

3 Ambarisha Maharaja



Long long ago there lived a great king named Ambarisha. He ruled over the entire earth. He ruled very well and was also a great devotee of the Lord.

Maharaja Ambarisha engaged all his senses in devotional service. His mind was engaged in meditating on the lotus feet of Krishna. His words in describing the glories of the Lord. His hands were used in cleaning the Lord's temple and his ears in hearing Krishna katha. He engaged his eyes in seeing the deity of the Lord. He engaged his sense of smell in smelling the fragrance of tulasi offered to the Lord and his tongue in tasting the Lord's prasada. He used his legs only for visiting the temples and other holy places. His head was for bowing down before the Lord and all his desires in serving the Lord twenty four hours a day.

Maharaja Ambarisha performed many great sacrifices like the Ashwamedha yagya. During these sacrifices, under the guidance of great saintly persons, many things were given away in charity. Hence all the citizens were used to receiving charity and hearing about the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Maharaja Ambarisha had once observed a vow of Ekadashi for one year.

At the end of the year he fasted without water for 3 days, bathed, performed deity worship and gave many cows in charity. The cows were decorated with silver and gold ornaments. He distributed prasada to everyone. When he was about to break the fast, the great sage Durvasa Muni came there as an uninvited guest. King Ambarisha welcomed him with great honour and requested him to eat. Durvasa Muni accepted the invitation but first wanted to bathe in the Yamuna.

In the meantime the auspicious time for breaking the fast was almost ending. Maharaja Ambarisha was wondering what he should do. He consulted the brahmanas. "O brahmanas, out of respect I must wait for Durvasa Muni and at the same time break the fast at the prescribed time. What should I do? May be I could drink water. This may be accepted as eating and also not eating." He drank a few drops of water.

Durvasa Muni returned from the Yamuna. By his mystic power he could understand that Ambarisha had drunk water without his permission. Durvasa Muni became very angry. He said, "O proud king, you have invited me as a guest but instead of feeding me, you yourself have eaten first. Now I shall punish you."

With an angry red face, Durvasa Muni uprooted a bunch of hair from his head and created a fiery demon with a trident in his hand. The demon charged towards Ambarisha but the king was not at all disturbed and meditated on the Supreme Personality of Godhead in his heart.



It is said that a fire in the forest immediately burns to ashes an angry

snake. In the same way, to protect His devotee, the Lord's Sudarshan Chakra came and immediately burnt the demon to ashes. Then the Sudarshan Chakra started moving towards Durvasa Muni who became frightened and started running to save his life.



Durvasa Muni ran in all directions to save himself. In the sky, on the earth, in the ocean, on different planets. But wherever he went he could feel the unbearable fire of the Sudarshan Chakra following him. He tried to seek protection from Lord Bramha and Lord Shiva but both of them advised him to take the shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Finally Durvasa Muni went to the abode of Lord Narayana and fell at His lotus feet. He prayed, "O Lord, please protect me. I have offended Your most dear devotee. Kindly save me from the reaction of this offence. Even if a person is going to hell, You can deliver him simply by awakening Your holy name within his heart." The Supreme Personality of Godhead said, "I am completely under the control of my devotees who have given up all material desires. I sit within the cores of their hearts. Even the devotees of My devotees are very dear to Me. You should go immediately to King Ambarisha and beg forgiveness. Only he can save you now."

Durvasa Muni approached Maharaja Ambarisha and fell at his feet. Maharaja Ambarisha felt very embarrassed and started offering prayers to the Sudarshan Chakra. First he glorified the powerful weapon of the Lord and then begged the Sudarshan Chakra to spare the life of Durvasa Muni.

In this way Durvasa Muni was freed from the fire of Sudarshan Chakra.

Durvasa Muni said, "My dear king, now I have understood the greatness of devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I committed an offence, yet you prayed for my good fortune. The pure devotees of the Lord can achieve anything and give up anything. O king, you are so merciful. You have saved my life.

All this time Maharaja Ambarisha had not eaten anything and had been waiting for Durvasa Muni. For one complete year he had been drinking only water. He received the sage very respectfully and fed him a variety of tasty dishes. Durvasa Muni was satisfied and asked the king to eat. He said, "My dear king, I am very pleased with you. You are a great devotee of the Lord. All the three worlds shall sing your glories." The great mystic yogi glorified the king and went through the skyway to Bramhaloka.





Activity Time

Discussion:



- * What do you see?
- * What are the answers your other friends gave?
- * Is your answer right? -----
- * Do you think your friend's answers are right too? -----

It is a magnified picture of a tiny droplet of water falling in a glass.

It is how we look at it isn't it ?

You all really saw what you thought it was.



There are two ways of looking at the glass. What would you say?

In different situations people react in different ways. What do you think about the behaviour of these children? Could they have behaved any differently... Discuss



Go outside and play.
I don't care.
I'm going to play here.



My father didn't buy
a new bat for me.
Does he really love me?



My teacher didn't give me
the main part in the drama.
I don't think I'll ever act again.



There's such a long line for prasad.
Next time I think I'll eat at home.

Discuss more situations where you overreacted or saw something negatively.

We think we are right because we see things from our point of view. We see that Ambarisha Maharaja tolerated the situation without getting disturbed. This is one of the qualities of a pure devotee.

Ambarisha Maharaja only drank a few drops of water. Yet how did Durvasa Muni see it?

How can we engage our senses in serving the Lord? Srila Prabhupada said: Chanting, dancing, fasting and feasting can take us back to Godhead.

The Lord always protects His devotees.



See Durvasa Muni Flee

On the coloured page you will find pictures to make a flip book.

Cut the strips, colour Durvasa muni.

Bind them together to form a little booklet.

Flip the booklet to see Durvasa flee from Lord Vishnu's Sudarshana chakra

Trace the path taken by Durvasa muni

