

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Founder-Acharya His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

# Bhāgavatam Rasamālayam

## The Abode of Supreme Nectar

Meditations & Reflections from the lectures of His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami

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## Prahlad Maharaja's Heartfelt Prayers

"trasto 'smy ahaṁ kṛpaṇa-vatsala duḥsahogra-saṁsāra-cakra-kadanād grasatāṁ praṇītaḥ  
baddhaḥ sva-karmabhir uśattama te 'ṅhri-mūlaṁ  
prīto 'pavarga-śaraṇaṁ hvayase kadā nu"

"O most powerful, insurmountable Lord, who are kind to the fallen souls, I have been put into the association of demons as a result of my activities, and therefore I am very much afraid of my condition of life within this material world. When will that moment come when You will call me to the shelter of Your lotus feet, which are the ultimate goal for liberation from conditional life?" [SB. 7.19.16]



So Prahlāda Maharaj is praying to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and he is admitting he had been put into this difficult situation, he got his birth in a family of demons simply because of his past karma. He just recognizes that it is due to his karma that he has been in this difficult situation and had to go through so many difficulties. And Prabhupada is pointing out in the purport that Prahlāda Maharaj is actually speaking in this way on behalf of all the conditional souls. All of us, all the conditional souls in the material nature have come to the material nature because of our past karma. Sometimes people blame Krishna – if God there then why did He put me in this difficulty? Why did He put me in such an undesirable situation? The reason is that He didn't put you in that situation. We are ourselves put into this situation. And when people challenge in this way – why did You do that? How did we come to this material nature and so forth? Our simple answer is - don't worry about how you came here, consider how you can get out of here? How you came here is not important. How you're going to get out of this situation is important. And getting out of here – the process is given. This is what we are broadcasting all over the world. The process is just surrender to Krishna and you will go back to Him.

Prahlāda Maharaj is making the same point – when will I purify my consciousness and take shelter of Your lotus feet? Off course here Prahlāda Maharaj is not speaking for himself, he is speaking on behalf of others. He is already liberated. There is no question of him getting the shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord. He is already situated at the lotus feet of the Lord. Not only is he situated at the lotus feet of the Lord. The Lord has placed His lotus hands on His head and as a result of that he developed his purified spiritual consciousness. And later on we will see how - what to speak of he desiring to be at the lotus feet of the Lord, the Lord picks him up and places him on his lap, his right lap. So Prahlād Maharaj is not a conditioned soul as such but again, there is some consideration – in Hari Bhakti Vilas Sanatan Goswami is quoting from the scriptures why Prahlāda Maharaj took birth in a demoniac family and how did Prahlāda Maharaj receive the mercy of Nṛsimhadeva. He is explaining that in his previous life, one day Prahlāda Maharaj went out with his girlfriend on an outing. They located the spot which looked like a ruin and they cleaned up the ruin and decided to have a picnic. They went out together, they cleaned the place for spending the time there. But then they got into a fight. And that fight was so terrible that both of them did not eat anything. I'm sure she also did not eat anything.

And he stayed up the whole night. He was so upset. Now this place that appeared to be like a ruin was actually a temple of Lord Nṛsimhadeva. And the day happened to be Nṛsimha Chaturdasi. So on that auspicious day of Nṛsimha Chaturdasi because he cleaned the temple of Lord Nṛsimhadeva and he fasted the whole day and stayed up the whole night, as a result of that Prahlāda Maharaj in his next life was born as a devotee of Lord Nṛsimhadeva. Just because of this wonderful service rendered on that auspicious day of Nṛsimha Chaturdasi – cleaned the temple, although a ruin, it is the temple of Lord Nṛsimhadeva. He cleaned the temple. He fasted, although not knowingly, unknowingly. Secondary cause was fasting, the main cause was actually that he fought with his girlfriend and he was so upset that he didn't eat. And he didn't sleep that night. So because of that he received that good fortune of becoming a devotee of Lord Nṛsimhadeva. So in this way we find always there is a reason behind why something happens to somebody. Nothing happens in this material nature as a chance or accident. Everything has a cause. Everything, every action, every effect has a cause behind it. There are so many such wonderful instances – one classic example about this karmic factor is Bhishmadev.

In his previous life Bhishmadev was actually a demigod. One of the Vāsus. There are 8 Vāsus. The demigods are specific numbers – like 12 Adityas, 8 Vāsus, 7 Rishis, and so forth. So Bhishmadev was a Vāsu. And once the 8 Vāsus along with their wives were travelling through the space. And when they were flying over Vashishta's ashram, they saw this beautiful cow, Nandini. Nandini was actually the daughter of Surabhi. So one of the Vāsu's wives wanted to have this cow. Then one of the Vāsus suggested – don't do this as this cow actually belongs to Vashishta. We cannot take that and he is very dear to Vashishta. But this lady kept on insisting – No, I want this cow, I want this cow. So finally they stole the cow. So at that time Vashishta was not in the Ashram. Vashishta came back and he found that Nandini was not there. So he sat down in meditation and in his meditation, he was a trikaal-darshi. In his meditation, he could see what happened. And he felt that these Vāsus, they're demigods, look how they acted. Their actions were not even fit for them to be demigods. So let them go down to the earth planet and take birth as human beings. So he cursed them – because you acted in this abominable way, you lost your right to stay in the heavenly planets. Go, take birth on the earth planet as human beings. So when the Vāsus got to know about that, they came running to Vashishta and begged him – please forgive us.

## Krishna - The Cause of all Causes

Then finally Vashishta told them - look, when a word goes out of my mouth, it is bound to come true. This word of mine will happen. Nothing can change this. So you have to take birth on the earth planet, but if Mother Ganga agrees to become your mother, then right after your birth you will be delivered. But the one who actually stole the cow, he will have to suffer for a long, long time. He will have to stay on the earth planet. Then the Vāsus went to Mother Ganges, begged her. So Mother Ganges said – okay, I will come and become your mother. And Ganga agreed. And another thing happened – there was a very pious king, Shantanu. In his previous life he was elevated to Brahmaloaka. And when he was in Brahmaloaka, at that time Mother Ganga came there with water for Brahma’s worship of the Lord. At that time her sari got blown away by the wind and her breasts became exposed and this king, he just kept on looking at her. So Brahma, seeing that just cursed him- you’re not fit to live in Brahmaloaka so you go down to the earth planet.

So that king came down as King Shantanu but because he desired Ganga, his desire was fulfilled. So another incidence that is leading to that is why Ganga came down to the earth planet, not just the Vāsu’s plea but it was also another incidence behind that that brought her to the earth planet. And she got married to King Shantanu. But when she got married to Shantanu, she made a condition with Shantanu that he would never question her activities and never prevent her from doing what she wanted to do. If he ever does that, then she would leave him. So eventually Shantanu got married to Ganga. A child was born, and right after the birth of the child, Ganga took the child and threw the child in the river. And Shantanu, although his heart just broke with pain, but still he could not question her or prevent her from doing that. And in this way, 7 children were born, all 7 were thrown in the river. When the 8th one was born and Ganga was taking the child to the river, Shantanu just couldn’t restrain himself. He said – please just spare this child. Why are you doing this? Why are you killing your own children in this way? Please spare this child. Mother Ganga said – Okay, since you wanted me to spare this child, I will not throw him in the river. He will survive, but since you broke your promise, now I will go. Now I will leave you. So do you see the link? It was a curse and out of the curse, the seven who would have got released of the curse that right after their birth, they would be delivered but the 8th one would have to stay on the earth planet.

So over there it was a curse, and now it becomes a benediction. Seven were born and the 8th survived. And not only that, but when Bhishma sacrificed his kingdom, he sacrificed everything and he even took a vow of celibacy, lifelong celibacy (not getting married). And his father blessed him - you will not die unless you want to. He blessed him with Ichha-mrtyu, wilful death. Only when he wanted to die would he die, otherwise he will not die. Here we can see another incidence – there it was a curse of Vashishta and there it became a benediction of his father. Which means he will live a long long time. This is how we can see how karmic reactions are creating this effect. We act in a certain way and reaction comes in a specific way. So that is the condition of this material nature. And that is the point made here by Prahlāda Maharaja that everything is happening by the karmic reaction. The fact that I have taken birth in a demoniac family is a result of my past karma. The way I had been suffering is a result of my past karma. But very mercifully You have come to deliver me. And You have given me the shelter of your lotus feet. That is your causeless mercy.

So that is the attitude of a devotee –

**tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samikṣamāṇo  
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākaṁ  
hṛd-vāg-vapurbhir vidadhan namas te  
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk [SB 10.14.8]**

When good things happen he considers this is the mercy of the Lord and when bad things happen he considers - it is due to my bad karma. Whereas the materialistic people do the other way round. When good things happen, they want to take the credit for themselves. And when bad things happen, they blame Krishna for that. Why did it happen to me? I remember in BTG, long time back there was one article where a butcher is cutting, in his slaughterhouse, while he is cutting whatever he was, he chops off his finger and he exclaims why did it happen to me? So that is our thing – we don’t consider, all the sinful activities we’re indulging in but when some reaction comes as a result of our sinful activities, we challenge Krishna. Why did He allow this to happen to me? If God is there why did it happen to me? When Prabhupada was in Germany, the devotees told that the Germans became atheistic. They don’t believe in God because they lost so many of their relatives and friends during the war. The whole country was devastated that’s why they don’t believe in God.

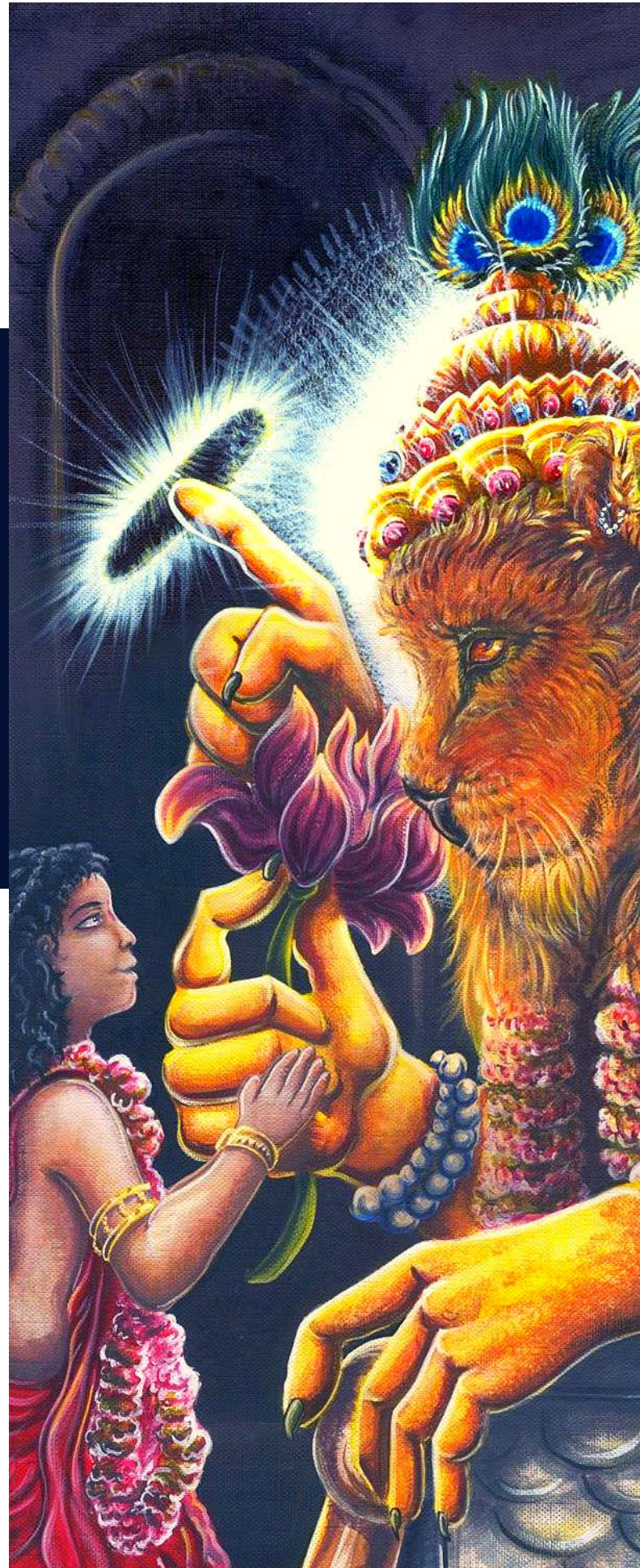
## Surrender to Krishna Brings Ultimate Success

Prabhupada just commented – when they started the war did they consult with God? When they started the war they didn't consult with God but the consequence of the war, when it turned against them, they became atheists. But by becoming atheistic who loses? The one who becomes an atheist – he is actually the loser. He is the loser. If someone gets upset with the sun and says I will never see the sun. Who is the loser? Did the sun get affected? No, he himself suffers because of that. He loses his sight, he becomes blind.

So similarly, our attitude should be - being submissive to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Let us become surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then the benefit is that whatever happens – we would recognise that ultimately it is due to the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The other day in the class we were discussing about that point – that one comes to the platform of devotional service then we have to understand that whatever happened in the past was simply to bring us to that point. Good or bad, whatever happened was to bring us to that point. And now that I've come to this point of devotional platform, now I found the way and now my life is perfect. That I have come to this perfect path will lead me to the ultimate perfection of existence. Only thing is that I have to stay on this path and not deviate. No matter what happens, we should not give up this process of Krishna consciousness. That is the important consideration.

Yes, some things will be pleasant and some things will be unpleasant. And this pleasant and unpleasantness – what is it? It is ultimately a matter of our sense gratification, in relation to our sense gratification. Things that are pleasing to our senses, we think it is pleasant. We think it is desirable. Things that are unpleasant to our senses, we think it's detrimental, it's undesirable. Doyite bhadra bhadra jnana sab mana dharma – it is only dharma of the mind, due to the activity of the mind, the functioning of the mind. Desirable-undesirable. Mind is the recipient of sense perception. Mind is the internal sense. And some activities, some happenings are pleasing to the senses. And some are unpleasing to the senses. And the mind is accepting and rejecting always. The pleasing activities or affairs are desirable and the unpleasing affairs are undesirable. Ultimately it is all activity of the mind, but the soul is above the mind.

**Indriyani parany ahur  
indriyebhyah param manah  
manasas tu para buddhir  
yo buddheh paratas tu sah [BG 3.42]**



## Instructions That Inspire

Beyond gross matter are the senses, beyond the senses, the mind, beyond the mind is intelligence and beyond the intelligence is the soul. And that is the self. So the self is not affected by these inferior things. Self should not be affected by the activities of the mind and the senses. And intelligence is the faculty by which we can decide what is ultimately favourable for our spiritual advancement and which are not. That is the main consideration. That is actually the function of our intelligence. And when the intelligence becomes properly situated, that is called Budhi yoga or devotional service. In the material plane the intelligence is figuring out how to enjoy, what to accept, how to accept and what to reject and so forth. How am I going to make arrangements for my sense gratification? That is the material function of the intelligence. But the ultimate function of the intelligence is that it is, it should engage my lower faculties, such as the mind, the senses, the body – these should be engaged in the service of Krishna. And when the intelligence does that, when the intelligence engages the body, mind and words and senses in the service of Krishna that is called Budhi Yoga or perfection of intelligence. And the perfection of intelligence, the activity of intelligence is devotional service. Therefore it is called Budhi Yoga. *Dadami buddhi-yogam tam. Krishna gives that intelligence.*

Another way to look at it is - the body has been compared to a chariot, the senses are the horses, the reign is the mind and intelligence is the chariot driver, charioteer. And the soul is the passenger sitting on the chariot. Now generally what happens, the intelligence doesn't know how to control the mind, the charioteer doesn't know how to control the horses with the reign. And as a result of that, the chariot becomes uncontrolled and falls in a ditch. But the intelligent thing is to put Krishna in the seat of the chariot as the charioteer as Arjun did. Put Krishna in that seat. And that is the meaning of Krishna consciousness. Our intelligence is not competent enough, not capable enough. But Krishna knows how to control us, therefore surrender to Krishna, and let Him drive the chariot. Let Him control the mind, let Him control the senses. He is an expert charioteer. So that is the intelligent thing to do. And when we become engaged in this way then everything becomes perfect for us and our lives become successful.



So Prahlāda Maharaj so wonderfully is revealing this point, appealing to the Lord. We do not know whether we will be able to control our mind and senses. We do not know whether we will be able to surrender ourselves properly to the Supreme Personality of Godhead but we just depend upon Krishna. Yes, allow us to become engaged in Your devotional service. Please allow us to become a speck of dust at Your lotus feet. And when you pray with sincerity then Krishna will respond. Krishna will respond. Krishna will engage us in His devotional service. And when we become properly situated at the lotus feet of Krishna, becoming engaged in His devotional service, not only Krishna will take care of us but Krishna will lead us back to His loving embrace in the spiritual sky.

## Inquiries of the Soul

Akrura became involved in the conspiracy of the Syamantaka jewel because he offended the residents of Vrindavan. Akrura took Krishna to Mathura because it was Krishna's desire, so how was it that he (Akrura) was involved in the conspiracy, in karmic reaction? Any comment on that.

HH BCS: Well, that is not the karmic reaction. The devotees felt hurt but ultimately when it comes to Krishna's pastimes, although some karmic reactions are there, apparently but they are actually Krishna's divine arrangement or Yogamaya's arrangement. For example the four Kumaras cursing Jaya and Vijaya. On one hand it was their own wish that they wanted to give Krishna (Narayana) the taste of Vira Rasa, the mellow of chivalry. So that mellow could not be experienced in the spiritual sky, in Vaikuntha. In order to fulfil that mellow, in order to give Narayan that opportunity to experience Vira Rasa, which is derived out of fighting, it had to happen on the material nature. And the arrangement was made – the four Kumaras came and cursed Jaya and Vijaya and as a result of that Jaya and Vijaya becomes the enemy of the Lord in the material platform so that they could fight with the Lord and give Him the taste of the mellow of chivalry or Vira Rasa. So apparently there is a curse and similarly it is the curse of the residents of Vrindavan that made Akrura go through this incidence of getting involved in the Syamantaka Jewel. So when it comes to Lord's pastimes, we have to see them as the divine arrangement of Yoga Maya, which is actually causing that. There, the predominating factor, behind those pastimes are actually the will of the Lord, the desire of the Lord, the arrangement of Yogamaya. And apparent karmic reactions or results are simply just an apparent façade. We can say ultimately even in that pastime, even Kamsa, Sishupala, Dantavakra, Jarasandha – they all are devotees of Krishna. They are not enemies. The greatest of the demons, Sishupala and Dantavakra are Jaya and Vijaya, two gatekeepers, two associates of the Lord from the spiritual sky.

