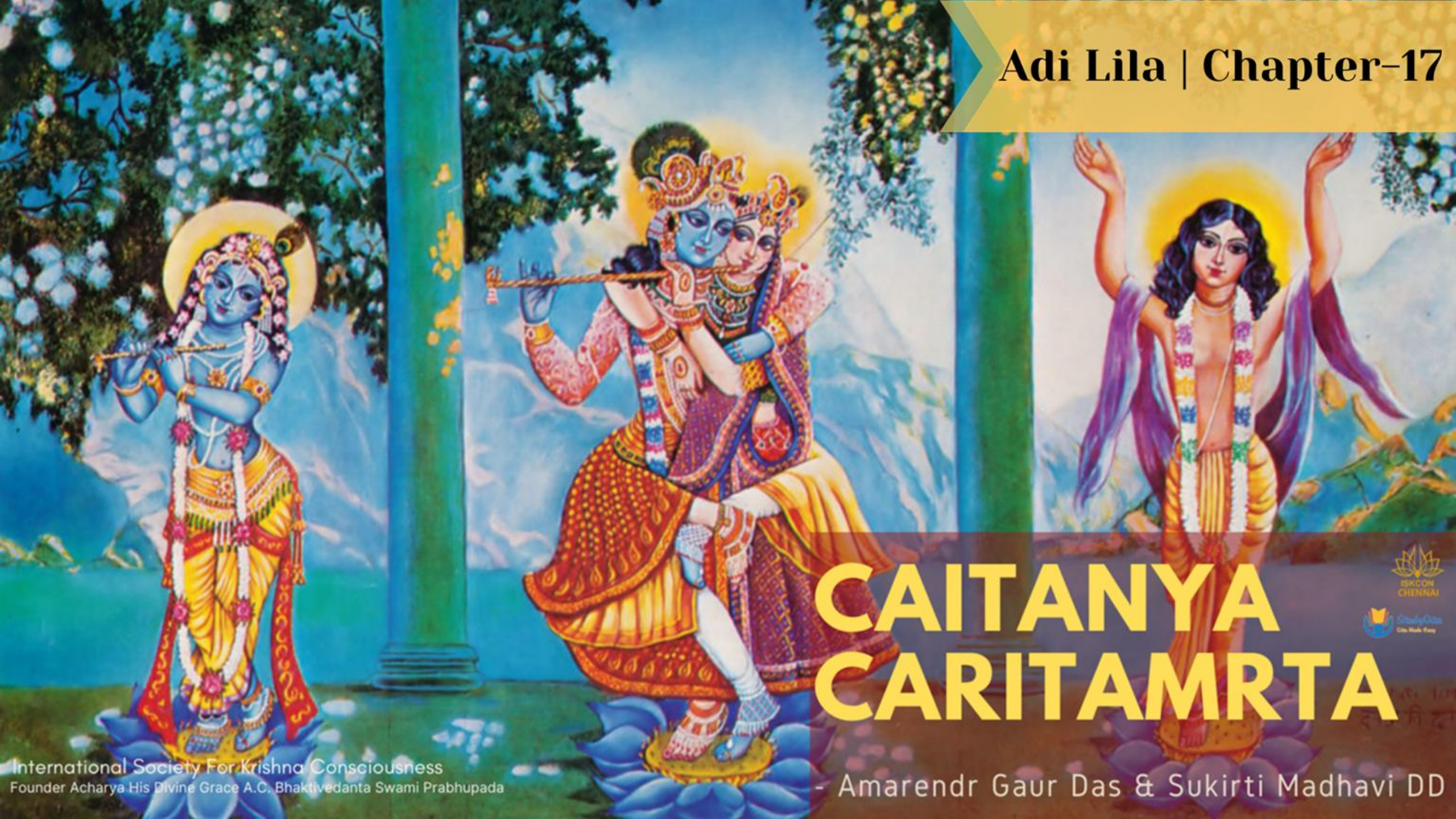


Adi Lila | Chapter-17



CAITANYA CARITAMRTA



International Society For Krishna Consciousness
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CHAPTER 17 - THE PASTIMES OF LORD CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU IN HIS YOUTH

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PASTIMES WITH KOLAVECHA
SRIDHARA (CB ML CH 9)

Lord ordered, "Quickly, go and bring Śrīdhara. Let
him come and behold My opulences"

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Some Vaiṣṇavas hurried to the house of Śrīdhara

He earned his livelihood by selling banana leaves

He offered half of whatever he earned in a day in worship of the Ganges

With the other half, he maintained his life - This is the test of a devotee of Viṣṇu

He was as truthful as Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira

He never deviated from whatever price he fixed

In this way he resided in Navadvīpa. No one recognized him, for everyone thought he was
simply a banana leaf seller

He passed the entire night without sleep while loudly chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa and Hari

As soon as the devotees got halfway there, they heard the loud cries of Śrīdhara

"O Mahāśaya, come. Come and see the Lord. Let us become glorious by your touch"

On seeing Śrīdhara, the Lord was pleased and called him, "Come, come"

PASTIMES WITH KOLAVECHA
SRIDHARA (CB ML CH 9)

Lord ordered, "Quickly, go and bring Śrīdhara. Let him come and behold My opulences"

WHEN THE LORD MANIFESTED HIS PASTIMES AS A SCHOLAR,
HE ACTED LIKE A MOST ARROGANT PERSON

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Keeping His identity concealed, He enjoyed various pastimes with Śrīdhara on the pretext of buying banana leaves



The Lord daily visited Śrīdhara's shop and bought banana leaves, bananas, and banana stems

He would daily quarrel with Śrīdhara for two hours and then buy his goods for half price

Although truthful Śrīdhara quoted a reasonable price, the Lord would take the goods at half price

Then Śrīdhara would stand up, grab hold of the goods, and a tug-of-war would ensue

In this way Śrīdhara and the Lord would shove each other

The Lord would say, "O brother Śrīdhara, why do you live like an ascetic when you have so much wealth?"

"Why are you taking the goods from My hands?"

"I know you are very clever. You have accumulated so much wealth by selling banana leaves"

PASTIMES WITH KOLAVECHA
SRIDHARA (CB ML CH 9)

Lord ordered, "Quickly, go and bring Śrīdhara. Let him come and behold My opulences"

WHEN THE LORD MANIFESTED HIS PASTIMES AS A SCHOLAR,
HE ACTED LIKE A MOST ARROGANT PERSON

"Are there no other shops?" Śrīdhara asked - "Go there and buy leaves cheaper"

Lord replied, "I will not give up My supplier. Take My money and give Me stems and bananas"

"What is wrong if you give Me a discount? - I am the father of the Ganges, whom you regularly worship.
This is the truth I am telling you"

Śrīdhara then covered his ears with his hands and exclaimed, "Viṣṇu! Viṣṇu!"

Seeing the Lord so arrogant, Śrīdhara then gave Him the leaves and stems

In this way they both regularly quarreled with each other

Śrīdhara considered the Lord as a most restless brāhmaṇa

Śrīdhara said, "I am defeated. Please leave me alone. I will give You something free"

"I will give You a piece of stem, a few bananas, and a few leaves. Then am I still at fault?"

The Lord said, "Good, good. I have no more complaints"

The Lord regularly ate rice off of Śrīdhara's leaf plates



PASTIMES WITH KOLAVECHA
SRIDHARA (CB ML CH 9)

Lord ordered, "Quickly, go and bring Śrīdhara. Let him come and behold My opulences"

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The Lord said, "O Śrīdhara, look at My form. Today I will award you the eight mystic perfections"

The exalted Śrīdhara raised his head and saw that Viśvambhara was blackish like a tamāla tree

He held an enchanting flute in His hands, and Balarāma stood at His right side - Śrīdhara saw the entire place was filled with a bright effulgence

He saw goddess Lakṣmī offer betel nuts into the hand of the Lord and the four-headed Brahmā and five-headed Śiva offer prayers to the Lord

He saw Ananta hold His thousand hoods as an umbrella over the head of the Lord and Sanaka, Nārada, and Śukadeva chanting the glories of the Lord

On seeing this, Śrīdhara was struck with wonder. As such, he reeled and fell to the ground

PASTIMES WITH KOLAVECHA
SRIDHARA (CB ML CH 9)

Lord ordered, "Quickly, go and bring Śrīdhara. Let him come and behold My opulences"

The Lord said, "O Śrīdhara, choose and ask for a benediction. Today I will give you the eight mystic perfections"

Śrīdhara replied, "O Lord, will You again deceive Me? Stay peaceful, for this will not be possible again"

Lord said, "Seeing Me cannot be fruitless. You must take some benediction according to your desire"

Śrīdhara replied "Let that brāhmaṇa who forcibly took away my banana leaves be my Lord birth after birth"

"Let me always engage in the service of the lotus feet of that brāhmaṇa who constantly quarreled with me"

Viśvambhara smiled and said, "Listen, Śrīdhara, I want to make you the king of a great kingdom"

Śrīdhara replied, "I do not want anything. Make such arrangement, O Lord, that I may chant Your names"

Lord said, "O Śrīdhara, you are My servant. That is why you are able to see My opulences"

"That is why your mind does not deviate from Me. Thus I am giving you devotional service that is confidential to the Vedas"

He had no wealth, no followers, and no education. Who can recognize such servants of Lord Caitanya?

What is the value of education, wealth, beauty, fame, and high birth? They only increase one's pride and bring about one's falldown

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PASTIMES WITH KOLAVECHA
SRIDHARA (CB ML CH 9)

Lord ordered, "Quickly, go and bring Śrīdhara. Let
him come and behold My opulences"

In millions of kalpas Lord Brahmā will never see that which Śrīdhara received simply by
selling bananas and banana stems

Who has the ability to recognize a Vaiṣṇava? Although a Vaiṣṇava possesses all
perfection, he appears to be afflicted

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PASTIMES WITH KOLAVECHA
SRIDHARA (CB ML CH 9)

The story of Śrīdhara, the banana seller, is proof of this, for he accepted only devotional service and rejected the eight mystic perfections

Know for certain that whatever worldly distress is seen in a Vaiṣṇava is actually spiritual happiness

People blinded with pride over material enjoyment do not know anything

They cannot recognize a Vaiṣṇava due to pride born of education and wealth

Anyone who hears the prayers of Śrīdhara and the benediction he received from the Lord will obtain the wealth of prema, or love of Godhead

One who does not blaspheme the Vaiṣṇavas attains Kṛṣṇa by developing love and devotion at His lotus feet

There is no gain in the act of blasphemy; one simply incurs sin

Therefore the most fortunate persons do not engage in blasphemy

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THE 'HARER NAMA' VERSE (20-33)

Lord ate raw rice given by Śuklāmbara Brahmācārī and explained very elaborately the import of the "harer nāma" śloka mentioned in the Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa



"In this Age of Kali there is no other means, no other means, no other means for self-realization than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari"

"In this Age of Kali, the holy name of the Lord, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, is the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa"

"Simply by chanting the holy name, one associates with the Lord directly"

"Anyone who does this is certainly delivered"

"This verse repeats the word 'eva' ['certainly'] three times for emphasis, and it also three times repeats 'harer nāma' ['the holy name of the Lord'], just to make common people understand"

The use of the word 'kevala' ['only'] prohibits all other processes

Cultivation of knowledge

Practice of mystic yoga

Performance of austerities and fruitive activities

THE 'HARER NAMA' VERSE (20-33)

Lord ate raw rice given by Śuklāmbara Brahmācārī and explained very elaborately the import of the “harer nāma” śloka mentioned in the Bṛhan-nārāḍya Purāṇa

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This verse clearly states that anyone who accepts any other path cannot be delivered

This is the reason for the triple repetition ‘nothing else, nothing else, nothing else,’ which emphasizes the real process of self-realization

To chant the holy name always, one should be humbler than the grass in the street and devoid of all desire for personal honor, but one should offer others all respectful obeisances

A devotee engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord should practice forbearance like that of a tree

Even if rebuked or chastised, he should not say anything to others to retaliate

For even if one cuts a tree, it never protests, and even if it is drying up and dying, it does not ask anyone for water

Thus a Vaiṣṇava should not ask anything from anyone else

If someone gives him something without being asked, he should accept it, but if nothing comes, a Vaiṣṇava should be satisfied to eat whatever vegetables and fruits are easily available

One should strictly follow the principle of always chanting the holy name

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THE 'HARER NAMA' VERSE (20-33)

Lord ate raw rice given by Śuklāmbara Brahmācārī and explained very elaborately the import of the "harer nāma" śloka mentioned in the Bṛha-
nāradya Purāṇa

Such devotional behavior solidly maintains one's devotional service

"One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor yet is always prepared to give all respect to others can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord" - Lord Catianya Personally composed in Siksastakam Verse 3

Raising my hands, I declare, "Everyone please hear me! String this verse on the thread of the holy name and wear it on your neck for continuous remembrance"

One must strictly follow the principles given by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu in this verse

If one simply follows in the footsteps of Lord Caitanya and the Gosvāmīs, certainly he will achieve the ultimate goal of life, the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa

THE GOPAL CAPALA EPISODE (34-59)

One night while kīrtana was going on inside
Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura's house

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Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu regularly led congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra in the house of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura every night for one full year

A brāhmaṇa named Gopāla Cāpāla, the chief of the nonbelievers, who was talkative and very rough in his speech, placed all the paraphernalia for worshiping the goddess Durgā outside Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura's door

Upper portion of a plantain leaf he placed such paraphernalia for worship as oḍa-phula, turmeric, vermilion, red sandalwood and rice

He placed a pot of wine beside all this, and in the morning when Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura opened his door he saw this paraphernalia

Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura called for all the respectable gentlemen of the neighborhood and smilingly addressed them as follows

"Gentlemen, every night I worship the goddess Bhavānī"

"Since the paraphernalia for the worship is present here, now all you respectable brāhmaṇas and members of the higher castes can understand my position"



THE COPAL CAPALA EPISODE (34-59)

One night while kīrtana was going on inside
Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura's house

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After three days, leprosy attacked Gopāla Cāpāla, and blood oozed from sores all over his body

Incessantly covered with germs and insects biting him all over his body, Gopāla Cāpāla felt unbearable pain

His entire body burned in distress

Since leprosy is an infectious disease, Gopāla Cāpāla left the village to sit down on the bank of the Ganges underneath a tree

One day, however, he saw Caitanya Mahāprabhu passing by and spoke to Him as follows

"My dear nephew, I am Your maternal uncle in our village relationship"

"Please see how greatly this attack of leprosy has afflicted me"

"As an incarnation of God, You are delivering so many fallen souls"

"I am also a greatly unhappy fallen soul - Kindly deliver me by Your mercy"

"O sinful person, envious of pure devotees, I shall not deliver you! Rather, I shall have you bitten by these germs for many millions of years"

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THE COPAL CAPALA EPISODE (34-59)

One night while kīrtana was going on inside
Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura's house

"You have made Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura appear to have been worshiping the goddess Bhavānī"

"Simply for this offense, you will have to fall down into hellish life for ten million births"

"I have appeared in this incarnation to kill the demons [pāṣaṇḍīs] and, after killing them, to preach the cult of devotional service"

After saying this, the Lord left to take His bath in the Ganges, and that sinful man did not give up his life but continued to suffer

When Śrī Caitanya, after accepting the renounced order of life, went to Jagannātha Purī and then came back to the village of Kuliyā, upon His return that sinful man took shelter at the Lord's lotus feet

The Lord, being merciful to him, gave him instructions for his benefit

"You have committed an offense at the lotus feet of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura," the Lord said

"First you must go there and beg for his mercy, and then if he gives you his blessings and you do not commit such sins again, you will be freed from these reactions"

Then the brāhmaṇa, Gopāla Cāpāla, went to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and took shelter of his lotus feet, and by Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura's mercy he was freed from all sinful reactions