

Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

God in Bookform

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At the end of Dvapara-yuga, the son of Parasara Rsi known as Bhagavan Badarayana Vyasa (Krsna Dvaipayana Vedavyasa) divided the one Veda into four parts. He then taught these literatures through his four disciples – Paila, Vaisampayana, Jaimini and Sumantu. He encapsulated the essence of the Upanisads and Vedas in the Brahma-sutra. Then, because the subject of Brahma-sutra was difficult, he composed the Puranas. Finally, for sudras, ladies and everyone else, he made the Mahabharata, the fifth Veda, and he entrusted that to his disciple Romaharsana.

One day, sitting on the bank of the Sarasvati River at Samyaprasa, he began thinking, "I have accomplished all these tasks: I have divided the Veda. I have composed the Brahma-sutra. I have written all the Puranas and also the Mahabharata for general people, but still I am not happy and satisfied by body, mind or soul. Why is it so?"

In the meantime, fortunately, Sri Narada Gosvami came. Srila Vyasadeva worshipped him, and Narada Rsi was satisfied with his devotion. Narada commented, "You have done everything required: You have divided the Veda in four parts. You have written the Brahma-sutra. To simplify the Vedas you have written the many Puranas – the Puranas, Upa-puranas, Sakha-puranas. And after that you have written Mahabharata for all general persons. But it seems that you are not satisfied. Are you satisfied?"

Vyasadeva answered, "I have completed all writings. I know everything and I have explained my knowledge to others, but still I am not satisfied. You are my Guru. You are my vaidya, my doctor. You can tell me why." Srila Vyasadeva is an incarnation of Lord Sri Krsna Himself, a saktya-vesa-avatara; but still he did not know why he was not satisfied.

Narada Rsi replied, "In all the sastras that you have written, you have only glorified dharma (religion), artha (economic development), kama (sense gratification) and moksa (impersonal liberation). You have given importance to all these. You have written some narrations glorifying Vasudeva Sri Krsna, but these are secondary, not prominent. I think you cannot be happy by this.

"You should remember the sweet pastimes of Sri Krsna and then write about them. Have you written that that Supreme Lord Krsna was bound to a grinding mortar? Have you written that Krsna is Svayam Bhagavan, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead? 'Ete camsa kalah pumsah krsnas tu bhagavan svayam.' *[See endnote 1] Have you written this? In so many Puranas you have written that Siva is the prominent god, or Durga, Ganesh, Surya and so many others. You have not given importance to Sri Krsna. Have you written that that Supreme Lord sits at the feet of the gopis and begs pardon for His mistakes? He tells them, 'I have made a mistake. I will not do it again.' And, 'Na paraye `ham niravadya samyujam' *[See endnote 2] – have you written this? Have you written about the separation moods of the gopis and Krsna and the Vrajavasis? If not, what have you written? Nothing."

tyaktva sva-dharmam caranambujam harer
bhajann apakvo `tha patet tato yadi
yatra kva vabhadram abhud amusya kim
ko vartha apto `bhajatam sva-dharmatah

["If someone gives up self-gratificatory pursuits and works in Krsna consciousness, and then falls down on account of not completing his work, what loss is there on his part? And, what can one gain if one performs his material activities perfectly?" (Bhag. 1.5.17)] *[See endnote 3]

If we are doing bhajana of Sri Krsna but we give up before our bhajana has matured, what is the harm? If one falls down from there, what is the loss? Nothing. And, if a man is following varnasrama-dharma but not doing krsna-bhajana, what is his gain? Nothing. For a person to be happy by body, mind and soul, he should hear hari-katha from superiors – from a Mahabhagavata.

Sri Narada Rsi told Srila Vyasadeva, "In the beginning of Satya-yuga I was a dasi-putra, a maidservant's son. During Caturmasya, the rainy season, the four Kumaras – Sanat, Sanaka, Sanatana, Sanandana – and so many rsis (sages) and maharsis (saintly kings) came to our village. My mother used to go and wash their pots and clean for them, and I used to go there with her. I spoke very little with them. I used to serve them, supplying water and many other things. After serving them for some time, one day, with their permission, I took some food remnants from their leaf plates. At once ruci, taste for hearing and chanting about the Supreme Lord, came in my heart."

In the stages of development in devotion, first comes sraddha (faith), then anartha-nivrtti (freedom from unwanted desires and habits), nistha (steadiness) and then ruci (taste in devotional practices). This ruci came.

Sri Narada Rsi continued, "At once I was so much attracted to them – very much attracted. After that, when Caturmasya was over and they were about to leave for their own places, I began to weep. By their mercy they gave me bhagavan-mantra and told me, 'Very soon you will have darsana of Lord Krsna. Continue practicing your mantra.'"

The sages went away, but Narada had to stay back because his mother was very attached to him. By the arrangement of Providence a snake soon came and bit his mother, and she died. There was no funeral ceremony or any rites performed.

Sri Narada Rsi said, "I became very happy, taking this as the mercy of the Lord. At once I ran to the forest, and in the middle of the forest I began to meditate on the mantra the sages had given me." Luckily, after some time I saw my Istadeva (worshipful Deity) in trance – and then He disappeared. I began to weep bitterly, and then a voice came: 'In this body you will not see Me again. Out of mercy I have given you darsana. Don't worry. Go on chanting and remembering Me. I'm giving you a vina, which is svara brahma (charged with transcendental sound), and by its help you should go everywhere and broadcast My sweet hari-katha.

evam- vratah sva-priya-nama-kirtya
jatanurago druta-citta uccaih
hasaty atho roditi rauti gayaty
unmada-van nrtyati loka-bahyah

["By chanting the holy name of the Supreme Lord, one comes to the stage of love of Godhead. Then the devotee is fixed in his vow as an eternal servant of the Lord, and he gradually becomes very much attached to a particular name and form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As his heart melts with ecstatic love, he laughs very loudly or cries or shouts. Sometimes he sings and dances like a madman, for he is indifferent to public opinion." (Srimad-bhagavatam 11.2.40)]

srnvan su-bhadrani rathanga-paner

janmani karmani ca yani loke
gitani namani tad-arthakani
gayan vilajjo vicared asangah

["An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation and should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The holy names of Krsna are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world." (SB 11.2.39)]

Without shame, Narada went everywhere, especially to groups of young people like the Pracetas and others, and he turned them all into Vaisnavas.

Sri Narada Gosvami now advised Srila Vyasadeva: "By going into samadhi, the trance of bhakti-yoga, you will be able to see all the sweet pastimes of Sri Krsna from His birth to Dvaraka lila – you will see everything." Then Narada Rsi left.

bhakti-yogena manasi
samyak pranihite ´male
apasyat purusam purnam
mayam ca tad-apasrayam

["Thus he [Vyasadeva] fixed his mind, perfectly engaging it by linking it in devotional service (bhakti-yoga) without any tinge of materialism, and thus he saw the Absolute Personality of Godhead along with His external energy, which was under full control." (Srimad-bhagavatam 1.7.4)]

What is the nature of bhakti-yoga? One has to surrender first. Srila Vyasadeva was fully surrendered and had no worldly desires. He was "evam prasanna manaso." This means that his mind was enlivened by contact with devotional service. He had no worldly desires at all, especially because of having a Guru like Sri Narada.

He sat on the bank of the Sarasvati River in Samyaprasa. He surrendered and prayed, "...pracodayat." Praca – udayat: "In a special way, as You are, please manifest Yourself in my heart."

In our brahma-gayatri and in all our gayatri mantras, the word "pracodayat" occurs. "Dhiyo yo nah pracodayat." "Tan no gaurah pracodayat." We are in the disciplic line from Srila Vyasadeva. If you are like Srila Vyasadeva, with no worldly desires at all, then "evam prasanna manasah" – you will be happy by body, mind and soul; you will be able to have the darsana of Lord Krsna. You will see Him face to face, and you will see His sweet pastimes, from beginning to end.

"Purna-purusa apasyat." Srila Vyasadeva saw in trance the Purna-purusa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead – with Srimati Radhika. Without Srimati Radhika, how can Lord Krsna be complete? Vyasadeva saw Krsna with His mother and father, Yasoda Maiya and Nanda Baba, with Sridama-bhaiya, and with all the gopis. He saw the sweet pastime of Mother Yasoda binding Krsna, and Krsna was weeping – He had tears in His eyes.

Who did Srila Vyasadeva see? The Supreme Lord of Lords of Lords – and that Supreme Lord is weeping. Is He really weeping or is it an artificial show? It is not artificial show. He has forgotten

that "I am Brahma, the Supreme Lord." Why? To taste vatsalya-rasa (parental love) and other rasas. His sakhas do not know that He is the Supreme Lord. They address Him, "O my sakha!" They can give Him their food remnants, and He gives His remnants to them. They can jump on His bed, saying, "Oh, You are still sleeping? The cows are waiting for You! They will not give milk until You come to them." Srila Vyasadeva saw all these sweet pastimes.

Vyasadeva also saw rasa-lila in his trance, and He saw that after performing rasa-lila Krsna went to Mathura. You may have seen the temple of Rangeswara Mahadeva at Kamsa-tila in Mathura. Kamsa had Akrura bring Krsna there, and in no time Krsna crushed Kamsa's wrestlers Canura and Mustika. Then Krsna jumped up on Kamsa's very high throne, threw him down and jumped on his chest; and he died. Vyasa saw all these happenings.

After this he saw Krsna leave Mathura and go to Dvaraka. He saw the separation mood of Krsna and the Vrajavis. Without the mood of separation you cannot realize or taste milan, meeting. So separation is essential. According to the height of the separation, the meeting will be that much more interesting and tasteful. We are unable to describe this in such a way that you will understand, but when you realize it you will understand. Words cannot speak about milan, because words have no mouth, and the eye is unable to speak. It is such a thing.

After that Srila Vyasadeva saw the pastime of Bhramara-gita. How glorious! What an exalted mood! That was mohana mahabhava. Srimati Radhika was in divyonmada (transcendental madness in separation from Sri Krsna), talking with a bumblebee. *[See endnote 4] How elevated this is!

After that, Srila Vyasadeva saw all Dvaraka-lila, up to the end.

And then:

yaya sammohito jiva
atmanam tri-gunatmakam
paro 'pi manute 'nartham
tat-krtam cabhipadyate

[Due to this external energy, the living entity, although transcendental to the three modes of material nature, thinks of himself as a material product and thus undergoes the reactions of material miseries. (Srimad-bhagavatam. 1.7.5)]

We jivas are actually transcendental to Maya. We are part and parcel of Krsna. We are suddha, pure, but we are thinking that this body is our self. We think: "My son, my daughter, my wife, my dogs – all these are mine." This is our anartha (misconception).

anarthopasamam saksad
bhakti-yogam adhoksaje
lokasyajanato vidvams
cakre satvata-samhitam

[The material miseries of the living entity which are superfluous to him, can be directly mitigated by the linking process of devotional service. But the mass of people do not know this, and therefore the learned Vyasadeva compiled this Vedic literature, which is in relation to the Supreme Truth. (Srimad-bhagavatam 1.7.6)]

When Srila Vyasadeva's trance was finished, he wrote down all he had seen in his trance – the entire Srimad-bhagavatam – for all jivas.

yasyam vai sruyamanayam
krsne parama-puruse
bhaktir utpadyate pumsah
soka-moha-bhayapaha

[Simply by giving aural reception to this Vedic literature, the feeling for loving devotional service to Lord Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, sprouts up at once to extinguish the fire of lamentation, illusion and fearfulness. (Srimad-bhagavatam 1.7.7)]

Srila Vyasadeva has written the Srimad-bhagavatam, which is the transcendental form of Sri Krsna. "Yasya vai sruyamanayam." If anyone wants to hear with strong faith, then "krsne parama-puruse, bhaktir utpadyate pumsah, soka-moha-bhayapaha." Pure bhakti will manifest, and soka (lamentation), moha (illusion) and bhaya (fear) will all go away. If you hear Srimad Bhagavatam from a Bhagavata [Maha-bhagavata] (pure devotee), he who is expert in jiva-tattva, maya-tattva, bhakti-tattva, prema-tattva, krsna-tattva, radhika-tattva and sakti-tattva and who is detached from worldly things, this kind of bhakti will come in your heart.

We see that there are some specialities in the life history of Sri Narada Rsi. With the permission of the sages he once took only one grain of food remnant from their leaf plates.

bhakta-pada-dhuli ara bhakta-pada-jala
bhakta-bhukta-avasesa,--tina maha-bala

[The dust of the feet of a devotee, the water that has washed the feet of a devotee, and the remnants of food left by a devotee are three very powerful substances. (Caitanya-caritamrta Antya-lila 16.60)]

If you have no taste in bhakti, in harinama and in the process of bhakti, you should follow this. This is a very easy process.

[Sripad Padmanabha Maharaja:] In this verse, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has told us that there are three transcendental substances which have great spiritual power, maha-bala. Bhakta-pada-dhuli means the dust from the lotus feet of a pure devotee. Bhakta-pada-jala means the water that has washed the lotus feet of the pure devotee and bhakta-bhukta-avasesa means the remnants of foodstuffs that were tasted by the pure devotee.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Do you understand? Bhakta-pada-dhuli means the dust of the bhakta's feet. Bhakta-pada-jala means the water from his lotus feet. Bhakta-bhukta-avasesa means two things: his food remnants and also the subject matters that he is telling – his hari-katha. By honouring these, surely bhakti will come. Those who loudly repeat this verse, and follow it, will very soon receive bhakti.

sa samhitam bhagavatim
krtvanukramya catma-jam
sukam adhyapayam asa
nivrthi-niratam munih

[The great sage Vyasadeva, after compiling the Srimad-Bhagavatam and revising it, taught it to his own son, Sri Sukadeva Gosvami, who was already engaged in self-realization. (Srimad-bhagavatam. 1.7.8)]

Srila Vyasadeva wrote down what he saw in trance – this Srimad-bhagavatam – which came from Svayam-Bhagavan, the original Personality of Godhead Himself. He then called his son, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, who was very much immersed in advaita-brahma (the impersonal Absolute). Sukadeva Gosvami was a nivr̥tti-niratam muni. [This means he was engaged in the path of self-realization and was detached from the world.] The moment he was born he had left his home, father, mother – everything – and had gone to the forest. Somehow, by his skill, Srila Vyasadeva sent him some messages via the following slokas:

barhapidam nata- vara- vapuh karnayoh karnikaram
bibhrad vasam kanaka-kapisam vaijayantim ca malam
randhran venor adhara-sudhayapurayan gopa- vrndair
vrndaranyam sva-pada-ramanam pravisad gita-kirtih

["Syamasundara entered the forest of Vṙnda-devi. His head was decorated with a peacock feather. He wore yellow karnikara flowers over His ears, a dazzling golden yellow garment on His body and around His neck, extending down to His knees, hung a fragrant vaijayanti garland made of five kinds of flowers. Splendidly attired as a beautiful natavara, a most expert dancer, He appeared just like a very fine actor on stage. He poured the nectar of His lips through the holes of His flute, and the cowherd boys followed behind Him, singing His glories. In this way, the land of Vṙndavana was even more charming than Vaikuntha, due to being beautified by Sri Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet marked with the conch, disk and other symbols." (Srimad-bhagavatam 10.21.5)]

The meaning of the verse is this: Kṛṣṇa is very beautiful, with His peacock feather on His head and flute in His hand. His complexion is somewhat blue, and his pitambara (yellow shawl) is simultaneously more dazzling than the sun and very soothing like the moon. His vaijayanti-mala (garland of five kinds of forest flowers) hangs down to His knees. Subala, Sridama and Madhumangala are singing His glories as He walks along, following the cows.

Hearing this verse, Sukadeva Gosvami was at once attracted, although he was nivr̥tti-vad, a renunciate. He asked the hunters, who were reciting this sloka and thus delivering his father's message, "What is the qualification of this person?"

aho baki yam stana-kala-kutam
jighamsayapayayad apy asadhvi
lebhe gatim dhatry-ucitam tato 'nyam
kam va dayalum saranam vrajema

["Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than He who granted the position of mother to a she-demon [Putana] although she was unfaithful and she prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?" (Srimad-bhagavatam 3.2.23)]

The Raksasi (man-eating demon) Putana used to eat the blood and flesh of baby boys. Somehow or other she came to kill Kṛṣṇa, that Supreme Lord. She smeared very strong poison on her breast and forcefully placed it in Kṛṣṇa's mouth. Kṛṣṇa took the poison and her soul also – and purified her. With baby Kṛṣṇa holding on to her and sucking her breast, she began to run to Kamsa for help; but he could not help her. She fell down in Vraja and Kṛṣṇa awarded her dhatri-ucit-gati, a position like

a mother. [She became a nurse in Goloka.] So what will He give to others? What will He give to the fruit-seller? What will He give to Mother Yasoda or Subala and Sridama? There is nothing that He cannot give them.

Brahma (the author of this verse) is wondering how it is possible that Krsna can be so merciful.

Sukadeva Gosvami heard this verse and came at once to Srila Vyasadeva. He said, "I want to hear all these topics."

atmaramas ca munayo
nirgrantha apy urukrame
kurvanty ahaitukim bhaktim
ittham-bhuta-guno harih

["All different varieties of atmaramas [those who take pleasure in the atma, or spirit self], especially those established on the path of self-realization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls." (Srimad-bhagavatam 1.7.10)]

Saunaka Rsi questioned Suta Gosvami, "How wonderful it is that a renunciate like Sukadeva Gosvami, who was always engaged in the practices of the brahma-advaita-vadis (those in the school of impersonalism) came to bhakti. How did this happen?" Such are the qualities of Krsna.

Those who hear this hari-katha will also be transformed.

If you have staunch faith and you want to hear Srimad-bhagavatam, Lord Krsna will arrange this for you. Krsna will send somebody. The Western devotees never went to Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja. He was sent by Krsna, and he went from door to door, everywhere, in forests and here and there. You cannot search a Guru or Krsna, but Krsna is so wonderful and merciful that He has arranged everything. He is sending me also, from door to door. So many have come – Padmanabha Maharaja, Sajjan Maharaja, Muni Maharaja, Nemi Maharaja, Asrama Maharaja, Damodara Maharaja, Srauti Maharaja, Bhudhara prabhu and others. There are so many qualified persons coming.

This world will not give you anything. You have tasted this world for your sense gratification, life after life after life, but you are not satisfied. I am requesting you, and the sastra is requesting you, Srila Rupa Gosvami and Sriman Mahaprabhu are requesting you to be successful in your life by doing bhajana of Krsna. Follow the teachings that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu told to Srila Rupa Gosvami, and you will be able to go up to rati even in this lifetime, like Narada Rsi in his previous life. And after that he began to tour in the whole world, singing sabda-brahma (transcendental sound vibration, or the Supreme Lord in the form of sound) everywhere. All were attracted to him.

What is written in the Srimad-bhagavatam about pure bhakti, Srila Rupa Gosvami has manifested in other words: anyabhilasita sunyam. Srila Sanatana Gosvami has categorized bhaktas into five categories. Even Dhruva Maharaja, who was a disciple of Sri Narada and who saw Krsna, Sri Narayana, in trance, is not eligible to be in any of these categories. This is because Dhruva Maharaja has anyabhilasa (desires other than to please Krsna). His austerities were performed to get his father's kingdom.

His austerities were so great that in only six months he attained success. During the first month he ate only fruits and berries. In the second month he ate some dry leaves every 6 days, and in the third month he took only water every 9 days. Then he was eating only air, and in the end he ate nothing.

Sri Narayana came to him and his wish was fulfilled. Because he had some material desires, Lord Narayana gave him the kingdom of the whole world for 36,000 years. Then Dhruva began to repent, "I was searching for pieces of glass and I found a diamond. Why did I waste my time? Why did I take the boon from Narayana?" Even though he was lamenting like this, at the time of his departure from this world, when an aeroplane came to take him to Vaikuntha, he questioned, "Where is my mother?" For this reason he achieved an exalted planet within this universe called Dhruvaloka. Remaining in this universe, he has no touch with Vraja or even Vaikuntha.

The first in the five categories of devotees is the jnani-bhakta, and the example is Sri Prahlada Maharaja. Next is the suddha-bhakta, Ambarisa Maharaja, then the premi-bhakta, Hanuman, the prema-para-bhaktas, the Pandavas, and finally the prema-atura-bhakta, Sri Uddhava. And, as far as Uddhava is concerned, he is begging for the mercy of the gopis.

vande nanda-vraja-strinam
pada-renum abhiksnasah
yasam hari-kathodgitam
punati bhuvana-trayam

[I repeatedly offer my respects to the dust from the feet of the women of Nanda Maharaja's cowherd village. When these gopis loudly chant the glories of Sri Krsna, the vibration purifies the three worlds. (Srimad-bhagavatam 10.47.63)]

We shall discuss all these topics.

Gaura-premanande!

[*Endnote 1 – ete camsa-kalah pumsah krsnas tu bhagavan svayam
indrari-vyakulam lokam mrdyanti yuge yuge
"All the lists of the incarnations of Godhead submitted here with are either plenary expansions or parts of the plenary expansions of the Supreme Godhead, but Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.3.28)]

[*Endnote 2 – na paraye 'ham niravadya-samyujam
sva-sadhu-krtiyam vibudhayusapi vah
ya mabhajan durjara-geha-srnkhalah
samvrscya tad vah pratiyatu sadhuna

["I am not able to repay My debt for your spotless service, even within a lifetime of Brahma. Your connection with Me is beyond reproach. You have worshiped Me, cutting off all domestic ties, which are difficult to break. Therefore please let your own glorious deeds be your compensation." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.32.22)]

[*Endnote 3 – "Or, as the Christians say, 'What profiteth a man if he gain the whole world yet suffers the loss of his eternal soul?' (Bhagavad-gita 2.40, purport by Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada)]

[* Endnote 4 – "Just as Srimati Radharani talked inconsistently with a bumblebee in the presence of Uddhava, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in His ecstasy talked crazily and inconsistently day and night." PURPORT

"This unmada (madness) is not ordinary madness. When Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu talked inconsistently, almost like a crazy fellow, He was in the transcendental ecstasy of love. In the highest transcendental ecstasy there is a feeling of being enchanted in the presence of the enchanter. When the enchanter and the enchanted become separated, mohana, or bewilderment, occurs. When so bewildered due to separation, one becomes stunned, and at that time all the bodily symptoms of transcendental ecstasy are manifested. When they are manifest, one appears inconceivably crazy. This is called transcendental madness. In this state, there is imaginative discourse, and one experiences emotions like those of a madman. The madness of Srimati Radharani was explained to Krsna by Uddhava, who said, "My dear Krsna, because of extreme feelings of separation from You, Srimati Radharani is sometimes making Her bed in the groves of the forest, sometimes rebuking a bluish cloud, and sometimes wandering about in the dense darkness of the forest. Thus She has become like a crazy woman." (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 1.87)

"Highly advanced ecstasy is divided into two categories-madana and mohana. Meeting together is called madana, and separation is called mohana." (Madhya-lila 23.58)

"On the madana platform there are kissing and many other symptoms, which are unlimited. In the mohana stage, there are two divisions-udghurna [unsteadiness] and citra-jalpa [varieties of mad emotional talks]. (Madhya-lila 23.59)

"etasya mohanakhyasya... 'When the ecstatic emotion of enchantment gradually progresses, it becomes similar to bewilderment. Then one reaches the stage of astonishment [vaicitri], which awakens transcendental madness. Udghurna and citra-jalpa are two among the many divisions of transcendental madness.' PURPORT This is a quotation from the Ujjvala-nilamani (Sthayibhava-prakarana 190)." (Antya 14.16)]

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