We offer our humble obeisances to our beloved Spiritual Master, His Holiness Jayapataka Swami and to our Spiritual Grandfather, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada.

All glories to the rainy season!
The readers might be wondering why we are glorifying the rainy season. The rainy season is glorious, because it is during this time that devotional service to the Supreme Lord can be performed with minimal interruptions. The rainy season is viewed as an inconvenience by ordinary people engaged in fruitive activities, because it disrupts their daily routine; but it is a great blessing for the devotees, as they can devote more time to spiritual activities like hearing, chanting, discussing Krishna’s pastimes, and being absorbed in Krishna consciousness. While thus absorbed, the devotees experience spiritual bliss, before which the minimal material pleasure obtained through fruitive work pales into insignificance.

Not only are devotees blissful, but they also obtain spiritual enlightenment from how Nature behaves during the rainy season. In Srimad-Bhagavatam, Srila Sukadeva Goswami glorifies the rainy season because of the enlightenment it provides. Using the rainy season as an analogy, he explains the philosophy one requires for self-realization. Srila Sukadeva Goswami tells us how the simple son of a maid-servant made incredible advancement in spiritual life just by serving the devotees who were fully absorbed in increased spiritual activities leading to self-realization. The son of a mere maid-servant became Krishna’s greatest devotee, who was aware of all the three facets of time: past, present, and future. Who is this great personality? The readers will soon know.

Increased Krishna conscious activities during the four months of the rainy season under discussion are not performed just haphazardly; they constitute a method. That method is the observance of Caturmasya Vrata! Let’s find out more about it! Jai Caturmasya vrata ki jai!

Hare Krishna.
Your humble servants,
Jps Archives Multi-media team
Caturmasya begins from 23 July 2013. The dates for the four months of Caturmasya are as follows:

23 July: First month of Caturmasya. Fasting from green leafy vegetables
23 Aug: Second month of Caturmasya. Fasting from yogurt
20 Sept: Third month of Caturmasya. Fasting from milk
20 Oct: Fourth month of Caturmasya. Fasting from urad dal
17 Nov: Last day of Caturmasya

Srila Prabhupada writes in Caitanya Caritamrta, “Caturmasya should be observed by all sections of the population. It does not matter whether one is a grihasta or a sanyasi. The observation is obligatory to all ashramas.”

Vishnu Rahasya- Lord Brahma to Narada Muni.

If one accepts all these Vaisnava austerities and observances with devotion, one attains the supreme destination O Narada. One who desires within himself to execute all these Vaisnava austerities and vows, his sins obtained within one hundred births is destroyed. If one is exclusively devoted, peaceful, takes daily bath, is fixed in vow and worships the Lord during these four months, he goes to the abode of the Lord.

The four-month duration of Caturmasya coincides with the rainy season in India. In Srimad Bhagavatam(10.20.3-49), Sukadeva Goswami explains the philosophy of Krishna consciousness through the analogy of the rainy season and thus inspires the conditioned souls to rise above sluggish ignorance and take up Krishna consciousness with renewed vigor. The following poetic analogy of the rainy season will enable everyone to understand the philosophy of Krishna consciousness better and will further serve as a deep meditation on the philosophy of Krishna consciousness for everyone, especially for those observing the vow of Caturmasya.

SB 10.20.4: The sky was then covered by dense blue clouds accompanied by lightning and thunder. Thus the sky and its natural illumination were covered in the same way that the spirit
The soul is covered by the three modes of material nature.

PURPORT: Lightning is compared to the mode of goodness, thunder to the mode of passion, and clouds to the mode of ignorance. Thus the cloudy sky at the onset of the rainy season is analogous to the pure spirit soul when he becomes disturbed by the modes of nature, for at that time he is covered and his original brilliant nature is only dimly reflected through the haze of the material qualities.

SB 10.20.8: Flashing with lightning, great clouds were shaken and swept about by fierce winds. Just like merciful persons, the clouds gave their lives for the pleasure of this world. Excerpt from Srila Prabhupada’s purport to the above verse: Just as great, compassionate personalities sometimes give their lives or wealth for the happiness of society, the rain clouds poured down their rain upon the parched earth. Although the clouds were thus dissipated, they freely provided rainfall for the happiness of the earth. Metaphorically speaking, the lightning in rain clouds is the light by which they see the distressed condition of the earth, and the blowing winds are their heavy breathing, such as that found in a distressed person. Distressed to see the condition of the earth, the clouds tremble in the wind like a compassionate person. Thus they pour down their rain.

SB 10.20.7: The earth had been emaciated by the summer heat, but she became fully nourished again when moistened by the god of rain. Thus the earth was like a person whose body has been emaciated by austerities undergone for a material purpose, but who again becomes fully nourished when he achieves the fruit of those austerities.

An excerpt from Srila Prabhupada’s purport to this verse: In the Srimad-Bhagavatam it is recommended that tapasya, or austerities, should be accepted only for realizing the Supreme Lord. By accepting austerity in devotional service, one regains his spiritual life, and as soon as one regains his spiritual life, he enjoys unlimited spiritual bliss. But if someone undertakes austerities and penances for some material gain, then, as stated in the Bhagavad-gita, the results are temporary and are desired only by persons of less intelligence.

SB 10.20.8: In the evening twilight during the rainy season, the darkness allowed the glowworms but not the stars to shine forth, just as in the age of Kali the predominance of sinful activities
allows atheistic doctrines to overshadow the true knowledge of the Vedas.

Excerpt from Sri-la Prabhupada’s purport to this verse: During the rainy season, in the evening there are many glowworms visible about the tops of trees, hither and thither, and they glitter just like lights. But the luminaries of the sky, the stars and the moon, are not visible. Similarly, in the age of Kali, persons who are atheists or miscreants become very prominently visible, whereas persons who are actually following the Vedic principles for spiritual emancipation are practically obscured.

SB 10.20.9: The frogs, who had all along been lying silent, suddenly began croaking when they heard the rumbling of the rain clouds, in the same way that brāhmaṇa students, who perform their morning duties in silence begin reciting their lessons when called by their teacher.

Excerpt from Srila Prabhupada’s purport to this verse: Similarly, everyone is sleeping in the darkness of Kali-yuga, but when there is a great acarya, by his calling only, everyone takes to the study of the Vedas to acquire actual knowledge.”

SB 10.20.10: With the advent of the rainy season, the insignificant streams, which had become dry, began to swell and then strayed from their proper courses, like the body, property and money of a man controlled by the urges of his senses.

Excerpt from Srila Prabhupada’s purport to this verse: The poet Vidyapati said that in the society of friends, family, children, wife and so on, there is certainly some pleasure, but that pleasure is compared to a drop of water in the desert. Everyone is hankering after happiness, just as in the desert everyone is hankering after water. If in the desert there is a drop of water, the water is there, of course, but the benefit from that drop of water is very insignificant.

SB 10.20.12: With their wealth of grains, the fields gave joy to the farmers. But those fields created remorse in the hearts of those who were too proud to engage in farming and who failed to understand how everything is under the control of the Supreme.

An excerpt from Srila Prabhupada’s purport to the above verse: It is common for people living in large cities to become miserable and disgusted when there is ample rainfall. They do not understand or have forgotten that the rain is nourishing the crops they will eat. Although they certainly enjoy eating, they do not appreciate that with the rain the Supreme Lord is feeding not only human beings but also plants, animals and the earth itself.

SB 10.20.13: As all creatures of the land and water took advantage of the newly fallen rainwater, their forms became attractive and pleasing, just as a devotee becomes beautiful by engaging in the service of the Supreme Lord.

PURPORT: We have practical experience of this with our students in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Before becoming students, they were dirty-looking, although they had naturally
beautiful personal features; but due to having no information of Krishna consciousness they appeared very dirty and wretched. Since they have taken to Krishna consciousness, their health has improved, and by following the rules and regulations they have increased their bodily luster. When they are dressed with saffron-colored cloth, with tilaka on their foreheads and beads in their hands and on their necks, they look exactly as if they have come directly from Vaikuntha.

**SB 10.20.22** The cranes continued dwelling on the shores of the lakes, although the shores were agitated during the rainy season, just as materialistic persons with contaminated minds always remain at home, despite the many disturbances there.

**PURPORT :** During the rainy season there are often mud slides around the shores of lakes, and thorny hushes, stones and other debris sometimes accumulate there. Despite all these inconveniences, ducks and cranes continue meandering around the lakeshores. Similarly, innumerable painful occurrences are always disturbing family life, but a materialistic man never even considers leaving his family in the hands of his grown sons and going away for spiritual improvement. He regards such an idea as shocking and uncivilized, because he is completely ignorant of the Absolute Truth and his relationship to that Truth.

**SB 10.20.28** When it rained, the Lord would sometimes enter a cave or the hollow of a tree to play and to eat roots and fruits. Srla Sanatana Gosvami explains that during the rainy season bulbs and roots are very tender and palatable, and Lord Krishna would eat them along with wild fruits found in the forest. Lord Krishna and His young boyfriends would sit in the hollow of a tree or within a cave and enjoy pastimes while waiting for the rain to stop.

**SB 10.20.30-31** Lord Kṛṣṇa watched the contented bulls, calves and cows sitting on the green grass and grazing with closed eyes, and He saw that the cows were tired from the burden of their heavy milk bags. Thus observing the beauty and opulence of Vṛndāvana’s rainy season, a perennial source of great happiness, the Lord offered all respect to that season, which was expanded from His own internal potency.

The lush beauty of the rainy season in Vrindavana is meant to enhance the pleasure pastimes of Sri Krishna. Thus, to set the scene for the Lord’s loving affairs, His internal potency makes all the arrangements described in this chapter.

**SB 10.20.35** The clouds, having given up all they possessed, shone forth with purified effulgence, just like peaceful sages who have given up all material desires and are thus free of all sinful propensities.

When the clouds are filled with water, they are dark and cover the sun’s rays, just as the material mind of an impure man covers the soul shining within. But when the clouds pour down their rain, they become white and then brilliantly reflect the shining sun, just as a man who gives up all material desires and sinful propensities becomes purified and then brilliantly reflects his own soul and the Supreme Soul within.

**SB 10.20.41** In the same way that the practitioners of yoga bring their senses under strict control to check their consciousness from flowing out through the agitated senses, the farmers erected strong mud banks to keep the water within their rice fields from draining out.

**PURPORT :** In autumn, farmers save the water within the fields by building strong walls so that the water contained within the field cannot run out. There is hardly any hope for new rainfall; therefore they want to save whatever is in the field. Similarly, a person who is actually advanced in self-realization protects his
energy by controlling the senses. It is advised that after the age of fifty, one should retire from family life and conserve the energy of the body for utilization in the advancement of Krishna consciousness. Unless one is able to control the senses and engage them in the transcendental loving service of Mukunda, there is no possibility of salvation.

SB 10.20.43: Free of clouds and filled with clearly visible stars, the autumn sky shone brilliantly, just like the spiritual consciousness of one who has directly experienced the purport of the Vedic scriptures.

The clear and starry autumn sky can also be compared to the pure heart of the devotee. The spiritual nature is always brilliant, clean and blissful, and this spiritual nature, called vaikuntha, immediately satisfies all the desires of the soul. This is the secret of Krishna consciousness.

SB 10.20.48: In all the towns and villages people held great festivals, performing the Vedic fire sacrifice for honoring and tasting the first grains of the new harvest, along with similar celebrations that followed local custom and tradition. Thus the earth, rich with newly grown grain and especially beautified by the presence of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, shone beautifully as an expansion of the Supreme Lord.

The word agrayanaih refers to a particular authorized Vedic sacrifice, and the word indriyaih refers to folk ceremonies that have somewhat worldly objectives.

Srila Prabhupada comments as follows: “During autumn, the fields become filled with ripened grains. At that time, the people become happy over the harvest and observe various ceremonies, such as Navanna -- the offering of new grains to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The new grains are first offered to the Deities in various temples, and all are invited to take sweet rice made with these new grains. There are other religious ceremonies and methods of worship, particularly in Bengal, where the greatest of all such ceremonies is held, called Durga-puja.”

SB 10.20.49: The merchants, sages, kings and brahmacari students, kept in by the rain, were at last free to go out and attain their desired objects, just as those who achieve perfection in this life can, when the proper time comes, leave the material body and attain their respective forms.

PURPORT: In Vrindavana the autumn season was very beautiful then because of the presence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna and Balarama. The mercantile community, the royal order and the great sages were free to move to achieve their desired benedictions. Similarly, the transcendentalists, when freed from the encagement of the material body, also achieved their desired goal. During the rainy season, the mercantile community cannot move from one place to another and so do not get their desired profit. Nor can the royal order go from one place to another to collect taxes from the people. As for saintly persons who must travel to preach transcendental knowledge, they also are restrained by the rainy season. But during the autumn, all of them leave their confines. In the case of the transcendentalist, he a jnani, a yogi or a devotee, because of the material body he cannot actually enjoy spiritual achievement. But as soon as he gives up the body, or after death, the jnani merges into the spiritual effulgence of the Supreme Lord, the yogi transfers himself to the various higher planets, and the devotee goes to the planet of the Supreme Lord, Goloka Vrindavana, or the Vaikunthas, and thus enjoys his eternal spiritual life.
Narada Muni and The Rainy Season

In the previous ages, the sages minimized traveling throughout India during the four months of the rainy season. During this time it was impractical to travel on the muddy roads. Instead, they concentrated on increasing their Krishna consciousness by observing the vows of Caturmasya. At this time they decreased their material activities such as eating and sleeping and increased their hearing and chanting about the glories of Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The son of a mere maidservant chose to serve the brahmans by helping his mother in her service to some great sages who had stopped at their home for the four months of the rainy season. Because of his sincere endeavor to please these great sages, he attained the rarest of treasures. By their blessings and association he heard regularly about Krishna and His pastimes. This purified his consciousness and allowed him to rise to the platform of pure devotion. Since then he has become renowned throughout the universes as a great pure devotee.

The son of that maidservant is none other than the great sage Narada Muni. His pastimes teach us the glories of association with and service to the pure devotees of Krishna. Srila Prabhupada comments on this in the purport to the following verse from the Srimad Bhagavatam.

SB 1.5.23 Translation:

O Muni, in the last millennium I was born as the son of a certain maidservant engaged in the service of brahmanas who were following the principles of Vedanta. When they were living together during the four months of the rainy season, I was engaged in their personal service.

Purport:
The wonder of an atmosphere surcharged with devotional service to the Lord is briefly described herein by Sri Nara Muni. He was the son of the most insignificant parentage. He was not properly educated. Still, because his complete energy was engaged in the service of the Lord, he became an immortal sage. Such is the powerful action of devotional service. The living entities are the marginal energy of the Lord, and therefore they are meant
for being properly utilized in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. When this is not done, one's situation is called māyā. Therefore the illusion of māyā is at once dissipated as soon as one's full energy is converted in the service of the Lord instead of in sense enjoyment. From the personal example of Śrī Nārada Muni in his previous birth, it is clear that the service of the Lord begins with the service of the Lord's bona fide servants. The Lord says that the service of His servants is greater than His personal service. Service of the devotee is more valuable than the service of the Lord. One should therefore choose a bona fide servant of the Lord constantly engaged in His service, accept such a servant as the spiritual master and engage himself in his (the spiritual master’s) service. Such a spiritual master is the transparent medium by which to visualize the Lord, who is beyond the conception of the material senses. By service of the bona fide spiritual master, the Lord consents to reveal Himself in proportion to the service rendered. Utilization of the human energy in the service of the Lord is the progressive path of salvation. The whole cosmic creation becomes at once identical with the Lord as soon as service in relation with the Lord is rendered under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master. The expert spiritual master knows the art of utilizing everything to glorify the Lord, and therefore under his guidance the whole world can be turned into the spiritual abode by the divine grace of the Lord's servant.

Read more http://vedabase.com/en/sb/1/5/23

SB 7.15.73 – 74 Translation and purport

Translation:

Although I took birth as a śūdra from the womb of a maidservant, I engaged in the service of Vaiṣṇavas who were well-versed in Vedic knowledge. Consequently, in this life I got the opportunity to take birth as the son of Lord Brahmā.

Purport:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead says in Bhagavad-gītā (9.32):

O son of Prthā, those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower birth — women, vaiśyas [merchants], as well as śūdras [workers] — can approach the supreme destination.” It doesn’t matter whether a person is born as a śūdra, a woman or a vaiśya; if he associates with devotees repeatedly or always (sādhu-saṅgena), he can be elevated to the highest perfection. Nārada Muni is explaining this in relation to his own life. The saṅkīrtana movement is important, for regardless of whether one is a śūdra, vaiśya, mleccha, yavana or whatever, if one associates with a pure devotee, follows his instructions and serves the pure devotee, his life is successful. This is bhakti. Ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam. Bhakti consists of serving Kṛṣṇa and His devotees very favorably. Anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam. If one has no desire other than to serve Kṛṣṇa and His devotee, then his life is successful. This is explained by Nārada Muni through this practical example from his own life.

Translation:

The process of chanting the holy name of the Lord is so powerful that by this chanting even householders [gṛhasthas] can very easily gain the ultimate result achieved by persons in the renounced order. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, I have now explained to you that process of religion.

Purport:

This is a confirmation of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Anyone who takes part in this movement, regardless of what he is, can gain the topmost result achieved by a perfect sannyāsi, namely brahma-jñāna (spiritual knowledge). Even more import-
ant, he can advance in devotional service. Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira thought that because he was a grhaṣṭha there was no hope of his being liberated, and therefore he asked Nārada Muni how he could get out of material entanglement. But Nārada Muni, citing a practical example from his own life, established that by associating with devotees and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, any man in any condition of life can achieve the highest perfection without a doubt.

Read more: http://vedabase.com/en/sb/7/15/73

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