

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja  
THE CHARACTER OF KING AMBARISA  
Mathura, India: August 20, 2001

[The following transcription is taken from notes made during the translation of Srila Maharaja's class. The translation was given by Srimati Uma devi dasi at Sri Kesavaji Gaudiya Matha in Mathura.]

In order to attain service to the moods of Srimati Radharani, one must follow the path of raganuga-bhakti. Still, in order to actually become a sadhaka in the true sense, one must first be able to follow Maharaja Ambarisa. Maharaja Ambarisa was the son of King Nabhi, and he was a parama-mahabhagavata devotee.

Maharaja Ambarisa had unlimited property, and he was the emperor of all seven continents. Still, nothing could attract him. Moreover, if he had lost all that property, he would not have been disturbed. Therefore, when Kṛtya, the fire-demoness sent by Duvarṣa Muni, came to burn him, he did not fear. He simply stood with folded palms, thinking about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Although the brahma-rṣi Durvaṣa was so powerful that his actions could never fail, still, Ambarisa Maharaja did not feel any burning sensation. Rather, the demoness was destroyed by Bhagavan's sudarsana-cakra.

Hearing this from Sri Sukadeva Gosvami, Parikṣit Maharaja became curious to know about Ambarisa Maharaja's character. Parikṣit Maharaja was much more powerful than Ambarisa Maharaja because in his childhood he would play in the lap of Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa would kiss and caress him. Kṛṣṇa had also saved him from the burning brahmastra weapon when he was in the womb of his mother, and it would therefore be impossible for him to be hurt by the bite of the dangerous snake-bird when he would be later cursed to die. Although he was greater than Ambarisa Maharaja, still, out of Vaisnava humility, he wanted to hear about him.

Sukadeva Gosvami told Parikṣit Maharaja that Ambarisa Maharaja is maha-bhaga, as he also addressed Nanda and Yasoda in the Tenth Canto:

sri-rajovaca  
nandah kim akarod brahman  
sreya evam mahodayam  
yasoda ca maha-bhaga  
papau yasyah stanam harih

"Having heard of the great fortune of mother Yasoda, Parikṣit Maharaja inquired from Sukadeva Gosvami: 'O learned brahmana, Mother Yasoda's breast milk was sucked by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What past auspicious activities did she and Nanda Maharaja perform to achieve such perfection in ecstatic love?'"  
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.8.46)

Maharaja Ambarisa considered all his wealth to be as good as mud. We become happy when we get money, and when we loose it we lament. However, he saw all of his wealth as good as dust, and this is one of the symptoms of his being a parama maha-bhagavata.

Typist: Srimati Premavati devi dasi