



There is a song by great Chaitanya Mahaprabhu—a glorious personality who was ever vibrant with the experience of Divine communion. That song describes the characteristics of a Sage or a Saint:

**TRINAADAPI SUNEENCHENA
TARORAPI SAHISHNUNAA
AMAANINAA MAANADENA
KIRTANIYAA SADAHAHARIH**

Trinaadapi Suneechena, Tarorapi Sahishnuna:

A Saint is one who is humbler than a blade of grass, but more tolerant and enduring than a fruit-bearing tree.

He should be lesser than a blade of grass, implying that he does not give any value to his ego. From ego's point of view he has nothing. It is this utter humility—not seeking recognition, reverence or praise from others—and utter shyness with regard to the ego sense that is the nature of a Saint.

And at the same time, he must be tolerant and enduring like a tree. Why is a tree enduring? When you throw a stone at a mango tree, the tree, instead of cursing you for the stone you have thrown, drops a ripe mango—the ripest one which will delight your tongue the most. Even though people direct negative thoughts and actions that can be harmful from an apparent point of view, a Sage never develops a sense of revenge. His way of revenging is to fill the person who has hurt him with his fragrance. Sharpen your axe and violently strike it against a sandalwood tree, and the tree gives fragrance even to the axe! And that is the nature of a Saint.

The masses, however, generally respect the law of “An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” and cleverer ones hold the idea of “Two eyes for one eye.” But not so with a Saint. This type of personality—one who can give love as a reaction to violent acts done towards him, who repays hate with love, cruelty with compassion, and evil deeds with good deeds—becomes a powerful force of inspiration for all of humanity.

Amaaninaa Maanadena, kirtaniyaa Sadaaharih

A Saint is always giving honor to those around him who are lacking or seeking honor. Do not take up the responsibility of making others egoless. The project of being egoless must be yours internally. Do not run after others saying, “You are too proud.” Humble yourself, but give honor to other people. Tell those who seek honor how glorious they are, and you will not be telling lies, because human beings are spirit, and the spirit is Divine. Whatever honor they seek is very little compared to what their spirit already possesses. Therefore, give honor, respect, and praise to people. Make them happy. But with reference to yourself, seek no honor.

If you possess those qualities of humility, tolerance, and abiding reverence towards others, you then possess a mind that is absolutely free of all worldly problems. And with that mind you continue to sing the name of Hari—*kirtaniyaa sadaaharih*. And that is the clever way of living in this world. You are free from all problems.

For it is when you seek ego's satisfaction that you become intolerant, constantly asserting that you are greater than others, and always feeling that others are coming in your way. You are always creating an atmosphere of tension, and people are afraid that you will take away their position and their power by your advancement. So you become a center of a hurricane, a center of tension.

And if you are in that type of situation, your mind is constantly involved in the matter of surviving and retaining yourself. It is like a person who is walking down the middle of a road with a *mala* (rosary) in his hand, trying to repeat the Divine Name, yet always having to watch for vehicles that might hit him. First a car comes, then a truck comes, then a motor bike! He can only think about saving himself from all the turmoil! But if you have developed these qualities sung about by Saint Chaitanya, you are in a jet plane soaring in the blue sky. You have very little to be worried about, and your mind simply flows toward the Divine Self.