

# Narada Muni : More Than the Mischief-Maker



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A recipient of the **Chancellor's Medal 2024**, she is interested in studying scientific treatises related to poetics.

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In many television serials, films, and animated mythological shows, *Narada Muni* appears in a very familiar way. He suddenly enters a scene, holding his Veena, smiling mischievously, chanting “*Narayana, Narayana*”. Then he whispers something to someone, leaves quietly and soon after a misunderstanding begins. A quarrel breaks out. A conflict grows.

Because of this repeated portrayal, many people today think of Narada as a mere gossipmonger, someone who enjoys carrying tales from one place to another and secretly creating trouble.

### But is this really who Narada Muni is?

This *Narada Jayanti*, it is worth taking a moment to look at what our scriptures actually say about him. When we do that, we discover a very different picture. The playful image seen in popular media hides the true identity of a great sage, a learned being whose words and actions are rooted in knowledge and devotion.

Let us try to know the real Narada Muni, the one described in our sacred texts.

### A Sage Among the Gods

Narada is not just a wandering figure in stories. *He is called Devarshi, a divine saint*. The word “*Muni*” itself carries deep meaning. *A “Muni” is a person of wisdom, self-discipline, and inner realisation*. Such a title is never given casually.

In the scriptures, Narada travels across different worlds – among Gods, humans, and sages. But his movement is not aimless wandering. *He goes where he is needed: where someone needs guidance, where devotion must be awakened, or where pride needs to be corrected*.

Sometimes, his arrival leads to dramatic events in a story. But that does not mean he enjoys creating conflict. Often, Narada Muni simply reveals the truth that was already hidden beneath the surface. *His words bring out what people were already thinking or feeling. In this way, Narada becomes a messenger of truth rather than a maker of trouble.*

### What the Scriptures Say About Narada

The Sanskrit Subhashita tradition clearly describes Narada's qualities. A well-known shloka about him says:

**नारदस्य वचः सत्यं नारदस्य तपो महत् ।  
नारदस्य गतिर्विद्या नारदो नास्ति दुर्बुधः ॥**

**Meaning:** *Narada's words are always truthful. Narada's austerity is great. Narada's movement is guided by wisdom. In Narada, there is no foolishness.*

These four simple lines quietly dismantle the popular stereotype.

- First, **“Naradasya Vachah Satyam”** - **Narada's speech is truth itself.**

A gossipmonger thrives on half-truths, exaggeration, and hidden motives. Narada, on the other hand, speaks only what aligns with truth and cosmic order. Even when his words appear unsettling, they are never false or malicious.

- Second, **“Naradasya Tapo Mahat”** - **Narada's tapas, his inner discipline and spiritual effort, is immense.**

Tapas is not an external show. It is the inner fire that burns away ego, desire, and attachment. A being rooted in tapas does not act for entertainment or on impulse. Every action arises from awareness.

- Third, **“Naradasya Gatirvidya”** - **Narada's movement itself is knowledge.**

This line is especially beautiful. It tells us that Narada has proficiency in all branches of knowledge.

- Finally, **“Narado Nasti Durbudhah”** - **There is no foolishness in Narada.**

The text leaves no room for doubt. Narada is not naive, careless, or playful in a trivial sense. His actions may appear simple, but they are deeply intelligent.

### Knowledge and Conduct Are One

Another shloka describes Narada in an even deeper way:

**वेदाः शरीरं नारदस्य तपः सत्त्वं च भारत ।  
न तस्य विद्या पृथग्भूता न चाचारः पृथग्विधः ॥**

**Meaning:** *The Vedas are like the body of Narada. His nature is made of spiritual discipline and purity. In him, knowledge is not separate from conduct, and conduct is not separate from knowledge.*

This shloka gives us a beautiful idea. Many people may study sacred texts and learn a lot. But their daily behaviour may not reflect that knowledge.

Narada is different. In him, knowledge and action are the same. What he knows, he lives. What he teaches, he practises. This is why the shloka says that the **Vedas are like his body**. It means that sacred wisdom has become part of his very being.

### Why Narada Sometimes Appears to Cause Trouble ?

If Narada is so wise, why do many stories show him creating tension?

The answer lies in understanding how stories work. Narada often appears at moments when someone has become proud, careless, or confused. By speaking a few honest words, he brings hidden problems into the open. Once the truth comes out, events begin to move forward. People learn lessons. Pride is reduced and devotion grows. People or Gods come back on the track of Dharma.

In this way, **Narada acts like a teacher who asks difficult questions**. The questions may feel uncomfortable at first, but they help people grow.

Over time, entertainment has simplified many sacred characters for easy storytelling. Narada's playful side has been exaggerated until it almost became a caricature, somewhat ridiculed.

But when we return to the scriptures, we see a much deeper personality. **Narada is a sage who speaks truth, a devotee who constantly remembers Narayana, and a teacher who helps others walk the path of wisdom.**

This **Narada Jayanti**, let us remember him not as the gossiping figure of television, but as the wise muni described in our texts.

**Let us bow to Narada Muni – the sage whose words are truthful, whose knowledge guides his steps, and whose life shows that wisdom must always be lived, not merely spoken.**