

ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM

Twelfth Canto



His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

ALL GLORY TO ŚRĪ GURU AND GAURĀṄGA

ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM

of

KRṢṂA-DVAIPĀYANA VYĀSA

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann
asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya
mukta-saṅgaḥ param̐ vrajet*

Text 3.51

ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM

Twelfth Canto

“The Age of Deterioration”

*With the Original Sanskrit Text,
Its Roman Transliteration, Synonyms,
Translation and Elaborate Purports*

by disciples of

His Divine Grace

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Preface

We must know the present need of human society. And what is that need? Human society is no longer bounded by geographical limits to particular countries or communities. Human society is broader than in the Middle Ages, and the world tendency is toward one state or one human society. The ideals of spiritual communism, according to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, are based more or less on the oneness of the entire human society, nay, of the entire energy of living beings. The need is felt by great thinkers to make this a successful ideology. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will fill this need in human society. It begins, therefore, with an aphorism of Vedānta philosophy, *janmādy asya yataḥ*, to establish the ideal of a common cause.

Human society, at the present moment, is not in the darkness of oblivion. It has made rapid progress in the fields of material comforts, education and economic development throughout the entire world. But there is a pinprick somewhere in the social body at large, and therefore there are large-scale quarrels, even over less important issues. There is need of a clue as to how humanity can become one in peace, friendship and prosperity with a common cause. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will fill this need, for it is a cultural presentation for the respiritualization of the entire human society.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam should be introduced also in the schools and colleges, for it is recommended by the great student-devotee Prahāda Mahārāja in order to change the demoniac face of society.

*kaumāra ācāret prājño
dharmān bhāgavatān iha
durlabhaṁ mānuṣaṁ janma
tad apy adhruvam artha-dam*

(*Bhāg.* 7.6.1)

Disparity in human society is due to lack of principles in a godless civilization. There is God, or the Almighty One, from whom everything emanates, by whom everything is maintained and in whom everything is merged to rest. Material science has tried to find the ultimate source of creation very insufficiently, but it is a fact that there is one ultimate source of everything that be. This ultimate

source is explained rationally and authoritatively in the beautiful *Bhāgavatam*, or *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the transcendental science not only for knowing the ultimate source of everything but also for knowing our relation with Him and our duty toward perfection of the human society on the basis of this perfect knowledge. It is powerful reading matter in the Sanskrit language, and it is now rendered into English elaborately so that simply by a careful reading one will know God perfectly well, so much so that the reader will be sufficiently educated to defend himself from the onslaught of atheists. Over and above this, the reader will be able to convert others to accepting God as a concrete principle.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam begins with the definition of the ultimate source. It is a bona fide commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra* by the same author, Śrīla Vyāsadeva, and gradually it develops into nine cantos up to the highest state of God realization. The only qualification one needs to study this great book of transcendental knowledge is to proceed step by step cautiously and not jump forward haphazardly as with an ordinary book. It should be gone through chapter by chapter, one after another. The reading matter is so arranged with the original Sanskrit text, its English transliteration, synonyms, translation and purports so that one is sure to become a God-realized soul at the end of finishing the first nine cantos.

The Tenth Canto is distinct from the first nine cantos because it deals directly with the transcendental activities of the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. One will be unable to capture the effects of the Tenth Canto without going through the first nine cantos. The book is complete in twelve cantos, each independent, but it is good for all to read them in small installments one after another.

I must admit my frailties in presenting *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but still I am hopeful of its good reception by the thinkers and leaders of society on the strength of the following statement of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.11):

*tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavaty api
nāmāny anantasya yaśo 'ṛikitāni yac
chṛṇvanti gāyanti grṇanti sādhaḥ*

“On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, form and pastimes of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a transcendental creation meant for bringing about a revolution in the impious life of a misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literature, even though irregularly composed, is heard, sung and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.”

Om tat sat

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Foreword

“This *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is as brilliant as the sun, and it has arisen just after the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa to His own abode, accompanied by religion, knowledge, etc. Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the age of Kali shall get light from this *Purāṇa*.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.43)

The timeless wisdom of India is expressed in the *Vedas*, ancient Sanskrit texts that touch upon all fields of human knowledge. Originally preserved through oral tradition, the *Vedas* were first put into writing five thousand years ago by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the “literary incarnation of God.” After compiling the *Vedas*, Vyāsadeva set forth their essence in the aphorisms known as *Vedānta-sūtras*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) is Vyāsadeva’s commentary on his own *Vedānta-sūtras*. It was written in the maturity of his spiritual life under the direction of Nārada Muni, his spiritual master. Referred to as “the ripened fruit of the tree of Vedic literature,” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge.

After compiling the *Bhāgavatam*, Vyāsa imparted the synopsis of it to his son, the sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Śukadeva Gosvāmī subsequently recited the entire *Bhāgavatam* to Mahārāja Parīkṣit in an assembly of learned saints on the bank of the Ganges at Hastināpura (now Delhi). Mahārāja Parīkṣit was the emperor of the world and was a great *rājarṣi* (saintly king). Having received a warning that he would die within a week, he renounced his entire kingdom and retired to the bank of the Ganges to fast until death and receive spiritual enlightenment. The *Bhāgavatam* begins with Emperor Parīkṣit’s sober inquiry to Śukadeva Gosvāmī: “You are the spiritual master of great saints and devotees. I am therefore begging you to show the way of perfection for all persons, and especially for one who is about to die. Please let me know what a man should hear, chant, remember and worship, and also what he should not do. Please explain all this to me.”

Śukadeva Gosvāmī’s answer to this question, and numerous other questions posed by Mahārāja Parīkṣit, concerning everything from the nature of the self to the origin of the universe, held the assembled

sages in rapt attention continuously for the seven days leading up to the king's death. The sage Sūta Gosvāmī, who was present in that assembly when Śukadeva Gosvāmī first recited *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, later repeated the *Bhāgavatam* before a gathering of sages in the forest of Naimiṣāraṇya. Those sages, concerned about the spiritual welfare of the people in general, had gathered to perform a long, continuous chain of sacrifices to counteract the degrading influence of the incipient Age of Kali. In response to the sages' request that he speak the essence of Vedic wisdom, Sūta Gosvāmī repeated from memory the entire eighteen thousand verses of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, as spoken by Śukadeva Gosvāmī to Mahārāja Parīkṣit.

The reader of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* hears Sūta Gosvāmī relate the questions of Mahārāja Parīkṣit and the answers of Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Also, Sūta Gosvāmī sometimes responds directly to questions put by Śaunaka Ṛṣi, the spokesman for the sages gathered at Naimiṣāraṇya. One therefore simultaneously hears two dialogues: one between Mahārāja Parīkṣit and Śukadeva Gosvāmī on the bank of the Ganges, and another at Naimiṣāraṇya between Sūta Gosvāmī and the sages at Naimiṣāraṇya forest, headed by Śaunaka Ṛṣi. Furthermore, while instructing King Parīkṣit, Śukadeva Gosvāmī often relates historical episodes and gives accounts of lengthy philosophical discussions between such great souls as Nārada Muni and Vasudeva. With this understanding of the history of the *Bhāgavatam*, the reader will easily be able to follow its intermingling of dialogues and events from various sources. Since philosophical wisdom, not chronological order, is most important in the text, one need only be attentive to the subject matter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to appreciate fully its profound message.

The translators of this edition compare the *Bhāgavatam* to sugar candy – wherever you taste it, you will find it equally sweet and relishable. Therefore, to taste the sweetness of the *Bhāgavatam*, one may begin by reading any of its volumes. After such an introductory taste, however, the serious reader is best advised to go back to the First Canto and then proceed through the *Bhāgavatam*, canto after canto, in its natural order.

This edition of the *Bhāgavatam* is the first complete English translation of this important text with an elaborate commentary, and it is the first widely available to the English-speaking public. The first twelve volumes (Canto One through Canto Ten, Part One) are the

product of the scholarly and devotional effort of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and the world's most distinguished teacher of Indian religious and philosophical thought. His consummate Sanskrit scholarship and intimate familiarity with Vedic culture and thought as well as the modern way of life combine to reveal to the West a magnificent exposition of this important classic. After the departure of Śrīla Prabhupāda from this world in 1977, his monumental work of translating and annotating *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has been continued by his disciples Hridayananda dāsa Goswami and Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa.

Readers will find this work of value for many reasons. For those interested in the classical roots of Indian civilization, it serves as a vast reservoir of detailed information on virtually every one of its aspects. For students of comparative philosophy and religion, the *Bhāgavatam* offers a penetrating view into the meaning of India's profound spiritual heritage. To sociologists and anthropologists, the *Bhāgavatam* reveals the practical workings of a peaceful and scientifically organized Vedic culture, whose institutions were integrated on the basis of a highly developed spiritual worldview. Students of literature will discover the *Bhāgavatam* to be a masterpiece of majestic poetry. For students of psychology, the text provides important perspectives on the nature of consciousness, human behavior and the philosophical study of identity. Finally, to those seeking spiritual insight, the *Bhāgavatam* offers simple and practical guidance for attainment of the highest self-knowledge and realization of the Absolute Truth. The entire multivolume text, presented by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, promises to occupy a significant place in the intellectual, cultural and spiritual life of modern man for a long time to come.

– The Publishers

CHAPTER ONE

The Degraded Dynasties of Kali-yuga

The Twelfth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* begins with Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī predicting the kings of the earth who will appear in the future during the Age of Kali. Then he gives a description of the numerous faults of the age, after which the presiding goddess of the earth sarcastically berates the foolish members of the kingly order who perpetually try to conquer her. Next Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains the four varieties of material annihilation, and then he gives his final advice to Mahārāja Parīkṣit. Thereafter King Parīkṣit is bitten by the snake-bird Takṣaka and leaves this world. Sūta Gosvāmī concludes his narration of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to the sages at Naimiṣāraṇya forest by enumerating the teachers of the various branches of the *Vedas* and *Purāṇas*, relating the pious history of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, glorifying the Supreme Lord in His universal form and in His expansion as the sun-god, summarizing the topics discussed in this literature, and offering final benedictions and prayers.

The First Chapter of this canto briefly describes the future kings of the dynasty of Magadha and how they become degraded because of the influence of the Age of Kali. There were twenty kings who ruled in the family of Pūru, in the dynasty of the sun-god, counting from Uparicara Vasu to Purañjaya. After Purañjaya, the lineage of this dynasty will become corrupted. Following Purañjaya there will be five kings known as the Pradyotanas, who are then followed by the Śīsunāgas, the Mauryas, the Śuṅgas, the Kāṇvas, thirty kings of the Andhra nation, seven Ābhīras, ten Gardabhīs, sixteen Kaṅkas, eight Yavanas, fourteen Turuṣkas, ten Guruṇḍas, eleven Maulas, five Kilakilā monarchs and thirteen Bāhlikas. After this, different regions will be ruled over at the same time by seven Andhra kings, seven Kauśalas, the kings of Vidūra, and the Niṣadhas. Then the power of rulership in the countries of Magadha and so forth will fall to kings who are no better than *śūdras* and *mlecchas* and are totally absorbed in irreligion.

TEXTS 1.1–2

śrī-śuka uvāca

*yo 'ntyah purañjayo nāma
bhaviṣyo bārahadraṭhaḥ
tasyāmātyas tu śunako
hatvā svāminam ātma-jam*

*pradyota-samjñam rājānam
kartā yat-pālakaḥ sutaḥ
viśākhayūpas tat-putro
bhavitā rājakaḥ tataḥ*

śrī śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *yaḥ* – who; *antyaḥ* – the final member (of the lineage described in the Ninth Canto); *purañjayaḥ* – Purañjaya (Ripuñjaya); *nāma* – named; *bhaviṣyaḥ* – will live in the future; *bārahadrathaḥ* – the descendant of Bṛhadratha; *tasya* – his; *amātyaḥ* – minister; *tu* – but; *śunakaḥ* – Śunaka; *hatvā* – killing; *svāminam* – his master; *ātma-jaṁ* – his own son; *pradyota-samjñam* – named Pradyota; *rājānam* – the king; *kartā* – will make; *yat* – whose; *pālakaḥ* – named Pālaka; *sutaḥ* – the son; *viśākhayūpaḥ* – Viśākhayūpa; *tat-putraḥ* – the son of Pālaka; *bhavitā* – will be; *rājakaḥ* – Rājaka; *tataḥ* – then (coming as the son of Viśākhayūpa).

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: The last king mentioned in our previous enumeration of the future rulers of the Māgadha dynasty was Purañjaya, who will take birth as the descendant of Bṛhadratha. Purañjaya’s minister Śunaka will assassinate the king and install his own son, Pradyota, on the throne. The son of Pradyota will be Pālaka, his son will be Viśākhayūpa, and his son will be Rājaka.

PURPORT

The vicious political intrigue described here is symptomatic of the Age of Kali. In the Ninth Canto of this work, Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes how the great rulers of men descended from two royal dynasties, that of the sun and that of the moon. The Ninth Canto’s description of Lord Rāmacandra, a most famous incarnation of God, occurs in this genealogical narration, and at the end of the Ninth Canto Śukadeva describes the forefathers of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma. Finally, the appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa and that of Lord Balarāma are mentioned within the context of the narration of the moon dynasty.

The Tenth Canto is devoted exclusively to a description of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s childhood pastimes in Vṛndāvana, His teenage activities in Mathurā and His adult activities in Dvārakā. The famous epic *Mahābhārata* also describes the events of this period, focusing upon the five Pāṇḍava brothers and their activities in relation with Lord

Kṛṣṇa and other leading historical figures, such as Bhīṣma, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Droṇācārya and Vidura. Within the *Mahābhārata* is *Bhagavad-gītā*, in which Lord Kṛṣṇa is declared to be the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, of which we are presently translating the twelfth and final canto, is considered a more advanced literature than the *Mahābhārata* because throughout the entire work Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth and supreme source of all existence, is directly, centrally and irrefutably revealed. In fact, the First Canto of the *Bhāgavatam* describes how Śrī Vyāsadeva composed this great work because he was dissatisfied with his rather sporadic glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Mahābhārata*.

Although *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* narrates the histories of many royal dynasties and the lives of innumerable kings, not until the description of the present age, the Age of Kali, do we find a minister assassinating his own king and installing his son on the throne. This incident resembles Dhṛtarāṣṭra's attempt to assassinate the Pāṇḍavas and crown his son Duryodhana king. As the *Mahābhārata* describes, Lord Kṛṣṇa thwarted this attempt, but with the departure of the Lord for the spiritual sky, the Age of Kali became fully manifested, ushering in political assassination within one's own house as a standard technique.

TEXT 1.3

*nandivardhanas tat-putraḥ
pañca pradyotanā ime
aṣṭa-trimśottara-śatam
bhokṣyanti pṛthivīm nṛpāḥ*

nandivardhanaḥ – Nandivardhana; *tat-putraḥ* – his son; *pañca* – five; *pradyotanāḥ* – Pradyotanas; *ime* – these; *aṣṭa-trimśa* – thirty-eight; *uttara* – increased by; *śatam* – one hundred; *bhokṣyanti* – they will enjoy; *pṛthivīm* – the earth; *nṛpāḥ* – these kings.

TRANSLATION

The son of Rājaka will be Nandivardhana, and thus in the Pradyotana dynasty there will be five kings, who will enjoy the earth for 138 years.

TEXT 1.4

śīsunāgas tato bhāvyah

*kākavarṇas tu tat-sutaḥ
kṣemadharmā tasya sutaḥ
kṣetrajñaḥ kṣemadharmajaḥ*

śiśunāgaḥ – Śiśunāga; *tataḥ* – then; *bhāvyaḥ* – will take birth;
kākavarṇaḥ – Kākavarṇa; *tu* – and; *tat-sutaḥ* – his son; *kṣemadharmā* –
Kṣemadharmā; *tasya* – of Kākavarṇa; *sutaḥ* – the son; *kṣetrajñaḥ* –
Kṣetrajña; *kṣemadharmajaḥ* – born to Kṣemadharmā.

TRANSLATION

Nandivardhana will have a son named Śiśunāga, and his son will be known as Kākavarṇa. The son of Kākavarṇa will be Kṣemadharmā, and the son of Kṣemadharmā will be Kṣetrajña.

TEXT 1.5

*vidhisāraḥ sutas tasyā-
jātaśatruḥ bhaviṣyati
darbhakas tat-suto bhāvī
darbhakasyājayaḥ smṛtaḥ*

vidhisāraḥ – Vidhisāra; *sutaḥ* – the son; *tasya* – of Kṣetrajña; *ajātaśatruḥ* –
Ajātaśatru; *bhaviṣyati* – will be; *darbhakaḥ* – Darbhaka; *tat-sutaḥ* –
the son of Ajātaśatru; *bhāvī* – will take birth; *darbhakasya* – of
Darbhaka; *ājayaḥ* – Ajaya; *smṛtaḥ* – is remembered.

TRANSLATION

The son of Kṣetrajña will be Vidhisāra, and his son will be Ajātaśatru. Ajātaśatru will have a son named Darbhaka, and his son will be Ajaya.

TEXTS 1.6–8

*nandivardhana ājeyo
mahānandiḥ sutas tataḥ
śiśunāgā daśaivaite
saṣṭy-uttara-śata-trayam
samā bhokṣyanti pṛthivīm
kuru-śreṣṭha kalau nṛpāḥ
mahānandi-suto rājan
śūdrā-garbhodbhavo balī
mahāpadma-patiḥ kaścin
nandaḥ kṣatra-vināśa-kṛt*

*tato nṛpā bhaviṣyanti
śūdra-prāyās tv adhārmikāḥ*

nandivardhanaḥ – Nandivardhana; *ājeyaḥ* – the son of Ajaya; *mahā-nandiḥ* – Mahānandi; *sutaḥ* – the son; *tataḥ* – then (following Nandivardhana); *śīsunāgāḥ* – the Śīsunāgas; *daśa* – ten; *eva* – indeed; *ete* – these; *saṣṭi* – sixty; *uttara* – increased by; *śata-trayam* – three hundred; *samāḥ* – years; *bhokṣyanti* – they will rule; *ṛthivīm* – the earth; *kuruśreṣṭha* – O best of the Kurus; *kalau* – in this Age of Kali; *nṛpāḥ* – the kings; *mahānandi-sutaḥ* – the son of Mahānandi; *rājan* – O King Parīkṣit; *śūdrā-garbha* – in the womb of a *śūdra* woman; *udbhavaḥ* – taking birth; *balī* – powerful; *mahā-padma* – of an army, or wealth, measured in the millions; *patiḥ* – the master; *kaścit* – a certain; *nandaḥ* – Nanda; *kṣatra* – of the royal class; *vināśa-kṛt* – the destroyer; *tataḥ* – then; *nṛpāḥ* – the kings; *bhaviṣyanti* – will become; *śūdra-prāyāḥ* – no better than *śūdras*; *tu* – and; *adhārmikāḥ* – irreligious.

TRANSLATION

Ajaya will father a second Nandivardhana, whose son will be Mahānandi. O best of the Kurus, these ten kings of the Śīsunāga dynasty will rule the earth for a total of 360 years during the Age of Kali. My dear Parīkṣit, King Mahānandi will father a very powerful son in the womb of a śūdra woman. He will be known as Nanda and will be the master of millions of soldiers and fabulous wealth. He will wreak havoc among the kṣatriyas, and from that time onward virtually all kings will be irreligious śūdras.

PURPORT

Here is a description of how authentic political authority degenerated and disintegrated throughout the world. There is a Supreme Godhead, and there are saintly, powerful men who have taken the role of government leaders and represented that Godhead on earth. With the advent of the Age of Kali, however, this transcendental system of government collapsed, and unauthorized, uncivilized men gradually took the reins of power.

TEXT 1.9

*sa eka-cchatrām ṛthivīm
anullaṅghita-śāsanāḥ
śāsiṣyati mahāpadmo*

dvitīya iva bhārgavaḥ

saḥ – he (Nanda); *eka-chatrām* – under a single leadership; *pr̥thivīm* – the entire earth; *anullaṅghita* – undefied; *śāsanaḥ* – his rulership; *śāsiṣyati* – he will have sovereignty over; *mahāpadmaḥ* – the lord of Mahāpadma; *dvitīyaḥ* – a second; *iva* – as if; *bhārgavaḥ* – Paraśurāma.

TRANSLATION

That lord of Mahāpadma, King Nanda, will rule over the entire earth just like a second Paraśurāma, and no one will challenge his authority.

PURPORT

In the eighth verse of this chapter it was mentioned that King Nanda would destroy the remnants of the *kṣatriya* order. Therefore he is here compared to Lord Paraśurāma, who annihilated the *kṣatriya* class twenty-one times in a previous age.

TEXT 1.10

*tasya cāṣṭau bhaviṣyanti
sumālya-pramukhāḥ sutāḥ
ya imāṁ bhokṣyanti mahim
rājānaś ca śatam samāḥ*

tasya – of him (Nanda); *ca* – and; *aṣṭau* – eight; *bhaviṣyanti* – will take birth; *sumālya-pramukhāḥ* – headed by Sumālya; *sutāḥ* – sons; *ye* – who; *imām* – this; *bhokṣyanti* – will enjoy; *mahim* – the earth; *rājānaḥ* – kings; *ca* – and; *śatam* – one hundred; *samāḥ* – years.

TRANSLATION

He will have eight sons, headed by Sumālya, who will control the earth as powerful kings for one hundred years.

TEXT 1.11

*nava nandān dvijaḥ kaścit
prapannān uddhariṣyati
teṣām abhāve jagatim
mauryā bhokṣyanti vai kalau*

nava – nine; *nandān* – the Nandas (King Nanda and his eight sons); *dvijaḥ* – *brāhmaṇa*; *kaścit* – a certain; *prapannān* – trusting; *uddhariṣyati* – will uproot; *teṣām* – of them; *abhāve* – in the absence; *jagatim* – the

earth; *mauryāḥ* – the Maurya dynasty; *bhokṣyanti* – will rule over; *vai* – indeed; *kalau* – in this age, Kali-yuga.

TRANSLATION

A certain brāhmaṇa [Cāṇakya] will betray the trust of King Nanda and his eight sons and will destroy their dynasty. In their absence the Mauryas will rule the world as the Age of Kali continues.

PURPORT

Śrīdhara Svāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura both confirm that the *brāhmaṇa* mentioned here is Cāṇakya, also known as Kauṭilya or Vātsyāyana. The great historical narration *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which began with the events prior to the cosmic manifestation, now reaches into the realm of modern recorded history. Modern historians recognize both the Maurya dynasty and Candragupta, the king mentioned in the following verse.

TEXT 1.12

*sa eva candraguptaṁ vai
dvijo rājye ’bhiṣekṣyati
tat-suto vārisāras tu
tataś cāśokavardhanaḥ*

saḥ – he (Cāṇakya); *eva* – indeed; *candraguptam* – Prince Candragupta; *vai* – indeed; *dvijaḥ* – the *brāhmaṇa*; *rājye* – in the role of king; *abhiṣekṣyati* – will install; *tat* – of Candragupta; *sutaḥ* – the son; *vārisāraḥ* – Vārisāra; *tu* – and; *tataḥ* – following Vārisāra; *ca* – and; *aśokavardhanaḥ* – Aśokavardhana.

TRANSLATION

This brāhmaṇa will enthrone Candragupta, whose son will be named Vārisāra. The son of Vārisāra will be Aśokavardhana.

TEXT 1.13

*suyaśā bhavitā tasya
saṅgataḥ suyaśaḥ-sutaḥ
śāliśūkas tatas tasya
somaśarmā bhaviṣyati
śatadhanvā tatas tasya
bhavitā tad-brhadraṭhaḥ*

suyaśāḥ – Suyasā; *bhavitā* – will be born; *tasya* – of him (Aśokavardhana); *saṅgataḥ* – Saṅgata; *suyaśaḥ-sutaḥ* – the son of Suyasā; *śāliśūkaḥ* – Śāliśūka; *tataḥ* – next; *tasya* – of him (Śāliśūka); *somaśarmā* – Somaśarmā; *bhaviṣyati* – will be; *śatadhanvā* – Śatadhanvā; *tataḥ* – next; *tasya* – of him (Somaśarmā); *bhavitā* – will be; *tat* – of him (Śatadhanvā); *bṛhadrathaḥ* – Bṛhadratha.

TRANSLATION

Aśokavardhana will be followed by Suyasā, whose son will be Saṅgata. His son will be Śāliśūka, Śāliśūka's son will be Somaśarmā, and Somaśarmā's son will be Śatadhanvā. His son will be known as Bṛhadratha.

TEXT 1.14

mauryā hy ete daśa nṛpāḥ
sapta-trimśac-chatottaram
samā bhokṣyanti pṛthivīm
kalau kuru-kulodvaha

mauryāḥ – the Mauryas; *hi* – indeed; *ete* – these; *daśa* – ten; *nṛpāḥ* – kings; *sapta-trimśat* – thirty-seven; *śata* – one hundred; *uttaram* – more than; *samāḥ* – years; *bhokṣyanti* – they will rule; *pṛthivīm* – the earth; *kalau* – in Kali-yuga; *kuru-kula* – of the Kuru dynasty; *udvaha* – O most eminent hero.

TRANSLATION

O best of the Kurus, these ten Maurya kings will rule the earth for 137 years of the Kali-yuga.

PURPORT

Although nine kings are mentioned by name, Daśaratha appeared after Sujyeṣṭha, before the rule of Saṅgata, and thus there are ten Maurya kings.

TEXTS 1.15–17

agnimitras tatas tasmāt
sujyeṣṭho bhavitā tataḥ
vasumitro bhadraś ca
pulindo bhavitā sutāḥ

tato ghoṣaḥ sutas tasmād
vajramitro bhaviṣyati

*tato bhāgavatas tasmād
devabhūtiḥ kurūdvaha*

*śuṅgā daśaite bhokṣyanti
bhūmim varṣa-śatādhikam
tataḥ kāṇvān iyaṁ bhūmir
yāsyaty alpa-guṇān nṛpa*

agnimitraḥ – Agnimitra; *tataḥ* – from Puṣpamitra, the general who will murder Br̥hadratha; *tasmāt* – from him (Agnimitra); *sujoyeṣṭhaḥ* – Sujoyeṣṭha; *bhavitā* – will be; *tataḥ* – from him; *vasumitraḥ* – Vasumitra; *bhadraḥ* – Bhadraka; *ca* – and; *pulindaḥ* – Pulinda; *bhavitā* – will be; *sutaḥ* – the son; *tataḥ* – from him (Pulinda); *ghoṣaḥ* – Ghoṣa; *sutaḥ* – the son; *tasmāt* – from him; *vajramitraḥ* – Vajramitra; *bhaviṣyati* – will be; *tataḥ* – from him; *bhāgavataḥ* – Bhāgavata; *tasmāt* – from him; *devabhūtiḥ* – Devabhūti; *kuru-udvaha* – O most eminent of the Kurus; *śuṅgāḥ* – the Śuṅgas; *daśa* – ten; *ete* – these; *bhokṣyanti* – will enjoy; *bhūmim* – the earth; *varṣa* – years; *śata* – one hundred; *adhikam* – more than; *tataḥ* – then; *kāṇvān* – the Kāṇva dynasty; *iyam* – this; *bhūmiḥ* – the earth; *yāsyati* – will come under the domain; *alpa-guṇān* – of few good qualities; *nṛpa* – O King Parīkṣit.

TRANSLATION

My dear King Parīkṣit, Agnimitra will follow as king, and then Sujoyeṣṭha. Sujoyeṣṭha will be followed by Vasumitra, Bhadraka, and the son of Bhadraka, Pulinda. Then the son of Pulinda, named Ghoṣa, will rule, followed by Vajramitra, Bhāgavata and Devabhūti. In this way, O most eminent of the Kuru heroes, ten Śuṅga kings will rule over the earth for more than one hundred years. Then the earth will come under the subjugation of the kings of the Kāṇva dynasty, who will manifest very few good qualities.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the Śuṅga dynasty began when General Puṣpamitra killed his king, Br̥hadratha, and assumed power. After Puṣpamitra came Agnimitra and the rest of the Śuṅga dynasty, which lasted for 112 years.

TEXT 1.18

śuṅgaṁ hatvā devabhūtim

*kāṅvo 'mātyas tu kāminam
svayam kariṣyate rājyaṁ
vasudevo mahā-matiḥ*

śuṅgam – the Śuṅga king; *hatvā* – killing; *devabhūtim* – Devabhūti; *kāṅvaḥ* – the member of the Kāṅva family; *amātyaḥ* – his minister; *tu* – but; *kāminam* – lusty; *svayam* – himself; *kariṣyate* – will execute; *rājyaṁ* – the rulership; *vasudevaḥ* – named Vasudeva; *mahā-matiḥ* – very intelligent.

TRANSLATION

Vasudeva, an intelligent minister coming from the Kāṅva family, will kill the last of the Śuṅga kings, a lusty debauchee named Devabhūti, and assume rulership himself.

PURPORT

Apparently, because King Devabhūti was lusty after the wives of other men, his minister killed him, assuming leadership and thus beginning the Kāṅva dynasty.

TEXT 1.19

*tasya putras tu bhūmitras
tasya nārāyaṇaḥ sutaḥ
kāṅvāyanā ime bhūmiṁ
catvāriṁśac ca pañca ca
śatāni trīṇi bhokṣyanti
varṣāṇām ca kalau yuge*

tasya – of him (Vasudeva); *putraḥ* – the son; *tu* – and; *bhūmitraḥ* – Bhūmitra; *tasya* – his; *nārāyaṇaḥ* – Nārāyaṇa; *sutaḥ* – the son; *kāṅva-ayanāḥ* – kings of the Kāṅva dynasty; *ime* – these; *bhūmiṁ* – the earth; *catvāriṁśat* – forty; *ca* – and; *pañca* – five; *ca* – and; *śatāni* – hundreds; *trīṇi* – three; *bhokṣyanti* – they will rule; *varṣāṇām* – years; *ca* – and; *kalau yuge* – in the Kali-yuga.

TRANSLATION

The son of Vasudeva will be Bhūmitra, and his son will be Nārāyaṇa. These kings of the Kāṅva dynasty will rule the earth for 345 more years of the Kali-yuga.

TEXT 1.20

hatvā kāṅvaṁ suśarmāṇaṁ

*tad-bhr̥tyo vṛṣalo balī
gām bhokṣyaty andhra-jātīyaḥ
kañcit kālam asattamaḥ*

hatvā – killing; *kāṇvam* – the Kāṇva king; *suśarmāṇam* – named Suśarmā; *tad-bhr̥tyaḥ* – his own servant; *vṛṣalaḥ* – a low-class śūdra; *balī* – named Balī; *gām* – the earth; *bhokṣyati* – will rule; *andhra-jātīyaḥ* – of the Andhra race; *kañcit* – for some; *kālam* – time; *asattamaḥ* – most degraded.

TRANSLATION

The last of the Kāṇvas, Suśarmā, will be murdered by his own servant, Balī, a low-class śūdra of the Andhra race. This most degraded Mahārāja Balī will have control over the earth for some time.

PURPORT

Here is a further description of how uncultured men infiltrated government administration. The so-called king named Balī is described as *asattama*, a most impious, uncultured man.

TEXTS 1.21–26

*kṛṣṇa-nāmātha tad-bhr̥tā
bhavitā pṛthivī-patiḥ
śrī-śāntakarnaś tat-putraḥ
paurṇamāśas tu tat-sutaḥ
lambodaras tu tat-putras
tasmāc cibilako nṛpaḥ
meghasvātīś cibilakād
aṭamānas tu tasya ca
aniṣṭakarmā hāleyas
talakas tasya cātma-jaḥ
purīṣabhīrus tat-putras
tato rājā sunandanaḥ
cakoro bahavo yatra
śivasvātir arin-damaḥ
tasyāpi gomatī putraḥ
purīmān bhavitā tataḥ
medaśīrāḥ śivaskando*

*yajñaśrīs tat-sutas tataḥ
vijayas tat-suto bhāvyaś
candravijñāḥ sa-lomadhiḥ
ete trimśan nṛpatayaś
catvāry abda-śatāni ca
ṣaṭ-pañcāśac ca pṛthivīm
bhokṣyanti kuru-nandana*

kṛṣṇa-nāma – named Kṛṣṇa; *atha* – then; *tat* – of him (Balī); *bhrātā* – the brother; *bhavitā* – will become; *pṛthivī-patiḥ* – the master of the earth; *śrī-śāntakarnaḥ* – Śrī Śāntakarna; *tat* – of Kṛṣṇa; *putraḥ* – the son; *paurṇamāsaḥ* – Paurṇamāsa; *tu* – and; *tat-sutaḥ* – his son; *lambodaraḥ* – Lambodara; *tu* – and; *tat-putraḥ* – his son; *tasmāt* – from him (Lambodara); *cibilakaḥ* – Cibilaka; *nṛpaḥ* – the king; *meghasvātīḥ* – Meghasvāti; *cibilakāt* – from Cibilaka; *aṭamānaḥ* – Aṭamāna; *tu* – and; *tasya* – of him (Meghasvāti); *ca* – and; *aniṣṭakarmā* – Aniṣṭakarmā; *hāleyaḥ* – Hāleya; *talakaḥ* – Talaka; *tasya* – of him (Hāleya); *ca* – and; *ātma-jah* – the son; *purīṣabhīruḥ* – Purīṣabhīru; *tat* – of Talaka; *putraḥ* – the son; *tataḥ* – then; *rājā* – the king; *sunandanaḥ* – Sunandana; *cakoraḥ* – Cakora; *bahavaḥ* – the Bahus; *yatra* – among whom; *śivasvātīḥ* – Śivasvāti; *arimdamaḥ* – the subduer of enemies; *tasya* – of him; *apī* – also; *gomatī* – Gomatī; *putraḥ* – the son; *purīmān* – Purīmān; *bhavitā* – will be; *tataḥ* – from him (Gomatī); *medaśirāḥ* – Medaśirā; *śivaskandaḥ* – Śivaskanda; *yajñaśrīḥ* – Yajñaśrī; *tat* – of Śivaskanda; *sutaḥ* – the son; *tataḥ* – then; *vijayaḥ* – Vijaya; *tat-sutaḥ* – his son; *bhāvyaḥ* – will be; *candravijñāḥ* – Candravijñā; *sa-lomadhiḥ* – along with Lomadhi; *ete* – these; *trimśat* – thirty; *nṛ-patayaḥ* – kings; *catvāri* – four; *abda-śatāni* – centuries; *ca* – and; *ṣaṭ-pañcāśat* – fifty-six; *ca* – and; *pṛthivīm* – the world; *bhokṣyanti* – will rule; *kuru-nandana* – O favorite son of the Kurus.

TRANSLATION

The brother of Balī, named Kṛṣṇa, will become the next ruler of the earth. His son will be Śāntakarna, and his son will be Paurṇamāsa. The son of Paurṇamāsa will be Lambodara, who will father Mahārāja Cibilaka. From Cibilaka will come Meghasvāti, whose son will be Aṭamāna. The son of Aṭamāna will be Aniṣṭakarmā. His son will be Hāleya, and his son will be Talaka. The son of Talaka will be Purīṣabhīru, and following him Sunandana will become king. Sunandana will be followed by

Cakora and the eight Bahus, among whom Śivasvāti will be a great subduer of enemies. The son of Śivasvāti will be Gomatī. His son will be Purīmān, whose son will be Medaśīrā. His son will be Śivaskanda, and his son will be Yajñaśrī. The son of Yajñaśrī will be Vijaya, who will have two sons, Candravijña and Lomadhi. These thirty kings will enjoy sovereignty over the earth for a total of 456 years, O favorite son of the Kurus.

TEXT 1.27

*saptābhīrā āvabhṛtyā
daśa gardabhino nṛpāḥ
kaṅkāḥ ṣoḍaśa bhū-pālā
bhaviṣyanti ati-lolupāḥ*

sapta – seven; *ābhīrāḥ* – Ābhīras; *āvabhṛtyāḥ* – of the city of Avabhṛti; *daśa* – ten; *gardabhinaḥ* – Gardabhīs; *nṛpāḥ* – kings; *kaṅkāḥ* – Kaṅkas; *ṣoḍaśa* – sixteen; *bhū-pālāḥ* – rulers of the earth; *bhaviṣyanti* – will be; *ati-lolupāḥ* – very greedy.

TRANSLATION

Then will follow seven kings of the Ābhīra race from the city of Avabhṛti, and then ten Gardabhīs. After them, sixteen kings of the Kaṅkas will rule and will be known for their excessive greed.

TEXT 1.28

*tato 'ṣṭau yavanā bhāvyāś
caturdaśa turuṣkakāḥ
bhūyo daśa guruṇḍāś ca
maulā ekādaśaiva tu*

tataḥ – then; *aṣṭau* – eight; *yavanāḥ* – Yavanas; *bhāvyāḥ* – will be; *catuḥ-daśa* – fourteen; *turuṣkakāḥ* – Turuṣkas; *bhūyaḥ* – furthermore; *daśa* – ten; *guruṇḍāḥ* – Guruṇḍas; *ca* – and; *maulāḥ* – Maulas; *ekādaśa* – eleven; *eva* – indeed; *tu* – and.

TRANSLATION

Eight Yavanas will then take power, followed by fourteen Turuṣkas, ten Guruṇḍas and eleven kings of the Maula dynasty.

TEXTS 1.29–31

*ete bhokṣyanti pṛthivīm
daśa varṣa-śatāni ca*

*navādhikām ca navatim
maulā ekādaśa kṣitim*

*bhokṣyanty abda-śatāny aṅga
trīṇi taiḥ samsthite tataḥ
kilakilāyām nṛpatayo
bhūtanando 'tha vaṅgiriḥ*

*śiśunandīś ca tad-bhrātā
yaśonandiḥ pravīrakaḥ
ity ete vai varṣa-śatam
bhaviṣyanty adhikāni ṣaṭ*

ete – these; *bhokṣyanti* – will rule; *pṛthivīm* – the earth; *daśa* – ten; *varṣa-śatāni* – centuries; *ca* – and; *nava-adhikām* – plus nine; *ca* – and; *navatim* – ninety; *maulāḥ* – the Maulas; *ekādaśa* – eleven; *kṣitim* – the world; *bhokṣyanti* – will rule; *abda-śatāni* – centuries; *aṅga* – my dear Parīkṣit; *trīṇi* – three; *taiḥ* – they; *samsthite* – when they are all dead; *tataḥ* – then; *kilakilāyām* – in the city Kilakilā; *nṛ-patayaḥ* – kings; *bhūtanandaḥ* – Bhūtananda; *atha* – and then; *vaṅgiriḥ* – Vaṅgiri; *śiśunandiḥ* – Śiśunandi; *ca* – and; *tat* – his; *bhrātā* – brother; *yaśonandiḥ* – Yaśonandi; *pravīrakaḥ* – Pravīraka; *iti* – thus; *ete* – these; *vai* – indeed; *varṣa-śatam* – one hundred years; *bhaviṣyanti* – will be; *adhikāni* – plus; *ṣaṭ* – six.

TRANSLATION

These Ābhīras, Gardabhis and Kaṅkas will enjoy the earth for 1,099 years, and the Maulas will rule for 300 years. When all of them have died off there will appear in the city of Kilakilā a dynasty of kings consisting of Bhūtananda, Vaṅgiri, Śiśunandi, Śiśunandi's brother Yaśonandi, and Pravīraka. These kings of Kilakilā will hold sway for a total of 106 years.

TEXTS 1.32–33

*teṣāṃ trayodaśa sutā
bhavitāraś ca bāhlikāḥ
puṣpamitro 'tha rājanyo
durmitro 'sya tathaiva ca*

*eka-kālā ime bhū-pāḥ
saptāndhrāḥ sapta kauśalāḥ
vidūra-patayo bhāvya*

niṣadhās tata eva hi

teṣām – of them (Bhūtananda and the other kings of the Kilakilā dynasty); *trayodaśa* – thirteen; *sutāḥ* – sons; *bhavitāraḥ* – will be; *ca* – and; *bāhlikāḥ* – called the Bāhlikas; *puṣpamitraḥ* – Puṣpamitra; *atha* – then; *rājanyaḥ* – the king; *durmitraḥ* – Durmitra; *asya* – his (son); *tathā* – also; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – and; *eka-kālāḥ* – ruling at the same time; *ime* – these; *bhū-pāḥ* – kings; *sapta* – seven; *andhrāḥ* – Andhras; *sapta* – seven; *kauśalāḥ* – kings of Kauśala-deśa; *vidūra-patayaḥ* – rulers of Vidūra; *bhāvyaḥ* – will be; *niṣadhāḥ* – Niṣadhas; *tataḥ* – then (after the Bāhlikas); *eva hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

The Kilakilās will be followed by their thirteen sons, the Bāhlikas, and after them King Puṣpamitra, his son Durmitra, seven Andhras, seven Kauśalas and also kings of the Vidūra and Niṣadha provinces will separately rule in different parts of the world.

TEXT 1.34

*māgadhānām tu bhavitā
viśvasphūrjīḥ purañjayaḥ
kariṣyaty aparō varṇān
pulinda-yadu-madrakān*

māgadhānām – of the Magadha province; *tu* – and; *bhavitā* – there will be; *viśvasphūrjīḥ* – Viśvasphūrji; *purañjayaḥ* – King Purañjaya; *kariṣyati* – he will make; *aparaḥ* – being the replica of; *varṇān* – all the civilized classes of men; *pulinda-yadu-madrakān* – into outcastes such as the Pulindas, Yadus and Madrakas.

TRANSLATION

There will then appear a king of the Māgadhas named Viśvasphūrji, who will be like another Purañjaya. He will turn all the civilized classes into low-class, uncivilized men in the same category as the Pulindas, Yadus and Madrakas.

TEXT 1.35

*prajāś cābrahma-bhūyiṣṭhāḥ
sthāpayiṣyati durmatīḥ
vīryavān kṣatram utsādya*

*padmavatyām sa vai puri
anu-gaṅgam ā-prayāgam
guptām bhokṣyati medinīm*

prajāḥ – the citizens; *ca* – and; *abrahma* – unbrahminical; *bhūyiṣṭhāḥ* – predominantly; *sthāpayiṣyati* – he will make; *durmatīḥ* – the unintelligent (Viśvasphūrji); *vīrya-vān* – powerful; *kṣatram* – the *kṣatriya* class; *utsādyā* – destroying; *padmavatyām* – in Padmavatī; *saḥ* – he; *vai* – indeed; *puri* – in the city; *anu-gaṅgam* – from Gaṅgādvārā (Hardwar); *ā-prayāgam* – to Prayāga; *guptām* – protected; *bhokṣyati* – he will rule; *medinīm* – the earth.

TRANSLATION

Foolish King Viśvasphūrji will maintain all the citizens in ungodliness and will use his power to completely disrupt the kṣatriya order. From his capital of Padmavatī he will rule that part of the earth extending from the source of the Gaṅgā to Prayāga.

TEXT 1.36

*saurāṣṭrāvanty-ābhīrāś ca
śūrā arbuda-mālavāḥ
vrātyā dvijā bhaviṣyanti
śūdra-prāyā janādhipāḥ*

śaurāṣṭra – residing in Śaurāṣṭra; *avantī* – in Avantī; *ābhīrāḥ* – and in Ābhīra; *ca* – and; *śūrāḥ* – residing in the Śūra province; *arbuda-mālavāḥ* – residing in Arbuda and Mālava; *vrātyāḥ* – deviated from all purificatory rituals; *dvijāḥ* – the *brāhmaṇas*; *bhaviṣyanti* – will become; *śūdra-prāyāḥ* – no better than *śūdras*; *jana-adhipāḥ* – the kings.

TRANSLATION

At that time the brāhmaṇas of such provinces as Śaurāṣṭra, Avantī, Ābhīra, Śūra, Arbuda and Mālava will forget all their regulative principles, and the members of the royal order in these places will become no better than śūdras.

TEXT 1.37

*sindhos taṭam candrabhāgām
kauntīm kāśmīra-maṇḍalam
bhokṣyanti śūdrā vrātyādyā*

mlecchāś cābrahma-varcasah

sindhoh – of the river Sindhu; *taṭam* – the land on the shore; *candrabhāgām* – Candrabhāgā; *kauntīm* – Kauntī; *kāśmīra-maṇḍalam* – the region of Kāśmīra; *bhokṣyanti* – will rule; *śūdrāḥ* – śūdras; *vrātya-ādyāḥ* – brāhmaṇas who have fallen from the brahminical standard, and other disqualified men; *mlecchāḥ* – meat-eaters; *ca* – and; *abrahma-varcasah* – lacking spiritual potency.

TRANSLATION

The land along the Sindhu River, as well as the districts of Candrabhāgā, Kauntī and Kāśmīra, will be ruled by śūdras, fallen brāhmaṇas and meat-eaters. Having given up the path of Vedic civilization, they will have lost all spiritual strength.

TEXT 1.38

tulya-kālā ime rājan
mleccha-prāyāś ca bhū-bhṛtaḥ
ete 'dharmānṛta-parāḥ
phalgu-dās tīvra-manyavaḥ

tulya-kālāḥ – ruling at the same time; *ime* – these; *rājan* – O King Parīkṣit; *mleccha-prāyāḥ* – mostly outcastes; *ca* – and; *bhū-bhṛtaḥ* – kings; *ete* – these; *adharmā* – to irreligion; *anṛta* – and untruthfulness; *parāḥ* – dedicated; *phalgu-dāḥ* – giving little benefit to their subjects; *tīvra* – fierce; *manyavaḥ* – their anger.

TRANSLATION

There will be many such uncivilized kings ruling at the same time, O King Parīkṣit, and they will all be uncharitable, possessed of fierce tempers, and great devotees of irreligion and falsity.

TEXTS 1.39–40

strī-bāla-go-dvija-ghnās ca
para-dāra-dhanādṛtāḥ
uditāsta-mita-prāyā
alpa-sattvālpakāyusaḥ
asaṁskṛtāḥ kriyā-hinā
rajasā tamasāvṛtāḥ
prajāś te bhakṣayiṣyanti

mlecchā rājanya-rūpiṇaḥ

strī – of women; *bāla* – children; *go* – cows; *dvija* – and *brāhmaṇas*; *ghnāḥ* – the murderers; *ca* – and; *para* – of other men; *dāra* – the wives; *dhana* – and money; *ādṛtāḥ* – showing interest in; *udita-astamita* – switching their moods from elated to depressed and then to moderate; *prāyāḥ* – for the most part; *alpa-sattva* – having little strength; *alpaka-āyusaḥ* – and short life spans; *asamskṛtāḥ* – not purified by Vedic rituals; *kriyā-hīnāḥ* – devoid of regulative principles; *rajasā* – by the mode of passion; *tamasā* – and by the mode of ignorance; *āvṛtāḥ* – covered over; *prajāḥ* – the citizens; *te* – they; *bhakṣayiṣyanti* – will virtually devour; *mlecchāḥ* – outcastes; *rājanya-rūpiṇaḥ* – appearing as kings.

TRANSLATION

These barbarians in the guise of kings will devour the citizenry, murdering innocent women, children, cows and brāhmaṇas and coveting the wives and property of other men. They will be erratic in their moods, have little strength of character and be very short-lived. Indeed, not purified by any Vedic rituals and lacking in the practice of regulative principles, they will be completely covered by the modes of passion and ignorance.

PURPORT

These verses give a concise, accurate description of the fallen leaders of this age.

TEXT 1.41

*tan-nāthās te janapadās
tac-chīlācāra-vādināḥ
anyonyato rājabhiś ca
kṣayam yāsyanti pīditāḥ*

tat-nāthāḥ – the subjects having these kings as rulers; *te* – they; *janapadāḥ* – the residents of the cities; *tat* – of these kings; *śīla* – (imitating) the character; *ācāra* – behavior; *vādināḥ* – and speech; *anyonyataḥ* – one another; *rājabhiḥ* – by the kings; *ca* – and; *kṣayam yāsyanti* – they will become ruined; *pīditāḥ* – tormented.

TRANSLATION

The citizens governed by these low-class kings will imitate the

character, behavior and speech of their rulers. Harassed by their leaders and by each other, they will all suffer ruination.

PURPORT

At the end of the Ninth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it is stated that Ripuñjaya, or Purañjaya, the first king mentioned in this chapter, ended his rule about one thousand years after the time of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Since Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared approximately five thousand years ago, Purañjaya must have appeared about four thousand years ago. That would mean that Viśvasphūrji, the last king mentioned, would have appeared approximately in the twelfth century of the Christian era.

Modern Western scholars have made the false accusation that Indian religious literature has no sense of chronological history. But the elaborate historical chronology described in this chapter certainly refutes that naive assessment.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, First Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Degraded Dynasties of Kali-yuga.”

CHAPTER TWO

**The Symptoms of Kali-
yuga**

This chapter relates that, when the bad qualities of the Age of Kali will increase to an intolerable level, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will descend as Kalki to destroy those who are fixed in irreligion. After that, a new Satya-yuga will begin.

As the Age of Kali progresses, all good qualities of men diminish and all impure qualities increase. Atheistic systems of so-called religion become predominant, replacing the codes of Vedic law. The kings become just like highway bandits, the people in general become dedicated to low occupations, and all the social classes become just like *sūdras*. All cows become like goats, all spiritual hermitages become like materialistic homes, and family ties extend no further than the immediate relationship of marriage.

When the Age of Kali has almost ended, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will incarnate. He will appear in the village Śambhala, in the home of the exalted *brāhmaṇa* Viṣṇuyaśā, and will take the name Kalki. He will mount His horse Devadatta and, taking His sword in hand, will roam about the earth killing millions of bandits in the guise of kings. Then the signs of the next Satya-yuga will begin to appear. When the moon, sun and the planet Brhaspati enter simultaneously into one constellation and conjoin in the lunar mansion Puṣyā, Satya-yuga will begin. In the order of Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali, the cycle of four ages rotates in the society of living entities in this universe.

The chapter ends with a brief description of the future dynasties of the sun and moon coming from Vaivasvata Manu in the next Satya-yuga. Even now two saintly *kṣatriyas* are living who at the end of this Kali-yuga will reinitiate the pious dynasties of the sun-god, Vivasvān, and the moon-god, Candra. One of these kings is Devāpi, a brother of Mahārāja Śantanu, and the other is Maru, a descendant of Ikṣvāku. They are biding their time incognito in a village named Kalāpa.

TEXT 2.1

śrī-śuka uvāca

*tataś cānu-dinaṁ dharmāḥ
satyaṁ śaucaṁ kṣamā dayā
kālena balinā rājan
naṅkṣyaty āyur balaṁ smṛtiḥ*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *tataḥ* – then; *ca* – and; *anudinam* – day after day; *dharmāḥ* – religion; *satyam* – truth; *śaucam* – cleanliness; *kṣamā* – tolerance; *dayā* – mercy; *kālena* – by the force of time; *balinā* – strong; *rājan* – O King Parīkṣit; *nanṅṣyati* – will become ruined; *āyuh* – duration of life; *balam* – strength; *smṛtiḥ* – memory.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Then, O King, religion, truthfulness, cleanliness, tolerance, mercy, duration of life, physical strength and memory will all diminish day by day because of the powerful influence of the Age of Kali.

PURPORT

During the present age, Kali-yuga, practically all desirable qualities will gradually diminish, as described in this verse. For example, *dharma*, which indicates a respect for higher authority that leads one to obey religious principles, will diminish.

In the Western world, theologians have been unable to scientifically present the laws of God or, indeed, God Himself, and thus in Western intellectual history a rigid dichotomy has arisen between theology and science. In an attempt to resolve this conflict, some theologians have agreed to modify their doctrines so that they conform not only to proven scientific facts but even to pseudoscientific speculations and hypotheses, which, though unproven, are hypocritically included within the realm of “science.” On the other hand, some fanatical theologians disregard the scientific method altogether and insist on the veracity of their antiquated, sectarian dogmas.

Thus bereft of systematic Vedic theology, material science has moved into the destructive realm of gross materialism, while speculative Western philosophy has drifted into the superficiality of relativistic ethics and inconclusive linguistic analysis. With so many of the best Western minds dedicated to materialistic analysis, naturally much of Western religious life, separated from the intellectual mainstream, is dominated by irrational fanaticism and unauthorized mystic and mystery cults. People have become so ignorant of the science of God that they often lump the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in with this odd assortment of fanciful attempts at theology and religion. Thus *dharma*, or true religion, which is strict and

conscious obedience to God's law, is diminishing.

Satyam, truthfulness, is also diminishing, simply because people do not know what the truth is. Without knowing the Absolute Truth, one cannot clearly understand the real significance or purpose of life merely by amassing huge quantities of relative or hypothetical truths.

Kṣamā, tolerance or forgiveness, is diminishing as well, because there is no practical method by which people can purify themselves and thus become free of envy. Unless one is purified by chanting the holy names of the Lord in an authorized program of spiritual improvement, the mind will be overwhelmed by anger, envy and all sorts of small-mindedness. Thus *dayā*, mercy, is also decreasing. All living beings are eternally connected by their common participation in the divine existence of God. When this existential oneness is obscured through atheism and agnosticism, people are not inclined to be merciful to one another; they cannot recognize their self-interest in promoting the welfare of other living beings. In fact, people are no longer even merciful to themselves: they systematically destroy themselves through liquor, drugs, tobacco, meat-eating, sexual promiscuity and whatever other cheap gratificatory processes are available to them.

Because of all these self-destructive practices and the powerful influence of time, the average life span (*āyur*) is decreasing. Modern scientists, seeking to gain credibility among the mass of people, often publish statistics supposedly showing that science has increased the average duration of life. But these statistics do not take into account the number of people killed through the cruel practice of abortion. When we figure aborted children into the life expectancy of the total population, we find that the average duration of life has not at all increased in the Age of Kali but is rather decreasing drastically.

Balam, bodily strength, is also decreasing. The Vedic literature states that five thousand years ago, in the previous age, human beings – and even animals and plants – were larger and stronger. With the progress of the Age of Kali, physical stature and strength will gradually diminish.

Certainly *smṛti*, memory, is weakening. In former ages human beings possessed superior memory, and they also did not encumber themselves with a terrible bureaucratic and technical society, as we have done. Thus essential information and abiding wisdom were

preserved without recourse to writing. Of course, in the Age of Kali things are dramatically different.

TEXT 2.2

*vittam eva kalau nṛṇām
janmācāra-guṇodayaḥ
dharma-nyāya-vyavasthāyām
kāraṇam balam eva hi*

vittam – wealth; *eva* – alone; *kalau* – in the Age of Kali; *nṛṇām* – among men; *janma* – of good birth; *ācāra* – good behavior; *guṇa* – and good qualities; *udayaḥ* – the cause of manifestation; *dharma* – of religious duty; *nyāya* – and reason; *vyavasthāyām* – in the establishment; *kāraṇam* – the cause; *balam* – strength; *eva* – only; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

In Kali-yuga, wealth alone will be considered the sign of a man's good birth, proper behavior and fine qualities. And law and justice will be applied only on the basis of one's power.

PURPORT

In the Age of Kali, a man is considered high class, middle class or low class merely according to his financial status, regardless of his knowledge, culture and behavior. In this age there are many great industrial and commercial cities with luxurious neighborhoods reserved for the wealthy. On beautiful tree-lined roads, within apparently aristocratic homes, it is not unusual to find many perverted, dishonest and sinful activities taking place. According to Vedic criteria, a man is considered high class if his behavior is enlightened, and his behavior is considered enlightened if his activities are dedicated to promoting the happiness of all creatures. Every living being is originally happy, because in all living bodies there is an eternal spiritual spark that partakes of the divine conscious nature of God. When our original spiritual awareness is revived, we become naturally blissful and satisfied in knowledge and peace. An enlightened, or educated, man should endeavor to revive his own spiritual understanding, and he should help others experience the same sublime consciousness.

The great Western philosopher Socrates stated that if a man is enlightened he will automatically act virtuously, and Śrīla

Prabhupāda confirmed this fact. But in the Kali-yuga this obvious truth is disregarded, and the search for knowledge and virtue has been replaced by a vicious, animalistic competition for money. Those who prevail become the “top dogs” of modern society, and their consumer power grants them a reputation as most respectable, aristocratic and well educated.

This verse also states that in the Age of Kali brute strength (*balam eva*) will determine law and “justice.” We should keep in mind that in the progressive, Vedic culture, there was no artificial dichotomy between the spiritual and the public realms. All civilized people took it for granted that God is everywhere and that His laws are binding upon all creatures. The Sanskrit word *dharma*, therefore, indicates one’s social, or public, obligation as well as one’s religious duty. Thus responsibly caring for one’s family is *dharma*, and engaging in the loving service of God is also *dharma*. This verse indicates, however, that in the Age of Kali the principle of “might makes right” will hold sway.

In the First Chapter of this canto we observed how this principle infiltrated India’s past. Similarly, as the Western world achieved political, economic and technological hegemony over Asian lands, bogus propaganda was disseminated to the effect that Indian, and in general all non-Western, religion, theology and philosophy are somehow primitive and unscientific – mere mythology and superstition. Fortunately this arrogant, irrational view is now dissipating, and people all over the world are beginning to appreciate the staggering wealth of spiritual philosophy and science available in the Sanskrit literature of India. In other words, many intelligent people no longer consider traditional Western religion or empirical science, which has virtually superseded religion as the official Western dogma, necessarily authoritative merely because the West has politically and economically subdued other geographic and ethnic configurations of humanity. Thus there is now hope that spiritual issues can be contested and resolved on a philosophical level and not merely by a crude test of arms.

Next this verse points out that the rule of law will be applied unequally to the powerful and the powerless. Already in many nations justice is available only to those who can pay and fight for it. In a civilized state, every man, woman and child must have equal and

rapid access to a fair system of laws. In modern times we sometimes refer to this as human rights. Certainly human rights are one of the more obvious casualties of the Age of Kali.

TEXT 2.3

*dāmpatyē ’bhiruciḥ hetuḥ
māyaiva vyāvahārike
strīṭve puṁstve ca hi ratir
vipratve sūtram eva hi*

dām-patyē – in the relationship of husband and wife; *abhiruciḥ* – superficial attraction; *hetuḥ* – the reason; *māyā* – deceit; *eva* – indeed; *vyāvahārike* – in business; *strīṭve* – in being a woman; *puṁstve* – in being a man; *ca* – and; *hi* – indeed; *ratir* – sex; *vipratve* – in being a *brāhmaṇa*; *sūtram* – the sacred thread; *eva* – only; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

Men and women will live together merely because of superficial attraction, and success in business will depend on deceit. Womanliness and manliness will be judged according to one’s expertise in sex, and a man will be known as a brāhmaṇa just by his wearing a thread.

PURPORT

Just as human life as a whole has a great and serious purpose – namely spiritual liberation – fundamental human institutions such as marriage and child-rearing should also be dedicated to that great objective. Unfortunately, in the present age the satisfaction of the sex impulse has become the overriding, if not the exclusive, reason for marriage.

The sexual impulse, which induces the male and female of almost every species to combine physically, and in higher species also emotionally, is ultimately not a natural urge, because it is based on the unnatural identification of the self with the body. Life itself is a spiritual phenomenon. It is the soul that lives and gives apparent life to the biological machine called the body. Consciousness is the soul’s manifest energy, and thus consciousness, awareness itself, is originally an entirely spiritual event. When life, or consciousness, is confined within a biological machine and falsely mistakes itself to be that machine, material existence occurs and sex desire arises.

God intends human life to be an opportunity for us to rectify this illusory mode of existence and return to the vast satisfaction of pure, godly existence. But because our identification with the material body is a long historical affair, it is difficult for most people to immediately break free from the demands of the materially molded mind. Therefore the Vedic scriptures prescribe sacred marriage, in which a so-called man and a so-called woman may combine in a regulated, spiritual marriage sheltered by overarching religious injunctions. In this way the candidate for self-realization who has selected family life can derive adequate satisfaction for his senses and simultaneously please the Lord within his heart by obeying religious injunctions. The Lord then purifies him of material desire.

In Kali-yuga this deep understanding has been almost lost, and, as stated in this verse, men and women combine like animals, solely on the basis of mutual attraction to bodies made of flesh, bone, membrane, blood and so on. In other words, in our modern, godless society the weak, superficial intelligence of humanity rarely penetrates beyond the gross physical covering of the eternal soul, and thus family life has in most cases lost its highest purpose and value.

A corollary point established in this verse is that in the Age of Kali a woman is considered “a good woman” if she is sexually attractive and, indeed, sexually efficient. Similarly, a sexually attractive man is “a good man.” The best example of this superficiality is the incredible attention twentieth-century people give to materialistic movie stars, music stars and other prominent figures in the entertainment industry. In fact, pursuing sexual experiences with various types of bodies is similar to drinking old wine from new bottles. But few people in the Kali-yuga can understand this.

Finally, this verse states that in the Age of Kali a man will become known as a priest, or *brāhmaṇa*, merely by wearing ceremonial dress. In India, *brāhmaṇas* wear a sacred thread, and in other parts of world members of the priestly class have other ornaments and symbols. But in the Age of Kali the symbols alone will suffice to establish a person as a religious leader, despite his ignorance of God.

TEXT 2.4

*liṅgam evāśrama-khyātāv
anyonyāpatti-kāraṇam*

*avr̥t̥tyā nyāya-daurbalyam
pāṇḍitye cāpalam vacaḥ*

liṅgam – the external symbol; *eva* – merely; *āśrama-khyātau* – in knowing a person’s spiritual order; *anyonya* – mutual; *āpatti* – of exchange; *kāraṇam* – the cause; *avr̥t̥tyā* – by lack of livelihood; *nyāya* – in credibility; *daurbalyam* – the weakness; *pāṇḍitye* – in scholarship; *cāpalam* – tricky; *vacaḥ* – words.

TRANSLATION

A person’s spiritual position will be ascertained merely according to external symbols, and on that same basis people will change from one spiritual order to the next. A person’s propriety will be seriously questioned if he does not earn a good living. And one who is very clever at juggling words will be considered a learned scholar.

PURPORT

The previous verse stated that in the Age of Kali the priestly class will be recognized by external symbols alone, and this verse extends the same principle to the other orders of society, namely the political or military class, the business or productive class, and finally the laborer or artisan class.

Modern sociologists have demonstrated that in those societies chiefly governed by the Protestant ethic, poverty is considered a sign of indolence, dirtiness, stupidity, immorality and worthlessness. In a God-conscious society, however, many persons voluntarily decide to dedicate their lives not to material acquisition but rather to the pursuit of knowledge and spirituality. Thus a preference for the simple and the austere may indicate intelligence, self-control and sensitivity to the higher purpose of life. Of course, in itself poverty does not establish these virtues, but it may sometimes be the result of them. In the Kali-yuga, however, this possibility is often forgotten.

Intellectuality is another casualty of the bewildering Age of Kali. Modern so-called philosophers and scientists have created a technical, esoteric terminology for each branch of learning, and when they give lectures people consider them learned simply because of their ability to speak that which no one else can understand. In Western culture, the Greek Sophists were among the first to systematically argue for rhetoric and “efficiency” above wisdom and purity, and sophistry

certainly flourishes in the twentieth century. Modern universities have very little wisdom, though they do possess a virtual infinity of technical data. Although many modern thinkers are fundamentally ignorant of the higher, spiritual reality, they are, so to speak, “good talkers,” and most people simply don’t notice their ignorance.

TEXT 2.5

*anādhyataivāsādhutve
sādhutve dambha eva tu
svikāra eva codvāhe
snānam eva prasādhanam*

anādhyatā – poverty; *eva* – simply; *asādhutve* – in one’s being unholy; *sādhutve* – in virtue, or success; *dambhaḥ* – hypocrisy; *eva* – alone; *tu* – and; *svī-kāraḥ* – verbal acceptance; *eva* – alone; *ca* – and; *udvāhe* – in marriage; *snānam* – bathing with water; *eva* – alone; *prasādhanam* – cleaning and decorating of the body.

TRANSLATION

A person will be judged unholy if he does not have money, and hypocrisy will be accepted as virtue. Marriage will be arranged simply by verbal agreement, and a person will think he is fit to appear in public if he has merely taken a bath.

PURPORT

The word *dambha* indicates a self-righteous hypocrite – someone not so much concerned with *being* saintly as with *appearing* saintly. In the Age of Kali there is a rather large number of self-righteous, hypocritical religious fanatics claiming to have the only way, the only truth and the only light. In many Muslim countries this mentality has resulted in brutal repression of religious freedom and thus destroyed the opportunity for enlightened spiritual dialectic. Fortunately, in much of the Western world there is a system of free religious expression. Even in the West, however, self-righteous hypocrites consider sincere and saintly followers of other disciplines to be heathens and devils.

Western religious fanatics are usually addicted to many bad habits, such as smoking, drinking, sex, gambling and animal slaughter. Although the followers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement strictly avoid illicit sex, intoxication, gambling and animal

killing, and although they dedicate their lives to the constant glorification of God, self-righteous hypocrites claim that such strict austerity and devotion to God are “tricks of the devil.” Thus the sinful are promoted as religious, and the saintly are decried as demonic. This pathetic incapacity to grasp the most rudimentary criteria of spirituality is a prominent symptom of Kali-yuga.

In this age, the institution of marriage will degenerate. Indeed, already a marriage certificate is sometimes cynically rejected as “a mere piece of paper.” Forgetting the spiritual purpose of marriage and misunderstanding sex to be the goal of family life, lusty men and women directly engage in sexual affairs without the troublesome formalities and responsibilities of a legal relationship. Such foolish people argue that “sex is natural.” But if sex is natural, pregnancy and childbirth are equally natural. And for the child it is certainly natural to be raised by a loving father and mother and in fact to have the same father and mother throughout his life. Psychological studies confirm that a child needs to be cared for by both his father and his mother, and thus it is obviously natural for sex to be accompanied by a permanent marriage arrangement. Hypocritical people justify unrestricted sex by saying “it is natural,” but to avoid the natural consequence of sex – pregnancy – they use contraceptives, which certainly do not grow on trees. Indeed, contraceptives are not at all natural. Thus hypocrisy and foolishness abound in the Age of Kali.

The verse concludes by saying that people will neglect to ornament their bodies properly in the present age. A human being should decorate his body with various religious ornaments. Vaiṣṇavas mark their bodies with *tilaka* blessed with the holy name of God. But in the Age of Kali, religious and even material formalities are thoughtlessly discarded.

TEXT 2.6

*dūre vāry-ayanam tīrtham
lāvaṇyam keśa-dhāraṇam
udaram-bharatā svārthaḥ
satyatve dhārṣṭyam eva hi
dākṣyam kuṭumba-bharaṇam
yaśo 'rthe dharma-sevanam*

dūre – situated far away; *vāri* – of water; *ayanam* – a reservoir; *tīrtham* – holy place; *lāvaṇyam* – beauty; *keśa* – hair; *dhāraṇam* – carrying;

udaram-bharatā – filling the belly; *sva-arthaḥ* – the goal of life; *satyatve* – in so-called truth; *dhārṣṭyam* – audacity; *eva* – simply; *hi* – indeed; *dākṣyam* – expertise; *kuṭumba-bharaṇam* – maintaining a family; *yaśaḥ* – fame; *arthe* – for the sake of; *dharma-sevanam* – observance of religious principles.

TRANSLATION

A sacred place will be taken to consist of no more than a reservoir of water located at a distance, and beauty will be thought to depend on one's hairstyle. Filling the belly will become the goal of life, and one who is audacious will be accepted as truthful. He who can maintain a family will be regarded as an expert man, and the principles of religion will be observed only for the sake of reputation.

PURPORT

In India there are many sacred places through which holy rivers flow. Foolish persons eagerly seek redemption from their sins by bathing in these rivers but do not take instruction from learned devotees of the Lord who reside in such places. One should go to a holy place seeking spiritual enlightenment and not just for ritualistic bathing.

In this age, people tirelessly arrange their hair in different styles, trying to enhance their facial beauty and sexuality. They do not know that actual beauty comes from within the heart, from the soul, and that only a person who is pure is truly attractive. As the difficulties of this age increase, filling one's belly will be the mark of success, and one who can maintain his own family will be considered brilliant in economic affairs. Religion will be practiced, if at all, only for the sake of reputation and without any essential understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 2.7

*evam prajābhir duṣṭābhir
ākīrṇe kṣiti-maṇḍale
brahma-ṣiṭ-kṣatra-śūdrāṇām
yo balī bhavitā nṛpaḥ*

evam – in this way; *prajābhiḥ* – with populace; *duṣṭābhiḥ* – corrupted; *ākīrṇe* – being crowded; *kṣiti-maṇḍale* – the earth globe; *brahma* – among the *brāhmaṇas*; *ṣiṭ* – *vaiśyas*; *kṣatra* – *kṣatriyas*; *śūdrāṇām* – and

śūdras; yaḥ – whoever; *balī* – the strongest; *bhavitā* – he will become; *nṛpaḥ* – the king.

TRANSLATION

As the earth thus becomes crowded with a corrupt population, whoever among any of the social classes shows himself to be the strongest will gain political power.

TEXT 2.8

*prajā hi lubdhai rājanyair
nirghṛṇair dasyu-dharmabhiḥ
ācchinna-dāra-draviṇā
yāsyanti giri-kānanam*

prajāḥ – the citizens; *hi* – indeed; *lubdhaiḥ* – avaricious; *rājanyaiḥ* – by the royal order; *nirghṛṇaiḥ* – merciless; *dasyu* – of ordinary thieves; *dharmabhiḥ* – acting according to the nature; *ācchinna* – taken away; *dāra* – their wives; *draviṇāḥ* – and property; *yāsyanti* – they will go; *giri* – to the mountains; *kānanam* – and forests.

TRANSLATION

Losing their wives and properties to such avaricious and merciless rulers, who will behave no better than ordinary thieves, the citizens will flee to the mountains and forests.

TEXT 2.9

*śāka-mūlāmiṣa-kṣaudra-
phala-puṣpāṣṭi-bhojanāḥ
anāvṛṣṭyā vinaṅśyanti
durbhikṣa-kara-pīditāḥ*

śāka – leaves; *mūla* – roots; *āmiṣa* – meat; *kṣaudra* – wild honey; *phala* – fruits; *puṣpa* – flowers; *āṣṭi* – and seeds; *bhojanāḥ* – eating; *anāvṛṣṭyā* – because of drought; *vinaṅśyanti* – they will become ruined; *durbhikṣa* – by famine; *kara* – and taxation; *pīditāḥ* – tormented.

TRANSLATION

Harassed by famine and excessive taxes, people will resort to eating leaves, roots, flesh, wild honey, fruits, flowers and seeds. Struck by drought, they will become completely ruined.

PURPORT

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam authoritatively describes the future of our planet. Just as a leaf disconnected from a plant or tree dries up, withers and disintegrates, when human society is disconnected from the Supreme Lord it withers up and disintegrates in violence and chaos. Despite our computers and rockets, if the Supreme Lord does not send rain we shall all starve.

TEXT 2.10

*śīta-vātātapa-prāvṛḍ-
himair anyonyataḥ prajāḥ
kṣut-trḍbhyām vyādhībhiś caiva
santapsyante ca cintayā*

śīta – by cold; *vāta* – wind; *ātapa* – the heat of the sun; *prāvṛt* – torrential rain; *himaiḥ* – and snow; *anyonyataḥ* – by quarrel; *prajāḥ* – the citizens; *kṣut* – by hunger; *trḍbhyām* – and thirst; *vyādhībhiḥ* – by diseases; *ca* – also; *eva* – indeed; *santapsyante* – they will suffer great distress; *ca* – and; *cintayā* – by anxiety.

TRANSLATION

The citizens will suffer greatly from cold, wind, heat, rain and snow. They will be further tormented by quarrels, hunger, thirst, disease and severe anxiety.

TEXT 2.11

*trimśad vimśati varṣāṇi
paramāyuhḥ kalau nṛṇām*

trimśat – thirty; *vimśati* – plus twenty; *varṣāṇi* – years; *parama-āyuh* – the maximum duration of life; *kalau* – in Kali-yuga; *nṛṇām* – of men.

TRANSLATION

The maximum duration of life for human beings in Kali-yuga will become fifty years.

TEXTS 2.12–16

*kṣiyamāṇeṣu deheṣu
dehinām kali-doṣataḥ
varṇāśramavatām dharme
naṣṭe veda-pathe nṛṇām
pāṣaṇḍa-pracure dharme*

dasyu-prāyeṣu rājasu
cauryānṛta-vṛthā-himsā-
nānā-vṛttiṣu vai nṛṣu
śūdra-prāyeṣu varṇeṣu
cchāga-prāyāsu dhenuṣu
grha-prāyeṣv āśrameṣu
yauna-prāyeṣu bandhuṣu
aṇu-prāyāsv oṣadhīṣu
śamī-prāyeṣu sthāsnuṣu
vidyut-prāyeṣu megheṣu
śūnya-prāyeṣu sadmasu
ittham kalau gata-prāye
janeṣu khara-dharmiṣu
dharma-trāṇāya sattvena
bhagavān avatariṣyati

kṣīyamāneṣu – having become smaller; *deheṣu* – the bodies; *dehinām* – of all living entities; *kali-doṣataḥ* – by the contamination of the Age of Kali; *varṇa-āśrama-vatām* – of the members of *varṇāśrama* society; *dharme* – when their religious principles; *naṣṭe* – have been destroyed; *veda-pathe* – the path of the *Vedas*; *nṛṇām* – for all men; *pāṣaṇḍa-pracure* – mostly atheism; *dharme* – religion; *dasyu-prāyeṣu* – mostly thieves; *rājasu* – the kings; *caurya* – banditry; *anṛta* – lying; *vṛthā-himsā* – useless slaughter; *nānā* – various; *vṛttiṣu* – their occupations; *vai* – indeed; *nṛṣu* – when men; *śūdra-prāyeṣu* – mostly low-class *śūdras*; *varṇeṣu* – the so-called social orders; *chāga-prāyāsu* – no better than goats; *dhenuṣu* – the cows; *grha-prāyeṣu* – just like materialistic homes; *āśrameṣu* – the spiritual hermitages; *yauna-prāyeṣu* – extending no further than marriage; *bandhuṣu* – family ties; *aṇu-prāyāsu* – mostly very small; *oṣadhīṣu* – plants and herbs; *śamī-prāyeṣu* – just like *śamī* trees; *sthāsnuṣu* – all the trees; *vidyut-prāyeṣu* – always manifesting lightning; *megheṣu* – the clouds; *śūnya-prāyeṣu* – devoid of religious life; *sadmasu* – the homes; *ittham* – thus; *kalau* – when the Age of Kali; *gata-prāye* – is almost finished; *janeṣu* – the people; *khara-dharmiṣu* – when they have assumed the characteristics of asses; *dharma-trāṇāya* – for the deliverance of religion; *sattvena* – in the pure mode of goodness; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *avatariṣyati* – will descend.

TRANSLATION

By the time the Age of Kali ends, the bodies of all creatures will be greatly reduced in size, and the religious principles of followers of varṇāśrama will be ruined. The path of the Vedas will be completely forgotten in human society, and so-called religion will be mostly atheistic. The kings will mostly be thieves, the occupations of men will be stealing, lying and needless violence, and all the social classes will be reduced to the lowest level of śūdras. Cows will be like goats, spiritual hermitages will be no different from mundane houses, and family ties will extend no further than the immediate bonds of marriage. Most plants and herbs will be tiny, and all trees will appear like dwarf śamī trees. Clouds will be full of lightning, homes will be devoid of piety, and all human beings will have become like asses. At that time, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will appear on the earth. Acting with the power of pure spiritual goodness, He will rescue eternal religion.

PURPORT

Significantly, these verses point out that most so-called religions in this age will be atheistic (*pāsaṇḍa-pracure dharme*). In confirmation of the *Bhāgavatam*'s prediction, the United States Supreme Court has recently ruled that to be considered a religion a system of belief need not recognize a supreme being. Also, many atheistic, voidistic belief systems, often imported from the Orient, have attracted the attention of modern atheistic scientists, who expound on the similarities between Eastern and Western voidism in fashionable, esoteric books.

These verses vividly describe many unsavory symptoms of the Age of Kali. Ultimately, at the end of this age, Lord Kṛṣṇa will descend as Kalki and remove the thoroughly demonic persons from the face of the earth.

TEXT 2.17

*carācara-guror viṣṇor
īśvarasyākhilātmanah
dharma-trāṇāya sādḥūnām
janma karmāpanuttaye*

cara-acara – of all moving and nonmoving living beings; *guroḥ* – of the spiritual master; *viṣṇoḥ* – the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu; *īśvarasya* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *akhila* – of all; *ātmanah* – of the

Supreme Soul; *dharma-trāṇāya* – for the protection of religion; *sādhūnām* – of saintly men; *janma* – the birth; *karma* – of their fruitive activities; *apanuttaye* – for the cessation.

TRANSLATION

Lord Viṣṇu – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the spiritual master of all moving and nonmoving living beings, and the Supreme Soul of all – takes birth to protect the principles of religion and to relieve His saintly devotees from the reactions of material work.

TEXT 2.18

*śambhala-grāma-mukhyasya
brāhmaṇasya mahātmanaḥ
bhavane viṣṇuyaśasaḥ
kalkiḥ prādurbhaviṣyati*

śambhala-grāma – in the village Śambhala; *mukhyasya* – of the chief citizen; *brāhmaṇasya* – of the *brāhmaṇa*; *mahā-ātmanaḥ* – the great soul; *bhavane* – in the home; *viṣṇuyaśasaḥ* – of Viṣṇuyaśā; *kalkiḥ* – Lord Kalki; *prādurbhaviṣyati* – will appear.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kalki will appear in the home of the most eminent *brāhmaṇa* of Śambhala village, the great soul Viṣṇuyaśā.

TEXTS 2.19–20

*aśvam āśu-gam āruhya
devadattam jagat-patiḥ
asināsādhu-damanam
aṣṭaiśvarya-guṇānvitaḥ
vicarann āsunā kṣaunṣyām
hayenāpratima-dyutiḥ
nrpa-liṅga-cchado dasyūn
koṭīśo nihaniṣyati*

aśvam – His horse; *āśu-gam* – swift-traveling; *āruhya* – mounting; *devadattam* – named Devadatta; *jagat-patiḥ* – the Lord of the universe; *asinā* – with His sword; *asādhu-damanam* – (the horse who) subdues the unholy; *aṣṭa* – with eight; *aiśvarya* – mystic opulences; *guṇa* – and transcendental qualities of the Personality of Godhead; *anvitaḥ* –

endowed; *vicaran* – traveling about; *āśunā* – swift; *kṣaunṣyām* – upon the earth; *hayena* – by His horse; *apratima* – unrivaled; *dyutiḥ* – whose effulgence; *nṛpa-liṅga* – with the dress of kings; *chadaḥ* – disguising themselves; *dasyūn* – thieves; *koṭīśaḥ* – by the millions; *nihanīṣyati* – He will slaughter.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kalki, the Lord of the universe, will mount His swift horse Devadatta and, sword in hand, travel over the earth exhibiting His eight mystic opulences and eight special qualities of Godhead. Displaying His unequalled effulgence and riding with great speed, He will kill by the millions those thieves who have dared dress as kings.

PURPORT

These verses describe the thrilling pastimes of Lord Kalki. Anyone would be attracted by the sight of a powerful, beautiful man riding on a wonderful horse at lightning speed, chastising and devastating cruel, demonic people with the sword in His hand.

Of course, fanatical materialists may argue that this picture of Lord Kalki is a mere anthropomorphic creation of the human mind – a mythological deity created by people who need to believe in some superior being. But this argument is not logical, nor does it prove anything. It is merely the opinion of certain people. We need water, but that does not mean man creates water. We also need food, oxygen and many other things that we do not create. Since our general experience is that our needs correspond to available objects existing in the external world, that we appear to need a Supreme Lord would tend to indicate that in fact there is a Supreme Lord. In other words, nature endows us with a sense of need for things that actually exist and that are in fact necessary for our well-being. Similarly, we experience a need for God because we are in fact part of God and cannot live without Him. At the end of Kali-yuga this same God will appear as the mighty Kalki *avatāra* and beat the pollution out of the demons.

TEXT 2.21

*atha teṣāṃ bhaviṣyanti
manāṃsi viśadāni vai
vāsudevāṅga-rāgāti-*

*puṇya-gandhānila-spr̥śām
paura-jānapadānām vai
hateṣv akhila-dasyuṣu*

atha – then; *teṣām* – of them; *bhaviṣyanti* – will become; *manāmsi* – the minds; *viśadāni* – clear; *vai* – indeed; *vāsudeva* – of Lord Vāsudeva; *aṅga* – of the body; *rāga* – from the cosmetic decorations; *ati-puṇya* – most sacred; *gandha* – having the fragrance; *anila* – by the wind; *spr̥śām* – of those who have been touched; *paura* – of the city-dwellers; *jāna-padānām* – and the residents of the smaller towns and villages; *vai* – indeed; *hateṣu* – when they have been killed; *akhila* – all; *dasyuṣu* – the rascal kings.

TRANSLATION

After all the impostor kings have been killed, the residents of the cities and towns will feel the breezes carrying the most sacred fragrance of the sandalwood paste and other decorations of Lord Vāsudeva, and their minds will thereby become transcendently pure.

PURPORT

Nothing can surpass the sublime experience of being dramatically rescued by a great hero who happens to be the Supreme Lord. The death of the demons at the end of Kali-yuga is accompanied by fragrant spiritual breezes, and thus the atmosphere becomes most enchanting.

TEXT 2.22

*teṣām prajā-visargaś ca
sthaviṣṭhaḥ sambhaviṣyati
vāsudeve bhagavati
sattva-mūrtau hr̥di sthite*

teṣām – of them; *prajā* – of progeny; *visargaḥ* – the creation; *ca* – and; *sthaviṣṭhaḥ* – abundant; *sambhaviṣyati* – will be; *vāsudeve* – Lord Vāsudeva; *bhagavati* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *sattva-mūrtau* – in His transcendental form of pure goodness; *hr̥di* – in their hearts; *sthite* – when He is situated.

TRANSLATION

When Lord Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead,

appears in their hearts in His transcendental form of goodness, the remaining citizens will abundantly repopulate the earth.

TEXT 2.23

*yadāvatīrṇo bhagavān
kalkir dharma-patir hariḥ
kṛtam bhaviṣyati tadā
prajā-sūtiś ca sāttvikī*

yadā – when; *avatīrṇaḥ* – incarnates; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Lord; *kalkiḥ* – Kalki; *dharma-patiḥ* – the master of religion; *hariḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *kṛtam* – Satya-yuga; *bhaviṣyati* – will begin; *tadā* – then; *prajā-sūtiḥ* – the creation of progeny; *ca* – and; *sāttvikī* – in the mode of goodness.

TRANSLATION

When the Supreme Lord has appeared on earth as Kalki, the maintainer of religion, Satya-yuga will begin, and human society will bring forth progeny in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 2.24

*yadā candraś ca sūryaś ca
tathā tiṣya-brhaspatī
eka-rāśau sameṣyanti
bhaviṣyati tadā kṛtam*

yadā – when; *candraḥ* – the moon; *ca* – and; *sūryaḥ* – the sun; *ca* – and; *tathā* – also; *tiṣya* – the asterism Tiṣyā (more commonly known as Puṣyā, extending from 3° 20' to 16° 40' Cancer); *brhaspatī* – and the planet Jupiter; *eka-rāśau* – in the same constellation (Cancer); *sameṣyanti* – will enter simultaneously; *bhaviṣyati* – will be; *tadā* – then; *kṛtam* – Satya-yuga.

TRANSLATION

When the moon, the sun and Brhaspatī are together in the constellation Karkaṭa, and all three enter simultaneously into the lunar mansion Puṣyā – at that exact moment the age of Satya, or Kṛta, will begin.

TEXT 2.25

*ye 'titā vartamānā ye
bhaviṣyanti ca pārthivāḥ*

*te ta uddeśataḥ proktā
vaṁśīyāḥ soma-sūryayoḥ*

ye – those who; *atītāḥ* – past; *vartamānāḥ* – present; *ye* – who; *bhaviṣyanti* – will be in the future; *ca* – and; *pārthivāḥ* – kings of the earth; *te te* – all of them; *uddeśataḥ* – by brief mention; *proktāḥ* – described; *vaṁśīyāḥ* – the members of the dynasties; *soma-sūryayoḥ* – of the sun-god and the moon-god.

TRANSLATION

Thus I have described all the kings – past, present and future – who belong to the dynasties of the sun and the moon.

TEXT 2.26

*ārabhya bhavato janma
yāvan nandābhiṣecanam
etat varṣa-sahasraṁ tu
śataṁ pañcadaśottaram*

ārabhya – beginning from; *bhavataḥ* – of your good self (Parīkṣit); *janma* – the birth; *yāvat* – up until; *nanda* – of King Nanda, the son of Mahānandi; *abhiṣecanam* – the coronation; *etat* – this; *varṣa* – years; *sahasram* – one thousand; *tu* – and; *śatam* – one hundred; *pañca-daśa-uttaram* – plus fifty.

TRANSLATION

From your birth up to the coronation of King Nanda, 1,150 years will pass.

PURPORT

Although Śukadeva Gosvāmī previously described approximately fifteen hundred years of royal dynasties, it is understood that some overlapping occurred between kings. Therefore the present chronological calculation should be taken as authoritative.

TEXTS 2.27–28

*saptarṣiṇāṁ tu yau pūrvau
dṛśyete uditau divi
tayos tu madhye nakṣatram
dṛśyate yat samam niśi
tenaiva ṛṣayo yuktās*

*tiṣṭhanty abda-śatam nṛṇām
te tvadiye dvijāḥ kāla
adhunā cāśritā maghāḥ*

sapta-ṛṣiṇām – of the constellation of the seven sages (the constellation known to Westerners as *Ursa Major*); *tu* – and; *yau* – which two stars; *pūrvau* – first; *drśyete* – are seen; *uditau* – risen; *divi* – in the sky; *tayoḥ* – of the two (named Pulaha and Kratu); *tu* – and; *madhye* – between; *nakṣatram* – the lunar mansion; *drśyate* – is seen; *yat* – which; *samam* – on the same line of celestial longitude, as their midpoint; *niśi* – in the night sky; *tena* – with that lunar mansion; *eva* – indeed; *ṛṣayaḥ* – the seven sages; *yuktāḥ* – are connected; *tiṣṭhanti* – they remain; *abda-śatam* – one hundred years; *nṛṇām* – of human beings; *te* – these seven sages; *tvadiye* – in your; *dvijāḥ* – the elevated *brāhmaṇas*; *kāle* – in the time; *adhunā* – now; *ca* – and; *āśritāḥ* – are situated; *maghāḥ* – in the asterism Maghā.

TRANSLATION

Of the seven stars forming the constellation of the seven sages, Pulaha and Kratu are the first to rise in the night sky. If a line running north and south were drawn through their midpoint, whichever of the lunar mansions this line passes through is said to be the ruling asterism of the constellation for that time. The Seven Sages will remain connected with that particular lunar mansion for one hundred human years. Currently, during your lifetime, they are situated in the nakṣatra called Maghā.

TEXT 2.29

*viṣṇor bhagavato bhānuḥ
kṛṣṇākhyo 'sau divam gataḥ
tadāviśat kalir lokam
pāpe yad ramate janaḥ*

viṣṇoḥ – of Viṣṇu; *bhagavataḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhānuḥ* – the sun; *kṛṣṇa-ākhyah* – known as Kṛṣṇa; *asau* – He; *divam* – to the spiritual sky; *gataḥ* – having returned; *tadā* – then; *aviśat* – entered; *kalih* – the Age of Kali; *lokam* – this world; *pāpe* – in sin; *yat* – in which age; *ramate* – take pleasure; *janaḥ* – the people.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, is brilliant like the sun and is known

as Kṛṣṇa. When He returned to the spiritual sky, Kali entered this world, and people then began to take pleasure in sinful activities.

TEXT 2.30

*yāvat sa pāda-padmābhyām
sprśan āste ramā-patiḥ
tāvat kalir vai pṛthivīm
parākrantum na cāśakat*

yāvat – as long as; *saḥ* – He, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *pāda-padmābhyām* – with His lotus feet; *sprśan* – touching; *āste* – remained; *ramā-patiḥ* – the husband of the goddess of fortune; *tāvat* – for that long; *kalīḥ* – the Age of Kali; *vai* – indeed; *pṛthivīm* – the earth; *parākrantum* – to overcome; *na* – not; *ca* – and; *aśakat* – was able.

TRANSLATION

As long as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the husband of the goddess of fortune, touched the earth with His lotus feet, Kali was powerless to subdue this planet.

PURPORT

Although even during the time of Lord Kṛṣṇa's presence on earth Kali had entered the earth to a slight extent through the impious activities of Duryodhana and his allies, Lord Kṛṣṇa consistently suppressed Kali's influence. Kali could not flourish until Lord Kṛṣṇa had left the earth.

TEXT 2.31

*yadā devaṛṣayaḥ sapta
maghāsu vicaranti hi
tadā pravṛttas tu kalir
dvādaśābda-śatātmakaḥ*

yadā – when; *deva-ṛṣayaḥ sapta* – the seven sages among the demigods; *maghāsu* – in the lunar mansion Maghā; *vicaranti* – are traveling; *hi* – indeed; *tadā* – then; *pravṛttaḥ* – begins; *tu* – and; *kalīḥ* – the Age of Kali; *dvādaśā* – twelve; *abda-śata* – centuries [These twelve hundred years of the demigods equal 432,000 earth years]; *ātmakaḥ* – consisting of.

TRANSLATION

When the constellation of the seven sages is passing through the lunar mansion Maghā, the Age of Kali begins. It comprises twelve hundred years of the demigods.

TEXT 2.32

*yadā maghābhyo yāsyanti
pūrvāśādhām maharṣayaḥ
tadā nandāt prabhṛty eṣa
kalir vṛddhim gamiṣyati*

yadā – when; *maghābhyaḥ* – from Maghā; *yāsyanti* – they will go; *pūrvā-āśādhām* – to the next lunar mansion, Pūrvāśādhā; *mahā-ṛṣayaḥ* – the seven great sages; *tadā* – then; *nandāt* – beginning from Nanda; *prabhṛti* – and his descendants; *eṣaḥ* – this; *kaliḥ* – Age of Kali; *vṛddhim* – maturity; *gamiṣyati* – will attain.

TRANSLATION

When the great sages of the Saptarṣi constellation pass from Maghā to Pūrvāśādhā, Kali will have his full strength, beginning from King Nanda and his dynasty.

TEXT 2.33

*yasmin kṛṣṇo divam yātas
tasminn eva tadāhani
pratipannam kali-yugam
iti prāhuḥ purā-vidaḥ*

yasmin – on which; *kṛṣṇaḥ* – Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *divam* – to the spiritual world; *yātaḥ* – gone; *tasmin* – on that; *eva* – same; *tadā* – then; *ahani* – day; *pratipannam* – obtained; *kali-yugam* – the Age of Kali; *iti* – thus; *prāhuḥ* – they say; *purā* – of the past; *vidaḥ* – the experts.

TRANSLATION

Those who scientifically understand the past declare that on the very day that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa departed for the spiritual world, the influence of the Age of Kali began.

PURPORT

Although technically Kali-yuga was to begin during the time of Lord Kṛṣṇa's presence on earth, this fallen age had to wait meekly for the departure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 2.34

*divyābdānām sahasrānte
caturthe tu punaḥ kṛtam
bhaviṣyati tadā nṛṇām
mana ātma-prakāśakam*

divya – of the demigods; *abdānām* – years; *sahasra* – of one thousand; *ante* – at the end; *caturthe* – in the fourth age, Kali; *tu* – and; *punaḥ* – again; *kṛtam* – the Satya-yuga; *bhaviṣyati* – will be; *tadā* – then; *nṛṇām* – of men; *manaḥ* – the minds; *ātma-prakāśakam* – self-luminous.

TRANSLATION

After the one thousand celestial years of Kali-yuga, the Satya-yuga will manifest again. At that time the minds of all men will become self-effulgent.

TEXT 2.35

*ity eṣa mānava vaṁśo
yathā saṅkhyāyate bhuvi
tathā viṭ-śūdra-viprāṇām
tās tā jñeyā yuge yuge*

iti – thus (in the cantos of this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*); *eṣaḥ* – this; *mānavaḥ* – descending from Vaivasvata Manu; *vaṁśaḥ* – the dynasty; *yathā* – as; *saṅkhyāyate* – it is enumerated; *bhuvi* – upon the earth; *tathā* – in the same way; *viṭ* – of the *vaiśyas*; *śūdra* – *śūdras*; *viprāṇām* – and *brāhmaṇas*; *tāḥ tāḥ* – the situations of each; *jñeyāḥ* – are to be understood; *yuge yuge* – in each age.

TRANSLATION

Thus I have described the royal dynasty of Manu, as it is known on this earth. One can similarly study the history of the vaiśyas, śūdras and brāhmaṇas living in the various ages.

PURPORT

Just as the dynasty of kings includes exalted and insignificant, virtuous and wicked monarchs, varieties of human character are found in the intellectual, commercial and laboring orders of society.

TEXT 2.36

eteṣām nāma-liṅgānām

*puruṣāṅām mahātmanām
kathā-mātrāvaśiṣṭānām
kīrtir eva sthitā bhuvī*

eteṣām – of these; *nāma* – their names; *liṅgānām* – which are the only means of remembering them; *puruṣāṅām* – of the personalities; *mahā-ātmanām* – who were great souls; *kathā* – the stories; *mātra* – merely; *avaśiṣṭānām* – whose remaining portion; *kīrtiḥ* – the glories; *eva* – only; *sthitā* – are present; *bhuvī* – on the earth.

TRANSLATION

These personalities, who were great souls, are now known only by their names. They exist only in accounts from the past, and only their fame remains on the earth.

PURPORT

Although one may consider oneself to be a great, powerful leader, he will ultimately end up as a name in a long list of names. In other words, it is useless to be attached to power and position in the material world.

TEXT 2.37

*devāpiḥ śāntanor bhrātā
maruś cekṣvāku-varṁśa-jaḥ
kalāpa-grāma āsāte
mahā-yoga-balānvitau*

devāpiḥ – Devāpi; *śāntanoḥ* – of Mahārāja Śāntanu; *bhrātā* – the brother; *maruḥ* – Maru; *ca* – and; *ikṣvāku-varṁśa-jaḥ* – born in the dynasty of Ikṣvāku; *kalāpa-grāme* – in the village Kalāpa; *āsāte* – the two of them are living; *mahā* – great; *yoga-bala* – with mystic power; *anvitau* – endowed.

TRANSLATION

Devāpi, the brother of Mahārāja Śāntanu, and Maru, the descendant of Ikṣvāku, both possess great mystic strength and are living even now in the village of Kalāpa.

TEXT 2.38

*tāv ihaitya kaler ante
vāsudevānuśikṣitau
varṇāśrama-yutaṁ dharmam*

pūrva-vat prathayiṣyataḥ

tau – they (Maru and Devāpi); *iha* – to human society; *etya* – returning; *kaleḥ* – of the Age of Kali; *ante* – at the end; *vāsudeva* – by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva; *anuśikṣitau* – instructed; *varṇa-āśrama* – the divine system of occupational and spiritual orders of society; *yutam* – comprising; *dharmam* – the code of eternal religion; *pūrva-vat* – just as previously; *prathayiṣyataḥ* – they will promulgate.

TRANSLATION

At the end of the Age of Kali, these two kings, having received instruction directly from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, will return to human society and reestablish the eternal religion of man, characterized by the divisions of varṇa and āśrama, just as it was before.

PURPORT

According to this and the previous verse, the two great kings who will reestablish human culture after the end of Kali-yuga have already descended to the earth, where they are patiently waiting to render their devotional service to Lord Viṣṇu.

TEXT 2.39

*kṛtam tretā dvāparam ca
kaliś ceti catur-yugam
anena krama-yogena
bhuvī prāṇiṣu vartate*

kṛtam – Satya-yuga; *tretā* – Tretā-yuga; *dvāparam* – Dvāpara-yuga; *ca* – and; *kaliḥ* – Kali-yuga; *ca* – and; *iti* – thus; *catuḥ-yugam* – the cycle of four ages; *anena* – by this; *krama* – sequential; *yogena* – pattern; *bhuvī* – in this world; *prāṇiṣu* – among living beings; *vartate* – goes on continuously.

TRANSLATION

The cycle of four ages – Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali – continues perpetually among living beings on this earth, repeating the same general sequence of events.

TEXT 2.40

rājann ete mayā proktā

*nara-devās tathāpare
bhūmau mamatvaṁ kṛtvānte
hitvemām nidhanam gatāḥ*

rājan – O King Parīkṣit; *ete* – these; *mayā* – by me; *proktāḥ* – described; *nara-devāḥ* – kings; *tathā* – and; *apare* – other human beings; *bhūmau* – upon the earth; *mamatvam* – possessiveness; *kṛtvā* – exerting; *ante* – in the end; *hitvā* – giving up; *imām* – this world; *nidhanam* – destruction; *gatāḥ* – met.

TRANSLATION

My dear King Parīkṣit, all these kings I have described, as well as all other human beings, come to this earth and stake their claims, but ultimately they all must give up this world and meet their destruction.

TEXT 2.41

*kṛmi-vid-bhasma-sañjñānte
rāja-nāmno 'pi yasya ca
bhūta-dhruk tat-kṛte svārtham
kim veda nirayo yataḥ*

kṛmi – of worms; *viṭ* – stool; *bhasma* – and ashes; *sañjñā* – the designation; *ante* – in the end; *rāja-nāmnaḥ* – going by the name “king”; *api* – even though; *yasya* – of which (body); *ca* – and; *bhūta* – of living beings; *dhruk* – an enemy; *tat-kṛte* – for the sake of that body; *sva-artham* – his own best interest; *kim* – what; *veda* – does he know; *nirayaḥ* – punishment in hell; *yataḥ* – because of which.

TRANSLATION

Even though a person’s body may now have the designation “king,” in the end its name will be “worms,” “stool” or “ashes.” What can a person who injures other living beings for the sake of his body know about his own self-interest, since his activities are simply leading him to hell?

PURPORT

After death, the body may be buried and eaten by worms, or it may be thrown in the street or forest to be eaten by animals who will pass out its remnants as stool, or it may be burned and converted into ashes. Therefore one should not pave his way to hell by using his temporary

body to injure the bodies of other living beings. In this verse the word *bhūta* includes nonhuman life forms, who are also creatures of God. One should give up all envious violence and learn to see God in everything by the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 2.42

*katham seyam akhaṇḍā bhūḥ
pūrvair me puruṣair dhṛtā
mat-putrasya ca pautrasya
mat-pūrvā vaṁśa-jasya vā*

katham – how; *sā iyam* – this same; *akhaṇḍā* – unbounded; *bhūḥ* – earth; *pūrvaiḥ* – by the predecessors; *me* – my; *puruṣaiḥ* – by the personalities; *dhṛtā* – held in control; *mat-putrasya* – of my son; *ca* – and; *pautrasya* – of the grandson; *mat-pūrvā* – now under my sway; *vaṁśa-jasya* – of the descendant; *vā* – or.

TRANSLATION

[The materialistic king thinks:] “This unbounded earth was held by my predecessors and is now under my sovereignty. How can I arrange for it to remain in the hands of my sons, grandsons and other descendants?”

PURPORT

This is an example of foolish possessiveness.

TEXT 2.43

*tejo-'b-anna-mayaṁ kāyaṁ
grhītvātmatayābudhāḥ
mahīm mamatayā cobhau
hitvānte 'darśanam gatāḥ*

tejaḥ – fire; *ap* – water; *anna* – and earth; *mayam* – composed of; *kāyam* – this body; *grhītvā* – accepting; *ātmatayā* – with the sense of “I”; *abudhāḥ* – the unintelligent; *mahīm* – this earth; *mamatayā* – with the sense of “my”; *ca* – and; *ubhau* – both; *hitvā* – giving up; *ante* – ultimately; *adarśanam* – disappearance; *gatāḥ* – they have obtained.

TRANSLATION

Although the foolish accept the body made of earth, water and fire as “me” and this earth as “mine,” in every case they have ultimately abandoned both their body and the earth and passed

away into oblivion.

PURPORT

Although the soul is eternal, our so-called family tradition and earthly fame will certainly pass into oblivion.

TEXT 2.44

*ye ye bhū-patayo rājan
bhuñjate bhuvam ojasā
kālena te kṛtāḥ sarve
kathā-mātrāḥ kathāsu ca*

ye ye – whatever; *bhū-patayaḥ* – kings; *rājan* – O King Parīkṣit; *bhuñjate* – enjoy; *bhuvam* – the world; *ojasā* – with their power; *kālena* – by the force of time; *te* – they; *kṛtāḥ* – have been made; *sarve* – all; *kathā-mātrāḥ* – mere accounts; *kathāsu* – in various histories; *ca* – and.

TRANSLATION

My dear King Parīkṣit, all these kings who tried to enjoy the earth by their strength were reduced by the force of time to nothing more than historical accounts.

PURPORT

The word *rājan*, “O King,” is significant in this verse. Parīkṣit Mahārāja was preparing to give up his body and go back home, back to Godhead, and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, his most merciful spiritual master, devastated any possible attachment that he might have to the position of king by showing the ultimate insignificance of such a position. By the causeless mercy of the spiritual master one is prepared to go back home, back to Godhead. The spiritual master teaches one to relax one’s strong grip on material illusion and leave the kingdom of *māyā* behind. Although Śukadeva Gosvāmī speaks very bluntly within this chapter about the so-called glory of the material world, he is exhibiting the causeless mercy of the spiritual master, who takes his surrendered disciple back to the kingdom of Godhead, Vaikuṅṭha.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Second Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Symptoms of Kali-yuga.”

CHAPTER THREE

The Bhūmi-gītā

This chapter describes how the earth took note of the foolishness of the many kings bent on conquering her. It also describes how even though the Age of Kali is full of faults, the glorification of the name of Lord Hari destroys them all.

Great kings, who are actually just playthings of death, desire to subdue their six internal enemies – the five senses and the mind – and afterward they imagine they will go on to conquer the earth and all its oceans. Seeing their false hopes, the earth simply laughs, for eventually they all must leave this planet and go elsewhere, as have all the great kings and monarchs of the past. Moreover, after usurping the earth or some part of it – which is actually unconquerable and must in every case be given up – fathers, sons, brothers, friends and relatives quarrel over it.

Thus the study of history naturally leads to the conclusion that all worldly achievements are temporary, and this conclusion should give rise to a sense of renunciation. Ultimately, the highest goal of life for any living entity is pure devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, which annihilates all inauspiciousness. In the age of Satya, religion was complete, still possessing its four legs of truth, mercy, austerity and charity. With the coming of each succeeding age, starting with Tretā, these religious qualities each diminish by one quarter. In Kali-yuga the legs of religion retain only one fourth of their power, and even that will be lost with the progress of the age. The mode of goodness is predominant during Satya-yuga, and the mode of passion is predominant during the Tretā-yuga. The mixed modes of passion and ignorance are predominant during Dvāpara-yuga, and in the Age of Kali the mode of ignorance is predominant. Atheism, the smallness and inferiority of all things, and devotion to the genitals and belly are very much evident in the Age of Kali. Living entities contaminated by the influence of Kali do not worship the Supreme Lord, Śrī Hari, even though they can be freed from all bondage and easily achieve the supreme destination simply by chanting the glories of His name and taking shelter of Him. But if somehow or other the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes manifest within the hearts of the conditioned souls in Kali-yuga, then all faults of place, time and personality inherent in the age will be destroyed. Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, but it possesses one great quality: simply by the chanting of the name of Kṛṣṇa, one can be delivered from material association and attain the Absolute Truth. All that was accomplished

in the age of Satya by meditation, in the age of Tretā by sacrificial performances and in the age of Dvāpara by temple worship is easily gained during the Kali-yuga by the simple process of *hari-kīrtana*.

TEXT 3.1

śrī-śuka uvāca

*dr̥ṣṭvātmani jaye vyagrān
nṛpān hasati bhūr iyam
aho mā vijigīṣanti
mṛtyoḥ kṛīḍanakā nṛpāḥ*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *dr̥ṣṭvā* – observing; *ātmani* – of herself; *jaye* – in conquest; *vyagrān* – busily engaged; *nṛpān* – the kings; *hasati* – she laughs; *bhūḥ* – the earth; *iyam* – this; *aho* – ah; *mā* – me; *vijigīṣanti* – they are desiring to conquer; *mṛtyoḥ* – of death; *kṛīḍanakāḥ* – playthings; *nṛpāḥ* – the kings.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Seeing the kings of this earth busy trying to conquer her, the earth herself laughed. She said: “Just see how these kings, who are actually playthings in the hands of death, are desiring to conquer me.

TEXT 3.2

*kāma eṣa narendrāṇām
moghaḥ syād viduṣām api
yena phenopame piṇḍe
ye ’ti-viśrambhitā nṛpāḥ*

kāmaḥ – lust; *eṣaḥ* – this; *nara-indrāṇām* – of the rulers of men; *moghaḥ* – the failure; *syāt* – becomes; *viduṣām* – who are wise; *api* – even; *yena* – by which (lust); *phena-upame* – comparable to ephemeral bubbles; *piṇḍe* – in this lump; *ye* – who; *ati-viśrambhitāḥ* – perfectly trusting; *nṛpāḥ* – the kings.

TRANSLATION

“Great rulers of men, even those who are learned, meet frustration and failure because of material lust. Driven by lust, these kings place great hope and faith in the dead lump of flesh called the body, even though the material frame is as fleeting as bubbles of foam on water.

TEXTS 3.3–4

*pūrvam nirjitya ṣaṭ-vargam
jeṣyāmo rāja-mantriṇaḥ
tataḥ saciva-paurāpta-
karīndrān asya kaṇṭakān
evam krameṇa jeṣyāmaḥ
pṛthvīm sāgara-mekhalām
ity āśā-baddha-hṛdayā
na paśyanty antike 'ntakam*

pūrvam – first of all; *nirjitya* – conquering; *ṣaṭ-vargam* – the five senses and the mind; *jeṣyāmaḥ* – we will conquer; *rāja-mantriṇaḥ* – the royal ministers; *tataḥ* – then; *saciva* – the personal secretaries; *paura* – the citizens of the capital; *āpta* – the friends; *kari-indrān* – the elephant keepers; *asya* – ridding ourselves of; *kaṇṭakān* – the thorns; *evam* – in this way; *krameṇa* – gradually; *jeṣyāmaḥ* – we shall conquer; *pṛthvīm* – the earth; *sāgara* – the ocean; *mekhalām* – whose girdle; *iti* – thus thinking; *āśā* – by hopes; *baddha* – bound up; *hṛdayāḥ* – their hearts; *na paśyanti* – they do not see; *antike* – nearby; *antakam* – their own end.

TRANSLATION

“Kings and politicians imagine: ‘First I will conquer my senses and mind; then I will subdue my chief ministers and rid myself of the thorn-pricks of my advisors, citizens, friends and relatives, as well as the keepers of my elephants. In this way I will gradually conquer the entire earth.’ Because the hearts of these leaders are bound by great expectations, they fail to see death waiting nearby.

PURPORT

To satisfy their greed for power, determined politicians, dictators and military leaders undergo severe austerities and sacrifice, with much self-discipline. Then they lead their great nations in a struggle to control the sea, land, air and space. Although the politicians and their followers will soon be dead – since birth and death are all inevitable in this world – they persist in their frenetic struggle for ephemeral glory.

TEXT 3.5

*samudrāvaraṇām jivā
mām viśanty abdhim ojasā
kiyat ātma-jayasyaitan
muktir ātma-jaye phalam*

samudra-āvaraṇām – bounded by the ocean; *jivā* – having conquered; *mām* – me; *viśanti* – they enter; *abdhim* – the ocean; *ojasā* – by their strength; *kiyat* – how much; *ātma-jayasya* – of victory over the self; *etat* – this; *muktiḥ* – liberation; *ātma-jaye* – of victory over the self; *phalam* – the fruit.

TRANSLATION

“After conquering all the land on my surface, these proud kings forcibly enter the ocean to conquer the sea itself. What is the use of their self-control, which is aimed at political exploitation? The actual goal of self-control is spiritual liberation.”

TEXT 3.6

*yām viśrjyaiva manavas
tat-sutās ca kurūdvaha
gatā yathāgatam yuddhe
tām mām jeṣyanty abuddhayaḥ*

yām – whom; *viśrjya* – giving up; *eva* – indeed; *manavaḥ* – human beings; *tat-sutāḥ* – their sons; *ca* – also; *kuru-udvaha* – O best of the Kurus; *gatāḥ* – gone away; *yathā-āgatam* – just as they had originally come; *yuddhe* – in battle; *tām* – that; *mām* – me, the earth; *jeṣyanti* – they try to conquer; *abuddhayaḥ* – unintelligent.

TRANSLATION

O best of the Kurus, the earth continued as follows: “Although in the past great men and their descendants have left me, departing from this world in the same helpless way they came into it, even today foolish men are trying to conquer me.

TEXT 3.7

*mat-kṛte piṭṛ-putrāṇām
bhrātṛṇām cāpi vighrahaḥ
jāyate hy asatām rājye
mamatā-baddha-cetasām*

mat-kṛte – for the sake of me; *piṭṛ-putrāṇām* – between fathers and

sons; *bhrātṛṇām* – among brothers; *ca* – and; *api* – also; *vigrahaḥ* – conflict; *jāyate* – arises; *hi* – indeed; *asatām* – among the materialistic; *rājye* – for political rule; *mamatā* – by the sense of possession; *baddha* – bound up; *cetasām* – whose hearts.

TRANSLATION

“For the sake of conquering me, materialistic persons fight one another. Fathers oppose their sons, and brothers fight one another, because their hearts are bound to possessing political power.

TEXT 3.8

*mamaiveyaṁ mahī kṛtsnā
na te mūḍheti vādinaḥ
spardhamānā mitho ghnanti
mriyante mat-kṛte nṛpāḥ*

mama – mine; *eva* – indeed; *iyam* – this; *mahī* – land; *kṛtsnā* – entire; *na* – not; *te* – yours; *mūḍha* – you fool; *iti vādinaḥ* – thus speaking; *spardhamānāḥ* – quarreling; *mithaḥ* – each other; *ghnanti* – they kill; *mriyante* – they are killed; *mat-kṛte* – for my sake; *nṛpāḥ* – kings.

TRANSLATION

“Political leaders challenge one another: ‘All this land is mine! It’s not yours, you fool!’ Thus they attack one another and die.

PURPORT

This verse describes with brilliant clarity the mundane political mentality that provokes innumerable conflicts in the world. For example, as we prepare this translation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, British and Argentine military forces are bitterly fighting over the tiny Falkland Islands.

The fact is that the Supreme Lord is the proprietor of all land. Of course, even in a God-conscious world political boundaries exist. But in such a God-conscious atmosphere political tensions are greatly eased, and people of all lands welcome each other and respect each other’s right to live in peace.

TEXTS 3.9–13

*prthuḥ purūravā gādhir
nahuṣo bharato ’rjunaḥ*

*māndhātā sagaro rāmaḥ
khaṭvāṅgo dhundhuhā raghuḥ*

*ṭṛṇabindur yayātiś ca
śaryātiḥ śantanur gayāḥ
bhagīrathaḥ kuvalayāśvaḥ
kakutstho naiśadho ṛgaḥ*

*hiranyakaśipur vṛtro
rāvaṇo loka-rāvaṇaḥ
namuciḥ śambaro bhaumo
hiranyākṣo 'tha tāraḥ*

*anye ca bahavo daityā
rājāno ye mahēśvarāḥ
sarve sarva-vidaḥ śūrāḥ
sarve sarva-jito 'jitāḥ*

*mamatām mayy avartanta
kṛtvocair martya-dharmināḥ
kathāvaśeṣāḥ kālena
hy akṛtārthāḥ kṛtā vibho*

ṛthuḥ purūravāḥ gādhiḥ – Mahārājas Ṛthu, Purūravā and Gādhi;
nahuṣaḥ bhārataḥ arjunaḥ – Nahuṣa, Bharata and Kārtavīrya Arjuna;
māndhātā sagaraḥ rāmaḥ – Māndhātā, Sagara and Rāma; *khaṭvāṅgaḥ
dhundhuhā raghuḥ* – Khaṭvāṅga, Dhundhuhā and Raghu; *ṭṛṇabinduḥ
yayātiḥ ca* – Ṭṛṇabindu and Yayāti; *śaryātiḥ śantanuḥ gayāḥ* – Śaryāti,
Śantanu and Gaya; *bhagīrathaḥ kuvalayāśvaḥ* – Bhagīratha and
Kuvalayāśva; *kakutsthaḥ naiśadhaḥ ṛgaḥ* – Kakutstha, Naiśadha and
Ṛga; *hiranyakaśipuḥ vṛtraḥ* – Hiraṇyakaśipu and Vṛtrāsura; *rāvaṇaḥ* –
Rāvaṇa; *loka-rāvaṇaḥ* – who made the whole world cry; *namuciḥ
śambaraḥ bhaumaḥ* – Namuci, Śambara and Bhauma; *hiranyākṣaḥ* –
Hiraṇyākṣa; *atha* – and; *tāraḥ* – Tāraka; *anye* – others; *ca* – as well;
bahavaḥ – many; *daityāḥ* – demons; *rājānaḥ* – kings; *ye* – who; *mahā-
īśvarāḥ* – great controllers; *sarve* – all of them; *sarva-vidaḥ* – all-
knowing; *śūrāḥ* – heroes; *sarve* – all; *sarva-jitaḥ* – all-conquering; *ajitāḥ*
– unconquerable; *mamatām* – possessiveness; *mayi* – for me; *avartanta*
– they lived; *kṛtvā* – expressing; *uccaiḥ* – to a great degree; *martya-
dharmināḥ* – subject to the laws of birth and death; *kathā-avaśeṣāḥ* –
remaining merely as historical narrations; *kālena* – by the force of
time; *hi* – indeed; *akṛta-arthāḥ* – incomplete in perfecting their desires;
kṛtāḥ – they have been made; *vibho* – O Lord.

TRANSLATION

“Such kings as Pṛthu, Purūravā, Gādhi, Nahuṣa, Bharata, Kārtavīrya Arjuna, Māndhātā, Sagara, Rāma, Khaṭvāṅga, Dhundhuhā, Raghu, Tṛṇabindu, Yayāti, Śaryāti, Śantanu, Gaya, Bhagīratha, Kuvalayāśva, Kakutstha, Naiṣadha, Nṛga, Hiraṇyakaśipu, Vṛtra, Rāvaṇa, who made the whole world lament, Namuci, Śambara, Bhauma, Hiraṇyākṣa and Tāraka, as well as many other demons and kings who possessed great powers of control over others, were all full of knowledge, heroic, all-conquering and unconquerable. Nevertheless, O almighty Lord, although they lived their lives intensely trying to possess me, these kings were subject to the passage of time, which reduced them all to mere historical accounts. None of them could permanently establish their rule.”

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, and as confirmed by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the King Rāma mentioned here is not the incarnation of Godhead Rāmacandra. Pṛthu Mahārāja is understood to be an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who completely exhibited the characteristics of an earthly king, claiming proprietorship over the entire earth. A saintly king like Pṛthu Mahārāja, however, controls the earth on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whereas a demon such as Hiraṇyakaśipu or Rāvaṇa tries to exploit the earth for his personal sense gratification. Nevertheless, both saintly kings and demons must leave the earth. In this way their political supremacy is ultimately neutralized by the force of time.

Modern political leaders cannot even temporarily control the entire earth, nor are their opulences and intelligence unlimited. Possessing hopelessly fragmented power, enjoying a minuscule life span, and lacking deep existential intelligence, modern leaders inevitably are symbols of frustration and misdirected ambition.

TEXT 3.14

*kathā imās te kathitā mahīyasām
vitāya lokeṣu yaśaḥ pareyuṣām
vijñāna-vairāgya-vivakṣayā vibho
vaco-vibhūtīr na tu pāramārthyam*

kathāḥ – the narrations; *imāḥ* – these; *te* – unto you; *kathitāḥ* – have been spoken; *mahīyasām* – of great kings; *vitāya* – spreading; *lokeṣu* – throughout all the worlds; *yaśaḥ* – their fame; *pareyuṣām* – who have departed; *vijñāna* – transcendental knowledge; *vairāgya* – and renunciation; *vivakṣayā* – with the desire for teaching; *vibho* – O mighty Parīkṣit; *vacāḥ* – of words; *vibhūtīḥ* – the decoration; *na* – not; *tu* – but; *pārama-arthyam* – of the most essential purport.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O mighty Parīkṣit, I have related to you the narrations of all these great kings, who spread their fame throughout the world and then departed. My real purpose was to teach transcendental knowledge and renunciation. Stories of kings lend power and opulence to these narrations but do not in themselves constitute the ultimate aspect of knowledge.

PURPORT

Since all the narrations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* bring the reader to the perfection of transcendental knowledge, they all give supreme spiritual lessons though apparently dealing with kings or other mundane subject matter. In relation with Kṛṣṇa, all ordinary topics become transcendental narrations, with the power to bring the reader to the perfection of life.

TEXT 3.15

*yas tūttamaḥ-śloka-guṇānuvādaḥ
saṅgīyate 'bhīkṣṇam amaṅgala-ghnaḥ
tam eva nityam śṛṇuyād abhīkṣṇam
kṛṣṇe 'malām bhaktim abhīpsamānaḥ*

yaḥ – which; *tu* – on the other hand; *uttamaḥ-śloka* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is praised in transcendental verses; *guṇa* – of the qualities; *anuvādaḥ* – the recounting; *saṅgīyate* – is sung; *abhīkṣṇam* – always; *amaṅgala-ghnaḥ* – which destroys everything inauspicious; *tam* – that; *eva* – indeed; *nityam* – regularly; *śṛṇuyāt* – one should hear; *abhīkṣṇam* – constantly; *kṛṣṇe* – unto Lord Kṛṣṇa; *amalām* – untainted; *bhaktim* – devotional service; *abhīpsamānaḥ* – he who desires.

TRANSLATION

The person who desires pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa

should hear the narrations of Lord Uttamaḥśloka's glorious qualities, the constant chanting of which destroys everything inauspicious. The devotee should engage in such listening in regular daily assemblies and should also continue his hearing throughout the day.

PURPORT

Since any topic related to Lord Kṛṣṇa is auspicious and transcendental, the direct narration of Lord Kṛṣṇa's own activities, political and nonpolitical, is certainly the supreme subject matter for hearing. The word *nityam* here indicates regulated cultivation of the topics of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and *abhikṣam* indicates constant remembrance of such regulated spiritual experiences.

TEXT 3.16

śrī-rājovāca

*kenopāyena bhagavan
kaler doṣān kalau janāḥ
vidhamiṣyanty upacitāms
tan me brūhi yathā mune*

śrī-rājā uvāca – King Parīkṣit said; *kena* – by what; *upāyena* – means; *bhagavan* – my dear lord; *kaleḥ* – of the Age of Kali; *doṣān* – the faults; *kalau* – living in Kali-yuga; *janāḥ* – people; *vidhamiṣyanti* – will eradicate; *upacitān* – accumulated; *tat* – that; *me* – to me; *brūhi* – please explain; *yathā* – fittingly; *mune* – O sage.

TRANSLATION

King Parīkṣit said: My lord, how can persons living in the Age of Kali rid themselves of the cumulative contamination of this age? O great sage, please explain this to me.

PURPORT

King Parīkṣit was a compassionate, saintly ruler. Thus, after hearing of the abominable qualities of the Age of Kali, he naturally inquired as to how those born in this age can free themselves of its inherent contamination.

TEXT 3.17

*yugāni yuga-dharmāms ca
mānaṁ pralaya-kalpayoḥ*

*kālasyeśvara-rūpasya
gatim viṣṇor mahātmanah*

yugāni – the ages of the universal history; *yuga-dharmān* – the special qualities of each age; *ca* – and; *mānam* – the measurement; *pralaya* – of annihilation; *kalpayoḥ* – and of universal maintenance; *kālasya* – of time; *īśvara-rūpasya* – the representation of the Personality of Godhead; *gatim* – the movement; *viṣṇoḥ* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *mahā-ātmanah* – the Supreme Soul.

TRANSLATION

Please explain the different ages of universal history, the special qualities of each age, the duration of cosmic maintenance and destruction, and the movement of time, which is the direct representation of the Supreme Soul, the Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu.

TEXT 3.18

śrī-śuka uvāca

*kṛte pravartate dharmas
catuṣ-pāt taj-janair dhṛtaḥ
satyam dayā tapo dānam
iti pādā vibhor nṛpa*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *kṛte* – in the Satya-yuga, the age of truth; *pravartate* – exists; *dharmah* – religion; *catuḥ-pāt* – with four legs; *tat* – of that age; *janaiḥ* – by the people; *dhṛtaḥ* – maintained; *satyam* – truth; *dayā* – mercy; *tapah* – austerity; *dānam* – charity; *iti* – thus; *pādāḥ* – the legs; *vibhoḥ* – of mighty religion; *nṛpa* – O King.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, in the beginning, during Satya-yuga, the age of truth, religion is present with all four of its legs intact and is carefully maintained by the people of that age. These four legs of powerful religion are truthfulness, mercy, austerity and charity.

PURPORT

Just as there are four seasons, there are four ages of the earth, each lasting hundreds of thousands of years. The first of these is Satya-

yuga, when such good qualities as charity are prominent.

Actual charity, here referred to as *dānam*, is to award fearlessness and freedom to others, not to give them some material means of temporary pleasure or relief. Any material “charitable” arrangement will inevitably be crushed by the onward march of time. Thus only realization of one’s eternal existence beyond the reach of time can make one fearless, and only freedom from material desire constitutes real freedom, for it enables one to escape the bondage of the laws of nature. Therefore real charity is to help people revive their eternal, spiritual consciousness.

Religion is here referred to as *vibhu*, “the mighty,” because universal religious principles are not different from the Supreme Lord Himself and ultimately lead one to His kingdom. The qualities mentioned here – truthfulness, mercy, austerity and charity – are universal, nonsectarian aspects of pious life.

In the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the fourth leg of religion is listed as cleanliness. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, this is an alternative definition of the word *dānam* in the present context.

TEXT 3.19

santuṣṭāḥ karuṇā maitrāḥ
śāntā dāntās titikṣavaḥ
ātmārāmāḥ sama-dṛśāḥ
prāyaśāḥ śramaṇā janāḥ

santuṣṭāḥ – self-satisfied; *karuṇāḥ* – merciful; *maitrāḥ* – friendly; *śāntāḥ* – pacified; *dāntāḥ* – self-controlled; *titikṣavaḥ* – tolerant; *ātma-ārāmāḥ* – enthused from within; *sama-dṛśāḥ* – possessed of equal vision; *prāyaśāḥ* – for the most part; *śramaṇāḥ* – endeavoring diligently (for self-realization); *janāḥ* – the people.

TRANSLATION

The people of Satya-yuga are for the most part self-satisfied, merciful, friendly to all, peaceful, sober and tolerant. They take their pleasure from within, see all things equally and always endeavor diligently for spiritual perfection.

PURPORT

Sama-darśana, equal vision, is based on the perception of the Supreme Spirit behind all material variety and within all living entities.

TEXT 3.20

*tretāyām dharma-pādānām
turyāmśo hīyate śanaiḥ
adharmā-pādaiḥ anṛta-
himṣāsantoṣa-vigrahaiḥ*

tretāyām – in the second age; *dharma-pādānām* – of the legs of religion; *turya* – one fourth; *amśaḥ* – part; *hīyate* – is lost; *śanaiḥ* – gradually; *adharmā-pādaiḥ* – by the legs of irreligion; *anṛta* – by falsity; *himṣā* – violence; *asantoṣa* – dissatisfaction; *vigrahaiḥ* – and quarrel.

TRANSLATION

In Tretā-yuga each leg of religion is gradually reduced by one quarter by the influence of the four pillars of irreligion – lying, violence, dissatisfaction and quarrel.

PURPORT

By falsity truth is diminished, by violence mercy is diminished, by dissatisfaction austerity is diminished, and by quarrel charity and cleanliness are diminished.

TEXT 3.21

*tadā kriyā-tapo-niṣṭhā
nāti-himśrā na lampatāḥ
trai-vargikās trayī-vṛddhā
varṇā brahmottarā nṛpa*

tadā – then (in the Tretā age); *kriyā* – to ritualistic ceremonies; *tapāḥ* – and to penances; *niṣṭhāḥ* – devoted; *na ati-himśrāḥ* – not excessively violent; *na lampatāḥ* – not wantonly desiring sense gratification; *trai-vargikāḥ* – interested in the three principles of religiosity, economic development and sense gratification; *trayī* – by the three *Vedas*; *vṛddhāḥ* – made prosperous; *varṇāḥ* – the four classes of society; *brahma-uttarāḥ* – mostly *brāhmaṇas*; *nṛpa* – O King.

TRANSLATION

In the Tretā age people are devoted to ritual performances and severe austerities. They are not excessively violent or very lusty after sensual pleasure. Their interest lies primarily in religiosity,

economic development and regulated sense gratification, and they achieve prosperity by following the prescriptions of the three Vedas. Although in this age society evolves into four separate classes, O King, most people are brāhmaṇas.

TEXT 3.22

*tapah-satya-dayā-dāneṣv
ardham hrasvati dvāpare
himsātuṣṭy-anṛta-dveṣair
dharmasyādharmā-lakṣaṇaiḥ*

tapah – of austerity; *satya* – truth; *dayā* – mercy; *dāneṣu* – and charity; *ardham* – one half; *hrasvati* – diminishes; *dvāpare* – in the age of Dvāpara; *himsā* – by violence; *atuṣṭi* – dissatisfaction; *anṛta* – untruth; *dveṣaiḥ* – and hatred; *dharmasya* – of religion; *adharmā-lakṣaṇaiḥ* – by the qualities of irreligion.

TRANSLATION

In Dvāpara-yuga the religious qualities of austerity, truth, mercy and charity are reduced to one half by their irreligious counterparts – dissatisfaction, untruth, violence and enmity.

TEXT 3.23

*yaśasvino mahā-śīlāḥ
svādhyāyādhyayane ratāḥ
ādhyāḥ kuṭumbino hṛṣṭā
varṇāḥ kṣatra-dvijottarāḥ*

yaśasvinaḥ – eager for glory; *mahā-śīlāḥ* – noble; *svādhyāya-adhyayane* – in study of the Vedic literature; *ratāḥ* – absorbed; *ādhyāḥ* – endowed with opulence; *kuṭumbinaḥ* – having large families; *hṛṣṭāḥ* – joyful; *varṇāḥ* – the four classes of society; *kṣatra-dvija-uttarāḥ* – represented mostly by the *kṣatriyas* and *brāhmaṇas*.

TRANSLATION

In the Dvāpara age people are interested in glory and are very noble. They devote themselves to the study of the Vedas, possess great opulence, support large families and enjoy life with vigor. Of the four classes, the *kṣatriyas* and *brāhmaṇas* are most numerous.

TEXT 3.24

*kalau tu dharma-pādānām
turyāmsō 'dharma-hetubhiḥ
edhamānaiḥ kṣīyamāno
hy ante so 'pi vinaṅkṣyati*

kalau – in the Age of Kali; *tu* – and; *dharma-pādānām* – of the legs of religion; *turya-amśaḥ* – one fourth; *adharma* – of irreligion; *hetubhiḥ* – by the principles; *edhamānaiḥ* – which are increasing; *kṣīyamānaḥ* – decreasing; *hi* – indeed; *ante* – in the end; *saḥ* – that one quarter; *api* – also; *vinaṅkṣyati* – will be destroyed.

TRANSLATION

In the Age of Kali only one fourth of the religious principles remains. That last remnant will continuously be decreased by the ever-increasing principles of irreligion and will finally be destroyed.

TEXT 3.25

*tasmin lubdhā durācārā
nirdayāḥ śuṣka-vairiṇaḥ
durbhagā bhūri-tarṣās ca
śūdra-dāsottarāḥ prajāḥ*

tasmin – in that age; *lubdhāḥ* – greedy; *durācārāḥ* – ill-behaved; *nirdayāḥ* – merciless; *śuṣka-vairiṇaḥ* – prone to useless quarrel; *durbhagāḥ* – unfortunate; *bhūri-tarṣāḥ* – obsessed by many kinds of hankering; *ca* – and; *śūdra-dāsa-uttarāḥ* – predominantly low-class laborers and barbarians; *prajāḥ* – the people.

TRANSLATION

In the Kali age people tend to be greedy, ill-behaved and merciless, and they fight one another without good reason. Unfortunate and obsessed with material desires, the people of Kali-yuga are almost all śūdras and barbarians.

PURPORT

In this age, we can already observe that most people are laborers, clerks, fishermen, artisans or other kinds of workers within the *śūdra* category. Enlightened devotees of God and noble political leaders are extremely scarce, and even independent businessmen and farmers are a vanishing breed as huge business conglomerates increasingly

convert them into subservient employees. Vast regions of the earth are already populated by barbarians and semibarbarous peoples, making the entire situation dangerous and bleak. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is empowered to rectify the current dismal state of affairs. It is the only hope for the ghastly age called Kali-yuga.

TEXT 3.26

*sattvaṁ rajas tama iti
dṛśyante puruṣe guṇāḥ
kāla-saṅcoditās te vai
parivartanta ātmani*

sattvam – goodness; *rajaḥ* – passion; *tamaḥ* – ignorance; *iti* – thus; *dṛśyante* – are seen; *puruṣe* – in a person; *guṇāḥ* – the modes of material nature; *kāla-saṅcoditāḥ* – impelled by time; *te* – they; *vai* – indeed; *parivartante* – undergo permutation; *ātmani* – within the mind.

TRANSLATION

The material modes – goodness, passion and ignorance – whose permutations are observed within a person’s mind, are set into motion by the power of time.

PURPORT

The four ages described in these verses are manifestations of various modes of material nature. The age of truth, Satya-yuga, manifests the predominance of material goodness, and Kali-yuga manifests the predominance of ignorance. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, within each age the other three ages occasionally manifest as sub-ages. Thus even within Satya-yuga a demon in the mode of ignorance may appear, and within the Age of Kali the highest religious principles may flourish for some time. As described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the three modes of nature are present everywhere and in everything, but the predominant mode, or combination of modes, determines the general character of any material phenomenon. In each age, therefore, the three modes are present in varying proportions. The particular age represented by goodness (Satya), passion (Tretā), passion and ignorance (Dvāpara) or ignorance (Kali) exists within each of the other ages as a subfactor.

TEXT 3.27

prabhavanti yadā sattve

*mano-buddhīndriyāṇi ca
tadā kṛta-yugam vidyāj
jñāne tapasi yad ruciḥ*

prabhavanti – they are predominantly manifest; *yadā* – when; *sattve* – in the mode of goodness; *manaḥ* – the mind; *buddhi* – intelligence; *indriyāṇi* – senses; *ca* – and; *tadā* – then; *kṛta-yugam* – the age of Kṛta; *vidyāt* – should be understood; *jñāne* – in knowledge; *tapasi* – and austerity; *yad* – when; *ruciḥ* – pleasure.

TRANSLATION

When the mind, intelligence and senses are solidly fixed in the mode of goodness, that time should be understood as Satya-yuga, the age of truth. People then take pleasure in knowledge and austerity.

PURPORT

The word *kṛta* means “performed” or “executed.” Thus in the age of truth all religious duties are duly performed, and people take great pleasure in spiritual knowledge and austerity. Even in the Kali-yuga, those who are situated in the mode of goodness take pleasure in the cultivation of spiritual knowledge and the regulated performance of austerity. This sublime state of existence is possible for one who has conquered sex desire.

TEXT 3.28

*yadā karmasu kāmyeṣu
bhaktir yaśasi dehinām
tadā tretā rajo-vṛttir
iti jānīhi buddhiman*

yadā – when; *karmasu* – in duties; *kāmyeṣu* – based on selfish desire; *bhaktiḥ* – devotion; *yaśasi* – in honor; *dehinām* – of the embodied souls; *tadā* – then; *tretā* – the age of Tretā; *rajo-vṛttiḥ* – predominated by activities in the mode of passion; *iti* – thus; *jānīhi* – you should understand; *buddhi-man* – O intelligent King Parīkṣit.

TRANSLATION

O most intelligent one, when the conditioned souls are devoted to their duties but have ulterior motives and seek personal prestige, you should understand such a situation to be the age of

Tretā, in which the functions of passion are prominent.

TEXT 3.29

*yadā lobhas tv asantoṣo
māno dambho 'tha matsaraḥ
karmaṇām cāpi kāmyānām
dvāparam tad rajas-tamaḥ*

yadā – when; *lobhaḥ* – greed; *tu* – indeed; *asantoṣaḥ* – dissatisfaction; *mānaḥ* – false pride; *dambhaḥ* – hypocrisy; *atha* – and; *matsaraḥ* – envy; *karmaṇām* – of activities; *ca* – and; *api* – also; *kāmyānām* – selfish; *dvāparam* – the age of Dvāpara; *tat* – that; *rajaḥ-tamaḥ* – predominated by a mixture of the modes of passion and ignorance.

TRANSLATION

When greed, dissatisfaction, false pride, hypocrisy and envy become prominent, along with attraction for selfish activities, such a time is the age of Dvāpara, dominated by the mixed modes of passion and ignorance.

TEXT 3.30

*yadā māyānṛtam tandrā
nidrā himsā viśādanam
śoka-mohau bhayaṁ dainyaṁ
sa kalis tāmasaḥ smṛtaḥ*

yadā – when; *māyā* – deceit; *anṛtam* – false speech; *tandrā* – sloth; *nidrā* – sleep and intoxication; *himsā* – violence; *viśādanam* – depression; *śoka* – lamentation; *mohau* – and delusion; *bhayaṁ* – fear; *dainyaṁ* – poverty; *saḥ* – that; *kalīḥ* – the Age of Kali; *tāmasaḥ* – in the mode of ignorance; *smṛtaḥ* – is considered.

TRANSLATION

When there is a predominance of cheating, lying, sloth, sleepiness, violence, depression, lamentation, bewilderment, fear and poverty, that age is Kali, the age of the mode of ignorance.

PURPORT

In Kali-yuga, people are almost exclusively devoted to gross materialism, with hardly any affinity for self-realization.

TEXT 3.31

*tasmāt kṣudra-drśo martyāḥ
kṣudra-bhāgyā mahāśanāḥ
kāmino vitta-hīnāś ca
svairiṇyaś ca striyo 'satīḥ*

tasmāt – due to these qualities of the Age of Kali; *kṣudra-drśaḥ* – shortsighted; *martyāḥ* – human beings; *kṣudra-bhāgyāḥ* – unfortunate; *mahā-aśanāḥ* – excessive in their eating habits; *kāmināḥ* – full of lust; *vitta-hīnāḥ* – lacking wealth; *ca* – and; *svairiṇyaḥ* – independent in their social dealings; *ca* – and; *striyaḥ* – the women; *asatīḥ* – unchaste.

TRANSLATION

Because of the bad qualities of the Age of Kali, human beings will become shortsighted, unfortunate, gluttonous, lustful and poverty-stricken. The women, becoming unchaste, will freely wander from one man to the next.

PURPORT

In the Age of Kali certain pseudointellectuals, seeking individual freedom, support sexual promiscuity. In fact, identification of the self with the body and the pursuit of “individual freedom” in the body rather than in the soul are signs of the most dismal ignorance and slavery to lust. When women are unchaste, many children are born out of wedlock as products of lust. These children grow up in psychologically unfavorable circumstances, and a neurotic, ignorant society arises. Symptoms of this are already manifest throughout the world.

TEXT 3.32

*dasyūtkṛṣṭā janapadā
vedāḥ pāṣaṇḍa-dūṣitāḥ
rājānaś ca prajā-bhakṣāḥ
śiśnodara-parā dvijāḥ*

dasyu-utkṛṣṭāḥ – predominated by thieves; *jana-padāḥ* – the populated places; *vedāḥ* – the Vedic scriptures; *pāṣaṇḍa* – by atheists; *dūṣitāḥ* – contaminated; *rājānaḥ* – the political leaders; *ca* – and; *prajā-bhakṣāḥ* – consuming the populace; *śiśna-udara* – to the genitals and belly; *parāḥ* – dedicated; *dvijāḥ* – the *brāhmaṇas*.

TRANSLATION

Cities will be dominated by thieves, the Vedas will be contaminated by speculative interpretations of atheists, political leaders will virtually consume the citizens, and the so-called priests and intellectuals will be devotees of their bellies and genitals.

PURPORT

Many large cities are unsafe at night. For example, it is understood that no sane person will walk in New York's Central Park at night because he knows he will almost certainly be mugged. Apart from ordinary thieves, who abound in this age, large cities are filled with cutthroat businessmen, who enthusiastically convince people to purchase and consume useless or even harmful products. It has been well documented that beef, tobacco, liquor and many other modern products destroy one's physical health, what to speak of mental health, and yet modern capitalists do not hesitate to use every psychological trick in the book to convince people to consume these things. Modern cities are full of mental and atmospheric pollution, and even ordinary citizens are finding them unbearable.

This verse also points out that the teachings of the Vedic scriptures will be distorted in this age. Great universities teach courses on Hinduism in which Indian religion, despite limitless evidence to the contrary, is described as polytheistic and leading to an impersonal salvation. In fact, all Vedic literature is a unified whole, as stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15): *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyaḥ*. "By all the Vedas I [Kṛṣṇa] am to be known." All Vedic literature is meant for enlightening us about the Supreme Personal Absolute Truth – Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa. Although known by many names and appearing in many forms, God is a single absolute entity, and He is a person. But this true Vedic understanding is hidden in the Kali-yuga.

In this verse Śukadeva astutely observes that "political leaders will virtually consume the citizens, and the so-called priests and intellectuals will be devotees of their bellies and genitals." How sadly true this statement is.

TEXT 3.33

*avratā baṭavo 'śaucā
bhikṣavaś ca kuṭumbinaḥ*

*tapasvino grāma-vāsā
nyāsino 'tyartha-lolupāḥ*

avratāḥ – failing to execute their vows; *baṭavaḥ* – the *brahmacārīs*; *aśaucāḥ* – unclean; *bhikṣavaḥ* – prone to begging; *ca* – and; *kutumbinaḥ* – the householders; *tapasvinaḥ* – those who have gone to the forest for austerities; *grāma-vāsāḥ* – village residents; *nyāsinaḥ* – the *sannyāsīs*; *atyartha-lolupāḥ* – excessively greedy for wealth.

TRANSLATION

The brahmacārīs will fail to execute their vows and become generally unclean, the householders will become beggars, the vānaprasthas will live in the villages, and the sannyāsīs will become greedy for wealth.

PURPORT

Brahmacarya, celibate student life, is practically nonexistent in the Age of Kali. In America, many boys' schools have become coeducational because young men frankly refuse to live without the constant companionship of lusty young girls. Also, we have personally observed throughout the Western world that student residences are among the dirtiest places on earth, as predicted here by the word *aśaucāḥ*.

Concerning householder beggars, when devotees of the Lord go door to door distributing transcendental literature and requesting donations for the propagation of God's glories, irritated householders commonly reply, "Someone should give *me* a donation." Householders in Kali-yuga are not charitable. Instead, because of their miserly mentality, they become irritated when spiritual mendicants approach them.

In Vedic culture, at the age of fifty, couples retire to sacred places for austere life and spiritual perfection. In countries like America, however, retirement cities have been constructed wherein elderly people can make fools of themselves by wasting the last years of their lives playing golf, ping-pong and shuffleboard and by engaging in pathetic attempts at love affairs even while their bodies are horribly rotting and their minds are growing senile. This shameless abuse of the venerable last years of life denotes a stubborn unwillingness to acknowledge the actual purpose of human life and is certainly an offense against God.

The words *nyāsino 'tyartha-lolupāḥ* indicate that charismatic religious leaders, and even those who are not charismatic, will proclaim themselves prophets, saints and incarnations to cheat the innocent public and fatten their bank accounts. Therefore the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is working arduously to establish bona fide celibate student life, religious householder life, dignified and progressive retirement, and genuine spiritual leadership for the entire world. Today, May 9, 1982, in the sensual city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, we have awarded *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life, to three young men, two Brazilians and one American, with the sincere hope that they will faithfully execute the rigid vows of renounced life and provide authentic spiritual leadership in South America.

TEXT 3.34

*hrasva-kāyā mahāhārā
bhūry-apatyā gata-hriyaḥ
śāśvat kaṭuka-bhāṣiṇyaś
caurya-māyōru-sāhasāḥ*

hrasva-kāyāḥ – having dwarfed bodies; *mahā-āhārāḥ* – eating too much; *bhūri-apatyāḥ* – having many children; *gata-hriyaḥ* – losing their shyness; *śāśvat* – constantly; *kaṭuka* – harshly; *bhāṣiṇyaḥ* – speaking; *caurya* – exhibiting the tendencies of thievery; *māyā* – deceit; *uru-sāhasāḥ* – and great audacity.

TRANSLATION

Women will become much smaller in size, and they will eat too much, have more children than they can properly take care of, and lose all shyness. They will always speak harshly and will exhibit qualities of thievery, deceit and unrestrained audacity.

TEXT 3.35

*paṇayiṣyanti vai kṣudrāḥ
kirātāḥ kūṭa-kāriṇaḥ
anāpady api maṁsyante
vārtām sādhu jugupsitām*

paṇayiṣyanti – will engage in commerce; *vai* – indeed; *kṣudrāḥ* – petty; *kirātāḥ* – the merchants; *kūṭa-kāriṇaḥ* – indulging in cheating; *anāpady* – when there is no emergency; *api* – even; *maṁsyante* – people will

consider; *vārtām* – an occupation; *sādhu* – good; *jugupsitām* – which is actually contemptible.

TRANSLATION

Businessmen will engage in petty commerce and earn their money by cheating. Even when there is no emergency, people will consider any degraded occupation quite acceptable.

PURPORT

Although other occupations are available, people do not hesitate to work in coal mines, slaughterhouses, steel mills, deserts, floating oil rigs, submarines and other equally abominable situations. As also mentioned here, businessmen will consider cheating and lying to be a perfectly respectable way to do business. These are all symptoms of the Age of Kali.

TEXT 3.36

*patim tyakṣyanti nirdravyam
bhṛtyā apy akhilottamam
bhṛtyam vipannam patayaḥ
kaulam gāś cāpayasvinīḥ*

patim – a master; *tyakṣyanti* – they will abandon; *nirdravyam* – lacking property; *bhṛtyāḥ* – servants; *apy* – even; *akhila-uttamam* – most excellent in personal qualities; *bhṛtyam* – a servant; *vipannam* – incapacitated; *patayaḥ* – masters; *kaulam* – belonging to the family for generations; *gāḥ* – cows; *ca* – and; *apayasvinīḥ* – which have stopped giving milk.

TRANSLATION

Servants will abandon a master who has lost his wealth, even if that master is a saintly person of exemplary character. Masters will abandon an incapacitated servant, even if that servant has been in the family for generations. Cows will be abandoned or killed when they stop giving milk.

PURPORT

In India, the cow is considered sacred not because Indian people are primitive worshipers of mythological totems but because Hindus intelligently understand that the cow is a mother. As children, nearly all of us were nourished with cow's milk, and therefore the cow is one

of our mothers. Certainly one's mother is sacred, and therefore we should not kill the sacred cow.

TEXT 3.37

*pitṛ-bhrāṭṛ-suhṛj-jñātīn
hitvā saurata-sauhṛdāḥ
nanāndṛ-śyāla-saṁvādā
dīnāḥ straiṇāḥ kalau narāḥ*

pitṛ – their fathers; *bhrāṭṛ* – brothers; *suhṛt* – well-wishing friends; *jñātīn* – and immediate relatives; *hitvā* – giving up; *saurata* – based on sexual relationships; *sauhṛdāḥ* – their conception of friendship; *nanāndṛ* – with their wives' sisters; *śyāla* – and wives' brothers; *saṁvādāḥ* – associating regularly; *dīnāḥ* – wretched; *straiṇāḥ* – effeminate; *kalau* – in Kali-yuga; *narāḥ* – the men.

TRANSLATION

In Kali-yuga men will be wretched and controlled by women. They will reject their fathers, brothers, other relatives and friends and will instead associate with the sisters and brothers of their wives. Thus their conception of friendship will be based exclusively on sexual ties.

TEXT 3.38

*śūdrāḥ pratigrahīṣyanti
tapo-veṣopajīvināḥ
dharmam vakṣyanty adharmajñā
adhiruhyottamāsanam*

śūdrāḥ – lowly, common workers; *pratigrahīṣyanti* – will accept religious charity; *tapah* – by shows of austerity; *veṣa* – and by dressing as mendicants; *upajīvināḥ* – earning their living; *dharmam* – the principles of religion; *vakṣyanti* – will speak about; *adharmajñāḥ* – those who know nothing about religion; *adhiruhyā* – mounting; *uttama-āsanam* – a high seat.

TRANSLATION

Uncultured men will accept charity on behalf of the Lord and will earn their livelihood by making a show of austerity and wearing a mendicant's dress. Those who know nothing about religion will mount a high seat and presume to speak on

religious principles.

PURPORT

The epidemic of bogus *gurus*, swamis, priests and so forth is explicitly described here.

TEXTS 3.39–40

*nityam udvigna-manaso
durbhikṣa-kara-karṣitāḥ
niranne bhū-tale rājan
anāvṛṣṭi-bhayāturāḥ*

*vāso-'nna-pāna-śayana-
vyavāya-snāna-bhūṣaṇaiḥ
hīnāḥ piśāca-sandarśā
bhaviṣyanti kalau prajāḥ*

nityam – constantly; *udvigna* – agitated; *manasaḥ* – their minds; *durbhikṣa* – by famine; *kara* – and taxes; *karṣitāḥ* – emaciated; *niranne* – when there is no food to be found; *bhū-tale* – upon the surface of the earth; *rājan* – O King Parikṣit; *anāvṛṣṭi* – of drought; *bhaya* – because of fear; *āturāḥ* – anxious; *vāsaḥ* – clothing; *anna* – food; *pāna* – drink; *śayana* – rest; *vyavāya* – sex; *snāna* – bathing; *bhūṣaṇaiḥ* – and personal ornaments; *hīnāḥ* – lacking; *piśāca-sandarśāḥ* – appearing just like ghostly demons; *bhaviṣyanti* – they will become; *kalau* – in the Age of Kali; *prajāḥ* – the people.

TRANSLATION

In the Age of Kali, people's minds will always be agitated. They will become emaciated by famine and taxation, my dear King, and will always be disturbed by fear of drought. They will lack adequate clothing, food and drink, will be unable to properly rest, have sex or bathe themselves, and will have no ornaments to decorate their bodies. In fact, the people of Kali-yuga will gradually come to appear like ghostly, haunted creatures.

PURPORT

The symptoms described here are already prevalent in many countries of the world and will gradually spread to other places engulfed by impiety and materialism.

TEXT 3.41

*kalau kākinike 'py arthe
vigrhya tyakta-sauhrdāḥ
tyakṣyanti ca priyān prāṇān
hanīsyanti svakān api*

kalau – in the Age of Kali; *kākinike* – of a small coin; *api* – even; *arthe* – for the sake; *vigrhya* – developing enmity; *tyakta* – abandoning; *sauhrdāḥ* – friendly relations; *tyakṣyanti* – they will reject; *ca* – and; *priyān* – dear; *prāṇān* – their own lives; *hanīsyanti* – they will kill; *svakān* – their own relatives; *api* – even.

TRANSLATION

In Kali-yuga men will develop hatred for each other even over a few coins. Giving up all friendly relations, they will be ready to lose their own lives and kill even their own relatives.

TEXT 3.42

*na rakṣīsyanti manujāḥ
sthavirau pitarāv api
putrān bhāryām ca kula-jām
kṣudrāḥ śīśnodaram-bharāḥ*

na rakṣīsyanti – they will not protect; *manujāḥ* – men; *sthavirau* – elderly; *pitarau* – parents; *api* – even; *putrān* – children; *bhāryām* – wife; *ca* – also; *kula-jām* – born of a proper family; *kṣudrāḥ* – petty; *śīśna-udaram* – their genitals and belly; *bharāḥ* – simply maintaining.

TRANSLATION

Men will no longer protect their elderly parents, their children or their respectable wives. Thoroughly degraded, they will care only to satisfy their own bellies and genitals.

PURPORT

In this age many people are already sending their elderly parents away to lonely, and often bizarre, old-age homes, although the elderly parents spent their entire lives serving their children.

Young children are also tormented in many ways in this age. Suicide among children has increased dramatically in recent years because they are being born not to loving, religious parents but to degraded, selfish men and women. In fact, children are often born because a birth-control pill, a prophylactic or some other

contraceptive device malfunctioned. Under such conditions, it is very difficult nowadays for parents to morally guide their children. Generally ignorant of spiritual science, parents cannot lead their children on the path of liberation and thus fail to fulfill their primary responsibility in family life.

As predicted in this verse, adultery has become common, and people in general are extremely concerned with eating and sex, which they consider far more important than knowing the Absolute Truth.

TEXT 3.43

*kalau na rājan jagatām param gurum
tri-loka-nāthānata-pāda-paṅkajam
prāyeṇa martyā bhagavantam acyutaṁ
yakṣyanti pāṣaṇḍa-vibhinna-cetasah*

kalau – in the Age of Kali; *na* – not; *rājan* – O King; *jagatām* – of the universe; *param* – the supreme; *gurum* – spiritual master; *tri-loka* – of the three worlds; *nātha* – by the various masters; *ānata* – bowed down to; *pāda-paṅkajam* – whose lotus feet; *prāyeṇa* – for the most part; *martyāḥ* – human beings; *bhagavantam* – the Personality of Godhead; *acyutam* – Lord Acyuta; *yakṣyanti* – they will offer sacrifice; *pāṣaṇḍa* – by atheism; *vibhinna* – diverted; *cetasah* – their intelligence.

TRANSLATION

O King, in the Age of Kali people’s intelligence will be diverted by atheism, and they will almost never offer sacrifice to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme spiritual master of the universe. Although the great personalities who control the three worlds all bow down to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, the petty and miserable human beings of this age will not do so.

PURPORT

The impulse to find the Absolute Truth, the source of all existence, has motivated philosophers, theologians and other intellectuals of various persuasions since time immemorial, and continues to do so today. However, soberly analyzing the ever-increasing plurality of so-called philosophies, religions, paths, ways of life and so on, we find that in almost all cases the ultimate objective is something impersonal or formless. But this idea of an impersonal or formless Absolute Truth

has serious logical flaws. According to ordinary rules of logic, a particular effect should directly or indirectly embody the attributes, or nature, of its own cause. Thus that which has no personality or activity could hardly be the source of all personality and all activity.

Our irrepressible proclivity to philosophize about the ultimate truth often expresses itself through philosophical, scientific and mystical attempts to discover that from which everything emanates. This material world, which is a seemingly limitless network of interactive causes and effects, is certainly not the Absolute Truth, since scientific observation of material elements indicates that the stuff of this world, material energy, is endlessly transformed into different states and shapes. Therefore, one particular instance of material reality cannot be the ultimate source of all other things.

We may speculate that matter in some shape or other has always existed. This theory, however, is no longer attractive to modern cosmologists, such as those at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. And even if we do posit that matter has always existed, we still must explain the source of consciousness if we want to satisfy our philosophical impulse toward discovering the Absolute Truth. Although modern empirical fanatics state that nothing is real except matter, everyone commonly experiences that consciousness is not the same kind of substance as a stone, a pencil or water. Awareness itself, in contradistinction to the objects of awareness, is not a physical entity but rather a process of perception and understanding. While there is ample evidence of a systematic interdependent relationship between matter and consciousness, there is no rigid empirical evidence whatsoever that matter is the *cause* of consciousness. Thus the theory that the material world has always existed and is therefore the ultimate truth does not scientifically or even intuitively explain the source of consciousness, which is the most fundamentally real aspect of our existence.

Furthermore, as demonstrated by Dr. Richard Thompson of the State University of New York at Binghamton and confirmed by several Nobel laureates in physics who have praised his work, the laws of nature governing the transformation of matter simply do not contain sufficiently complex information to account for the inconceivable complexity of events taking place within our own bodies and those of other life forms. In other words, not only do the material laws of

nature fail to account for the existence of consciousness, but they cannot explain even the interaction of material elements at complex organic levels. Even Socrates, the first great Western philosopher, was disgusted with the attempt to establish ultimate causality in terms of mechanistic principles.

The heat and luminosity of the sun's rays demonstrate to the satisfaction of any rational man that the sun, the source of the rays, is certainly not a dark, cold globe but rather a reservoir of almost unlimited heat and light. Similarly, the innumerable instances of personality and personal consciousness within creation are more than adequate to demonstrate the existence, somewhere, of an unlimited reservoir of consciousness and personal behavior. In his dialogue *Philebus*, the Greek philosopher Plato argued that just as the material elements in our body are derived from a vast reservoir of material elements existing within the universe, our rational intelligence is also derived from a great cosmic intelligence existing within the universe, and this supreme intelligence is God, the creator. Unfortunately, in Kali-yuga many leading thinkers cannot understand this and instead deny that the Absolute Truth, the source of our personal consciousness, has consciousness and personality. This is as reasonable as saying that the sun is cold and dark.

In Kali-yuga, many people present cheap, stereotyped arguments, such as "If God had a body or personality, He would be limited." In this inadequate attempt at logic, a qualified term is falsely presented in a universal sense. What really should be said is, "If God had a *material* body or a *material* personality like those we have experienced, He would be limited." But we leave out the qualifying adjective *material* and make a pseudouniversal assertion, as if we understood the full range, within total reality, of bodies and personality.

Bhagavad-gītā, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other Vedic literatures teach that the transcendental form and personality of the Absolute Truth are unlimited. Clearly, to be truly infinite God must be not only quantitatively but also qualitatively infinite. Unfortunately, in our mechanistic, industrial age we tend to define infinity only in its quantitative sense, and thus we fail to notice that an infinity of personal qualities is a necessary aspect of infinity. In other words, God must have infinite beauty, infinite wealth, infinite intelligence, infinite humor, infinite kindness, infinite anger and so on. Infinite is an

absolute, and if anything we observe in this world is not contained, somehow or other, within our conception of the Absolute, then that conception is of something limited and not of the Absolute at all.

Only in Kali-yuga are there philosophers foolish enough to proudly define the most absolute of all terms – God – in materialistic, relative ways and then declare themselves enlightened thinkers. No matter how big our brain may be, we should have the common sense to place it at the feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 3.44

*yan-nāmadheyam mriyamāṇa āturaḥ
patan skhalan vā vivaśo gṛṇan pumān
vimukta-karmārgala uttamām gatim
prāpnoti yakṣyanti na taṁ kalau janāḥ*

yat – whose; *nāmadheyam* – name; *mriyamāṇa* – a person who is dying; *āturaḥ* – distressed; *patan* – collapsing; *skhalan* – voice faltering; *vā* – or; *vivaśaḥ* – helplessly; *gṛṇan* – chanting; *pumān* – a person; *vimukta* – freed; *karma* – of fruitive work; *argalaḥ* – from the chains; *uttamām* – the topmost; *gatim* – destination; *prāpnoti* – achieves; *yakṣyanti na* – they do not worship; *taṁ* – Him, the Personality of Godhead; *kalau* – in the Age of Kali; *janāḥ* – people.

TRANSLATION

Terrified, about to die, a man collapses on his bed. Although his voice is faltering and he is hardly conscious of what he is saying, if he utters the holy name of the Supreme Lord he can be freed from the reaction of his fruitive work and achieve the supreme destination. But still people in the Age of Kali will not worship the Supreme Lord.

PURPORT

You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink.

TEXT 3.45

*pumsām kali-kṛtān doṣān
dravya-deśātma-sambhavān
sarvān harati citta-stho
bhagavān puruṣottamaḥ*

pumsām – of men; *kali-kṛtān* – created by the influence of Kali; *doṣān* –

the faults; *dravya* – objects; *deśa* – space; *ātma* – and personal nature; *sambhavān* – based upon; *sarvān* – all; *harati* – steals away; *citta-sthaḥ* – situated within the heart; *bhagavān* – the almighty Lord; *puruṣa-uttamaḥ* – the Supreme Person.

TRANSLATION

In the Kali-yuga, objects, places and even individual personalities are all polluted. The almighty Personality of Godhead, however, can remove all such contamination from the life of one who fixes the Lord within his mind.

TEXT 3.46

*śrutāḥ saṅkīrtitaḥ dhyātāḥ
pūjitaś cāḍṛto 'pi vā
nṛṇāṃ dhunoti bhagavān
hṛt-stho janmāyutāśubham*

śrutāḥ – heard; *saṅkīrtitaḥ* – glorified; *dhyātāḥ* – meditated upon; *pūjitaḥ* – worshiped; *ca* – and; *āḍṛtaḥ* – venerated; *api* – even; *vā* – or; *nṛṇām* – of men; *dhunoti* – cleanses away; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *hṛt-sthaḥ* – seated within their hearts; *janmāyuta* – of thousands of births; *āśubham* – the inauspicious contamination.

TRANSLATION

If a person hears about, glorifies, meditates upon, worships or simply offers great respect to the Supreme Lord, who is situated within the heart, the Lord will remove from his mind the contamination accumulated during many thousands of lifetimes.

TEXT 3.47

*yathā hemni sthito vahnir
durvarṇaṃ hanti dhātu-jam
evam ātma-gato viṣṇur
yoginām aśubhāśayam*

yathā – just as; *hemni* – in gold; *sthitaḥ* – situated; *vahnir* – fire; *durvarṇam* – the discoloration; *hanti* – destroys; *dhātu-jam* – due to the taint of other metals; *evam* – in the same way; *ātma-gataḥ* – having entered the soul; *viṣṇuḥ* – Lord Viṣṇu; *yoginām* – of the *yogīs*; *aśubhāśayam* – the dirty mind.

TRANSLATION

Just as fire applied to gold removes any discoloration caused by traces of other metals, Lord Viṣṇu within the heart purifies the minds of the yogīs.

PURPORT

Although one may practice the mystic *yoga* system, his actual spiritual advancement is due to the mercy of the Supreme Lord within the heart; it is not directly the result of his austerity and meditation. If one becomes foolishly proud in the name of *yoga*, his spiritual position becomes ridiculous.

TEXT 3.48

*vidyā-tapaḥ-prāṇa-nirodha-maitrī-
tīrthābhiṣeka-vrata-dāna-japyaiḥ
nātyanta-śuddhiṁ labhate 'ntarātmā
yathā hr̥di-sthe bhagavaty anante*

vidyā – by worship of demigods; *tapaḥ* – austerities; *prāṇa-nirodha* – exercise of breath control; *maitrī* – compassion; *tīrtha-abhiṣeka* – bathing in holy places; *vrata* – strict vows; *dāna* – charity; *japyaiḥ* – and chanting of various *mantras*; *na* – not; *atyanta* – complete; *śuddhiṁ* – purification; *labhate* – can achieve; *antaḥ-ātmā* – the mind; *yathā* – as; *hr̥di-sthe* – when He is present within the heart; *bhagavati* – the Personality of Godhead; *anante* – the unlimited Lord.

TRANSLATION

By one's engaging in the processes of demigod worship, austerities, breath control, compassion, bathing in holy places, strict vows, charity and chanting of various mantras, one's mind cannot attain the same absolute purification as that achieved when the unlimited Personality of Godhead appears within one's heart.

TEXT 3.49

*tasmāt sarvātmanā rājan
hr̥di-sthaṁ kuru keśavam
mriyamāṇo hy avahitas
tato yāsi parām gatim*

tasmāt – therefore; *sarva-ātmanā* – with all endeavor; *rājan* – O King;

hr̥di-stham – within your heart; *kuru* – make; *keśavam* – Lord Keśava; *mriyamāṇaḥ* – dying; *hi* – indeed; *avahitaḥ* – concentrated; *tataḥ* – then; *yāsi* – you will go; *parām* – to the supreme; *gatim* – destination.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O King, endeavor with all your might to fix the Supreme Lord Keśava within your heart. Maintain this concentration upon the Lord, and at the time of death you will certainly attain the supreme destination.

PURPORT

Although the Supreme Lord is always in the heart of every living being, the words *hr̥di-stham kuru keśavam* indicate that one should endeavor to realize the Lord's presence there and maintain this awareness at every moment. Parīkṣit Mahārāja is about to give up this world and is receiving final instructions from his spiritual master, Śukadeva Gosvāmī. In the context of the King's imminent departure, this verse has special significance.

TEXT 3.50

*mriyamāṇair abhidhyeyo
bhagavān parameśvaraḥ
ātma-bhāvaṁ nayaty aṅga
sarvātmā sarva-saṁśrayaḥ*

mriyamāṇaiḥ – by those who are dying; *abhidhyeyaḥ* – meditated upon; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *parama-īśvaraḥ* – the Supreme Lord; *ātma-bhāvaṁ* – their own true identity; *nayati* – leads them to; *aṅga* – my dear King; *sarva-ātmā* – the Supreme Soul; *sarva-saṁśrayaḥ* – the shelter of all beings.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, the Personality of Godhead is the ultimate controller. He is the Supreme Soul and the supreme shelter of all beings. When meditated upon by those about to die, He reveals to them their own eternal spiritual identity.

TEXT 3.51

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann
asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya*

mukta-saṅgaḥ param vrajet

kaleḥ – of the Age of Kali; *doṣa-nidheḥ* – in the ocean of faults; *rājan* – O King; *asti* – there is; *hi* – certainly; *ekaḥ* – one; *mahān* – very great; *guṇaḥ* – good quality; *kīrtanāt* – by chanting; *eva* – certainly; *kṛṣṇasya* – of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa; *mukta-saṅgaḥ* – liberated from material bondage; *param* – to the transcendental spiritual kingdom; *vrajet* – one can go.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.

PURPORT

After mentioning the innumerable faults of this Age of Kali, Śukadeva Gosvāmī now mentions its one brilliant aspect. Just as one powerful king can kill innumerable thieves, one brilliant spiritual quality can destroy all the contamination of this age. It is impossible to overestimate the importance of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, especially in this fallen age.

TEXT 3.52

*kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇum
tretāyām yajato makhaiḥ
dvāpare paricaryāyām
kalau tad dhari-kīrtanāt*

kṛte – in the Satya-yuga; *yat* – which; *dhyāyataḥ* – from meditation; *viṣṇum* – on Lord Viṣṇu; *tretāyām* – in the Tretā-yuga; *yajataḥ* – from worshiping; *makhaiḥ* – by performing sacrifices; *dvāpare* – in the age of Dvāpara; *paricaryāyām* – by worshiping the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa; *kalau* – in the Age of Kali; *tat* – that same result (can be achieved); *hari-kīrtanāt* – simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

TRANSLATION

Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga by meditating on Viṣṇu, in Tretā-yuga by performing sacrifices, and in Dvāpara-yuga by serving the Lord’s lotus feet can be obtained in Kali-yuga

simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

PURPORT

A similar verse is found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (6.2.17), and also in the *Padma Purāṇa* (*Uttara-khaṇḍa* 72.25) and the *Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa* (38.97):

*dhyāyan kṛte yajan yajñais
tretāyām dvāpare ’rcayan
yad āpnoti tad āpnoti
kalau saṅkīrtya keśavam*

“Whatever is achieved by meditation in Satya-yuga, by the performance of sacrifice in Tretā-yuga, and by the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet in Dvāpara-yuga is obtained in the Age of Kali simply by glorifying the name of Lord Keśava.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has further quoted from the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* concerning the degraded condition of people in Kali-yuga:

*ataḥ kalau tapo-yoga-
vidyā-yajñādikāḥ kriyāḥ
sāṅgā bhavanti na kṛtāḥ
kuśalair api dehibhiḥ*

“Thus in the Age of Kali the practices of austerity, yoga meditation, Deity worship, sacrifice and so on, along with their various subsidiary functions, are not properly carried out, even by the most expert embodied souls.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has also cited the *Cāturmāsya-māhātmya* of the *Skanda Purāṇa* concerning the necessity of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in this age:

*tathā caivottamaṁ loke
tapaḥ śrī-hari-kīrtanam
kalau yuge viśeṣeṇa
viṣṇu-prītyai samācaret*

“In this way the most perfect penance to be executed in this world is the chanting of the name of Lord Śrī Hari. Especially in the Age of Kali, one can satisfy the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu by performing *saṅkīrtana*.”

In conclusion, massive propaganda should be made all over the

world to induce people to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, by which human society can be rescued from the dangerous ocean of the Age of Kali.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Third Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Bhūmi-gītā.”

CHAPTER FOUR

**The Four Categories of
Universal Annihilation**

This chapter discusses the four kinds of annihilation (constant, occasional, material and final) and the chanting of the holy name of Lord Hari, which is the only means of stopping the cycle of material life.

One thousand cycles of four ages constitute one day of Brahmā, and each day of Brahmā, called a *kalpa*, contains within it the lifetimes of fourteen Manus. The duration of Brahmā's night is the same as that of his day. During his night Brahmā sleeps, and the three planetary systems meet destruction; this is the *naimittika*, or occasional, annihilation. When Brahmā's life span of one hundred years is finished, there occurs the *prākṛtika*, or total material, annihilation. At that time the seven elements of material nature, beginning with the *mahat*, and the entire universal egg composed of them are destroyed. When a person achieves knowledge of the Absolute, he understands factual reality. He perceives the entire created universe as separate from the Absolute and therefore unreal. That is called the *ātyantika*, or final, annihilation (liberation). At every moment time invisibly transforms the bodies of all created beings and all other manifestations of matter. This process of transformation causes the living entity to undergo the constant annihilation of birth and death. Those possessed of subtle vision state that all creatures, including Brahmā himself, are always subject to generation and annihilation. Material life means subjugation to birth and death, or generation and annihilation. The only boat suitable for crossing the ocean of material existence, which is otherwise impossible to cross, is the boat of submissive hearing of the nectarean pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 4.1

śrī-śuka uvāca

*kālas te paramāṇv-ādir
dvi-parārdhāvadhīr nṛpa
kathito yuga-mānaṁ ca
śṛṇu kalpa-layāv api*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *kālaḥ* – time; *te* – to you; *parama-āṇu* – (the smallest fraction of time measured in terms of) the indivisible atom; *ādiḥ* – beginning with; *dvi-para-ardha* – the two halves of Brahmā's total life span; *avadhiḥ* – culminating in; *nṛpa* – O

King Parīkṣit; *kathitaḥ* – has been described; *yuga-mānam* – the duration of the millennia; *ca* – and; *śṛṇu* – now hear; *kalpa* – Brahmā's day; *layau* – annihilation; *api* – also.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, I have already described to you the measurements of time, beginning from the smallest fraction measured by the movement of a single atom up to the total life span of Lord Brahmā. I have also discussed the measurement of the different millennia of universal history. Now hear about the time of Brahmā's day and the process of annihilation.

TEXT 4.2

*catur-yuga-sahasram tu
brahmaṇo dinam ucyate
sa kalpo yatra manavaś
caturdaśa viśām-pate*

catur-yuga – four ages; *sahasram* – one thousand; *tu* – indeed; *brahmaṇaḥ* – of Lord Brahmā; *dinam* – the day; *ucyate* – is said; *saḥ* – that; *kalpaḥ* – a kalpa; *yatra* – in which; *manavaḥ* – original progenitors of mankind; *caturdaśa* – fourteen; *viśām-pate* – O King.

TRANSLATION

One thousand cycles of four ages constitute a single day of Brahmā, known as a kalpa. In that period, O King, fourteen Manus come and go.

TEXT 4.3

*tad-ante pralayas tāvān
brāhmī rātrir udāhṛtā
trayo lokā ime tatra
kalpante pralayāya hi*

tad-ante – after those (thousand cycles of ages); *pralayaḥ* – the annihilation; *tāvān* – of the same duration; *brāhmī* – of Brahmā; *rātriḥ* – the nighttime; *udāhṛtā* – is described; *trayaḥ* – the three; *lokāḥ* – worlds; *ime* – these; *tatra* – at that time; *kalpante* – are prone; *pralayāya* – to annihilation; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

After one day of Brahmā, annihilation occurs during his night, which is of the same duration. At that time all the three planetary systems are subject to destruction.

TEXT 4.4

*eṣa naimittikaḥ proktaḥ
pralayo yatra viśva-ṣṛk
śete 'nantāsano viśvam
ātmasāt-kṛtya cātma-bhūḥ*

eṣaḥ – this; *naimittikaḥ* – occasional; *proktaḥ* – is said; *pralayaḥ* – annihilation; *yatra* – in which; *viśva-ṣṛk* – the creator of the universe, the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa; *śete* – lies down; *ananta-āsanah* – upon the snake-bed of Ananta Śeṣa; *viśvam* – the universe; *ātma-sāt-kṛtya* – absorbing within Himself; *ca* – also; *ātma-bhūḥ* – Lord Brahmā.

TRANSLATION

This is called the naimittika, or occasional, annihilation, during which the original creator, Lord Nārāyaṇa, lies down upon the bed of Ananta Śeṣa and absorbs the entire universe within Himself while Lord Brahmā sleeps.

TEXT 4.5

*dvi-parārdhe tv atikrānte
brahmaṇaḥ parameṣṭhinaḥ
tadā prakṛtayaḥ sapta
kalpante pralayāya vai*

dvi-parārdhe – two *parārdhas*; *tu* – and; *atikrānte* – when they have become completed; *brahmaṇaḥ* – of Lord Brahmā; *parame-sthinaḥ* – the most highly situated living entity; *tadā* – then; *prakṛtayaḥ* – the elements of nature; *sapta* – seven; *kalpante* – are subject; *pralayāya* – to destruction; *vai* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

When the two halves of the lifetime of Lord Brahmā, the most elevated created being, are complete, the seven basic elements of creation are annihilated.

TEXT 4.6

*eṣa prākṛtiko rājan
pralayo yatra liyate*

*aṇḍa-koṣas tu saṅghāto
vighāta upasādite*

eṣaḥ – this; *prākṛtikaḥ* – of the elements of material nature; *rājan* – O King Parīkṣit; *pralayaḥ* – the annihilation; *yatra* – in which; *līyate* – is dissolved; *aṇḍa-koṣaḥ* – the egg of the universe; *tu* – and; *saṅghātaḥ* – the amalgamation; *vighāte* – the cause of its disruption; *upasādite* – being encountered.

TRANSLATION

O King, upon the annihilation of the material elements, the universal egg, comprising the elemental amalgamation of creation, is confronted with destruction.

PURPORT

It is significant that Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the spiritual master of King Parīkṣit, is broadly discussing cosmic annihilation just before the death of his disciple. By attentively hearing the story of universal destruction, one can easily understand one's personal departure from this temporary world to be an insignificant incident within the gigantic scope of the total material manifestation. By his deep and relevant discussions of the creation of God, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, as an ideal spiritual master, is preparing his disciple for the moment of death.

TEXT 4.7

*parjanyaḥ śata-varṣāṇi
bhūmau rājan na varṣati
tadā niranne hy anyonyam
bhakṣyamāṇāḥ kṣudhārditāḥ
kṣayam yāsyanti śanakaiḥ
kālenopadrutāḥ prajāḥ*

parjanyaḥ – the clouds; *śata-varṣāṇi* – for one hundred years; *bhūmau* – upon the earth; *rājan* – my dear King; *na varṣati* – will not give rain; *tadā* – then; *niranne* – with the coming of famine; *hi* – indeed; *anyonyam* – one another; *bhakṣyamāṇāḥ* – eating; *kṣudhā* – by hunger; *arditāḥ* – distressed; *kṣayam* – to destruction; *yāsyanti* – they go; *śanakaiḥ* – gradually; *kālena* – by the force of time; *upadrutāḥ* – confounded; *prajāḥ* – the people.

TRANSLATION

As annihilation approaches, O King, there will be no rain upon the earth for one hundred years. Drought will lead to famine, and the starving populace will literally consume one another. The inhabitants of the earth, bewildered by the force of time, will gradually be destroyed.

TEXT 4.8

*sāmudram daihikam bhaumam
rasam sām̐vartako raviḥ
raśmibhiḥ pibate ghoraiḥ
sarvam naiva vimuñcati*

sāmudram – of the ocean; *daihikam* – of living bodies; *bhaumam* – of the earth; *rasam* – the juice; *sām̐vartakaḥ* – annihilating; *raviḥ* – the sun; *raśmibhiḥ* – with its rays; *pibate* – drinks up; *ghoraiḥ* – which are terrible; *sarvam* – all; *na* – nothing; *eva* – even; *vimuñcati* – gives.

TRANSLATION

The sun in its annihilating form will drink up with its terrible rays all the water of the ocean, of living bodies and of the earth itself. But the devastating sun will not give any rain in return.

TEXT 4.9

*tataḥ saṁvartako vahniḥ
saṅkarṣaṇa-mukhotthitaḥ
dahaty anila-vegottaḥ
śūnyān bhū-vivarān atha*

tataḥ – then; *saṁvartakaḥ* – of destruction; *vahniḥ* – the fire; *saṅkarṣaṇa* – of the Supreme Lord, Saṅkarṣaṇa; *mukha* – from the mouth; *utthitaḥ* – arisen; *dahati* – burns; *anila-vega* – by the force of the wind; *utthaḥ* – raised; *śūnyān* – empty; *bhū* – of the planets; *vivarān* – the crevices; *atha* – after that.

TRANSLATION

Next the great fire of annihilation will flare up from the mouth of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. Carried by the mighty force of the wind, this fire will burn throughout the universe, scorching the lifeless cosmic shell.

TEXT 4.10

upary adhaḥ samantāc ca

*śikhābhir vahni-sūryayoḥ
dahyamānam vibhāty aṇḍam
dagdha-gomaya-piṇḍa-vat*

upari – above; *adhaḥ* – and below; *samantāt* – in all directions; *ca* – and; *śikhābhiḥ* – with the flames; *vahni* – of the fire; *sūryayoḥ* – and of the sun; *dahyamānam* – being burned; *vibhāti* – glows; *aṇḍam* – the egg of the universe; *dagdha* – burned; *go-maya* – of cow dung; *piṇḍa-vat* – like a ball.

TRANSLATION

Burned from all sides – from above by the blazing sun and from below by the fire of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa – the universal sphere will glow like a burning ball of cow dung.

TEXT 4.11

*tataḥ pracaṇḍa-pavano
varṣāṇām adhikam śatam
paraḥ sām̐vartako vāti
dhūmram kham rajasāvṛtam*

tataḥ – then; *pracaṇḍa* – terrible; *pavanaḥ* – a wind; *varṣāṇām* – of years; *adhikam* – more than; *śatam* – one hundred; *paraḥ* – great; *sām̐vartakaḥ* – causing annihilation; *vāti* – blows; *dhūmram* – gray; *kham* – the sky; *rajasā* – with dust; *āvṛtam* – covered.

TRANSLATION

A great and terrible wind of destruction will begin to blow for more than one hundred years, and the sky, covered with dust, will turn gray.

TEXT 4.12

*tato megha-kulāny aṅga
citra varṇāny anekaśaḥ
śatam varṣāṇi varṣanti
nadanti rabhasa-svanaiḥ*

tataḥ – then; *megha-kulāni* – the clouds; *aṅga* – my dear King; *citra-varṇāni* – of various colors; *anekaśaḥ* – numerous; *śatam* – one hundred; *varṣāṇi* – years; *varṣanti* – they pour down rain; *nadanti* – they thunder; *rabhasa-svanaiḥ* – with tremendous sounds.

TRANSLATION

After that, O King, groups of multicolored clouds will gather, roaring terribly with thunder, and will pour down floods of rain for one hundred years.

TEXT 4.13

*tata ekodakam viśvam
brahmāṇḍa-vivarāntaram*

tataḥ – then; *eka-udakam* – a single body of water; *viśvam* – the universe; *brahma-aṇḍa* – of the egg of creation; *vivara-antaram* – within.

TRANSLATION

At that time, the shell of the universe will fill up with water, forming a single cosmic ocean.

TEXT 4.14

*tadā bhūmer gandha-guṇam
grasanti āpa uda-plave
grasta-gandhā tu pṛthivī
pralayatvāya kalpate*

tadā – then; *bhūmeḥ* – of the earth; *gandha-guṇam* – the perceptible quality of fragrance; *grasanti* – takes away; *āpaḥ* – the water; *uda-plave* – during the flooding; *grasta-gandhā* – deprived of its fragrance; *tu* – and; *pṛthivī* – the element earth; *pralayatvāya kalpate* – becomes unmanifest.

TRANSLATION

As the entire universe is flooded, the water will rob the earth of its unique quality of fragrance, and the element earth, deprived of its distinguishing quality, will be dissolved.

PURPORT

As clearly explained throughout *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the first element, sky, possesses the unique quality of sound. As creation expands, the second element, air, comes into being, and it possesses sound and touch. The third element, fire, possesses sound, touch and form, and the fourth element, water, possesses sound, touch, form and flavor. The earth possesses sound, touch, form, flavor and aroma. As each element loses its unique distinguishing quality, it naturally becomes indistinguishable from the more subtle elements and is thus

effectively dissolved as a unique entity.

TEXTS 4.15–19

*apām rasam atho tejas
tā liyante 'tha nīrasāḥ
grasate tejaso rūpaṁ
vāyus tad-rahitaṁ tadā*

*liyate cānile tejo
vāyoḥ khaṁ grasate guṇam
sa vai viśati khaṁ rājanis
tataś ca nabhaso guṇam*

*śabdaṁ grasati bhūtādir
nabhas tam anu liyate
taijasaś cendriyāṅy aṅga
devān vaikāriko guṇaiḥ*

*mahān grasaty ahaṅkāraṁ
guṇāḥ sattvādayaś ca tam
grasate 'vyākṛtaṁ rājan
guṇān kālena coditam*

*na tasya kālāvayavaiḥ
pariṇāmādayo guṇāḥ
anādy anantam avyaktaṁ
nityaṁ kāraṇam avyayam*

apām – of water; *rasam* – the taste; *atha* – then; *tejaḥ* – fire; *tāḥ* – that water; *liyante* – dissolves; *atha* – after this; *nīrasāḥ* – deprived of its quality of taste; *grasate* – takes away; *tejasāḥ* – of fire; *rūpaṁ* – the form; *vāyuh* – the air; *tad-rahitaṁ* – deprived of that form; *tadā* – then; *liyate* – merges; *ca* – and; *anile* – in wind; *tejaḥ* – fire; *vāyoḥ* – of the air; *khaṁ* – the ether; *grasate* – takes away; *guṇam* – the perceptible quality (touch); *saḥ* – that air; *vai* – indeed; *viśati* – enters; *khaṁ* – the ether; *rājan* – O King Parīkṣit; *tataḥ* – thereupon; *ca* – and; *nabhasāḥ* – of the ether; *guṇam* – the quality; *śabdaṁ* – sound; *grasati* – takes away; *bhūta-ādiḥ* – the element of false ego in the mode of ignorance; *nabhaḥ* – the ether; *tam* – into that false ego; *anu* – subsequently; *liyate* – merges; *taijasaḥ* – false ego in the mode of passion; *ca* – and; *indriyāṅi* – the senses; *aṅga* – my dear King; *devān* – the demigods; *vaikārikaḥ* – false ego in the mode of goodness; *guṇaiḥ* – along with the manifest functions (of false ego); *mahān* – the *mahat-tattva*; *grasati*

– seizes; *ahaṅkāram* – false ego; *guṇāḥ* – the basic modes of nature; *sattva-ādayaḥ* – goodness, passion and ignorance; *ca* – and; *tam* – that *mahat*; *grasate* – seizes; *avyākṛtam* – the unmanifest original form of nature; *rājan* – O King; *guṇān* – the three modes; *kālena* – by time; *coditam* – impelled; *na* – there are not; *tasya* – of that unmanifest nature; *kāla* – of time; *avayavaiḥ* – by the segments; *pariṇāma-ādayaḥ* – transformation and the other changes of visible matter (creation, growth and so on); *guṇāḥ* – such qualities; *anādi* – without beginning; *anantam* – without end; *avyaktam* – unmanifest; *nityam* – eternal; *kāraṇam* – the cause; *avyayam* – infallible.

TRANSLATION

The element fire then seizes the taste from the element water, which, deprived of its unique quality, taste, merges into fire. Air seizes the form inherent in fire, and then fire, deprived of form, merges into air. The element ether seizes the quality of air, namely touch, and that air enters into ether. Then, O King, false ego in ignorance seizes sound, the quality of ether, after which ether merges into false ego. False ego in the mode of passion takes hold of the senses, and false ego in the mode of goodness absorbs the demigods. Then the total mahat-tattva seizes false ego along with its various functions, and that mahat is seized by the three basic modes of nature – goodness, passion and ignorance. My dear King Parīkṣit, these modes are further overtaken by the original unmanifest form of nature, impelled by time. That unmanifest nature is not subject to the six kinds of transformation caused by the influence of time. Rather, it has no beginning and no end. It is the unmanifest, eternal and infallible cause of creation.

TEXTS 4.20–21

*na yatra vāco na mano na sattvaṁ
tamo rajo vā mahad-ādayo 'mī
na prāṇa-buddhīndriya-devatā vā
na sanniveśaḥ khalu loka-kalpaḥ*

*na svapna-jāgran na ca tat suṣuptaṁ
na khaṁ jalaṁ bhūr anilo 'gnir arkaḥ
saṁsupta-vac chūnya-vad apratarkyaṁ
tan mūla-bhūtaṁ padam āmananti*

na – not; *yatra* – wherein; *vācaḥ* – speech; *na* – not; *manaḥ* – the mind; *na* – not; *sattvam* – the mode of goodness; *tamaḥ* – the mode of ignorance; *rajaḥ* – the mode of passion; *vā* – or; *mahat* – the *mahat-tattva*; *ādayaḥ* – and so on; *amī* – these elements; *na* – not; *prāṇa* – the vital air; *buddhi* – intelligence; *indriya* – the senses; *devatāḥ* – and the controlling demigods; *vā* – or; *na* – not; *sanniveśaḥ* – the particular construction; *khalu* – indeed; *loka-kalpaḥ* – of the arrangement of the planetary systems; *na* – not; *svapna* – sleep; *jāgrat* – waking condition; *na* – not; *ca* – and; *tat* – that; *suṣuptam* – deep sleep; *na* – not; *kham* – ether; *jalam* – water; *bhūḥ* – earth; *anilaḥ* – air; *agniḥ* – fire; *arkaḥ* – the sun; *samsupta-vat* – like one who is fast asleep; *śūnya-vat* – like a void; *apratarkyam* – inaccessible to logic; *tat* – that *pradhāna*; *mūla-bhūtam* – serving as the basis; *padam* – the substance; *āmananti* – great authorities say.

TRANSLATION

In the unmanifest stage of material nature, called *pradhāna*, there is no expression of words, no mind and no manifestation of the subtle elements beginning from the *mahat*, nor are there the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. There is no life air or intelligence, nor any senses or demigods. There is no definite arrangement of planetary systems, nor are there present the different stages of consciousness – sleep, wakefulness and deep sleep. There is no ether, water, earth, air, fire or sun. The situation is just like that of complete sleep, or of voidness. Indeed, it is indescribable. Authorities in spiritual science explain, however, that since *pradhāna* is the original substance, it is the actual basis of material creation.

TEXT 4.22

*layaḥ prākṛtiko hy eṣa
puruṣāvyaktayor yadā
śaktayaḥ sampralīyante
vivaśāḥ kāla-vidrutāḥ*

layaḥ – the annihilation; *prākṛtikaḥ* – of the material elements; *hi* – indeed; *eṣaḥ* – this; *puruṣa* – of the Supreme Lord; *avyaktayoḥ* – and of His material nature in its unmanifest form; *yadā* – when; *śaktayaḥ* – the energies; *sampralīyante* – merge totally; *vivaśāḥ* – helpless; *kāla* – by time; *vidrutāḥ* – disarrayed.

TRANSLATION

This is the annihilation called *prākṛtika*, during which the energies belonging to the Supreme Person and His unmanifest material nature, disassembled by the force of time, are deprived of their potencies and merge together totally.

TEXT 4.23

*buddhīndriyārtha-rūpeṇa
jñānam bhāti tad-āśrayam
dṛśyatvāvyatirekābhyām
ādy-antavad avastu yat*

buddhi – of intelligence; *indriya* – the senses; *artha* – and the objects of perception; *rūpeṇa* – in the form; *jñānam* – the Absolute Truth; *bhāti* – manifests; *tat* – of these elements; *āśrayam* – the basis; *dṛśyatva* – because of being perceived; *avyatirekābhyām* – and because of being nondifferent from its own cause; *ādi-anta-vat* – which has a beginning and an end; *avastu* – is insubstantial; *yat* – whatever.

TRANSLATION

It is the Absolute Truth alone who manifests in the forms of intelligence, the senses and the objects of sense perception, and who is their ultimate basis. Whatever has a beginning and an end is insubstantial because of being an object perceived by limited senses and because of being nondifferent from its own cause.

PURPORT

The word *dṛśyatva* indicates that all subtle and gross material manifestations are made visible by the potency of the Supreme Lord and again become invisible, or unmanifest, at the time of annihilation. They are therefore in essence not separate from the source of their expansion and withdrawal.

TEXT 4.24

*dīpaś cakṣuś ca rūpaṁ ca
jyotiṣo na pṛthag bhavet
evaṁ dhīḥ khāni mātrās ca
na syur anyatamād ṛtāt*

dīpaḥ – a lamp; *cakṣuḥ* – a perceiving eye; *ca* – and; *rūpaṁ* – a perceived form; *ca* – and; *jyotiṣaḥ* – from the original element fire; *na*

– not; *pr̥thak* – distinct; *bhavet* – are; *evam* – in the same way; *dhīḥ* – intelligence; *khāni* – the senses; *mātrāḥ* – the perceptions; *ca* – and; *na syuḥ* – they are not; *anyatamāt* – which is itself completely distinct; *ṛtāt* – from the reality.

TRANSLATION

A lamp, the eye that views by the light of that lamp, and the visible form that is viewed are all basically nondifferent from the element fire. In the same way, intelligence, the senses and sense perceptions have no existence separate from the supreme reality, although that Absolute Truth remains totally distinct from them.

TEXT 4.25

*buddher jāgaraṇam svapnaḥ
suṣuptir iti cocyate
māyā-mātram idaṁ rājan
nānātvam pratyag-ātmani*

buddheḥ – of intelligence; *jāgaraṇam* – waking consciousness; *svapnaḥ* – sleep; *suṣuptiḥ* – deep sleep; *iti* – thus; *ca* – and; *ucyate* – are called; *māyā-mātram* – merely illusion; *idaṁ* – this; *rājan* – O King; *nānātvam* – the duality; *pratyag-ātmani* – experienced by the pure soul.

TRANSLATION

The three states of intelligence are called waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep. But, my dear King, the variegated experiences created for the pure living entity by these different states are nothing more than illusion.

PURPORT

Pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness exists beyond the various stages of material awareness. Just as darkness vanishes in the presence of light, so illusory material intelligence, which is experienced as normal perception, dreaming and deep sleep, completely vanishes in the brilliant presence of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the constitutional condition of every living entity.

TEXT 4.26

*yathā jala-dharā vyomni
bhavanti na bhavanti ca
brahmaṇīdaṁ tathā viśvam*

avayavy udayāpyayāt

yathā – just as; *jala-dharāḥ* – the clouds; *vyomni* – in the sky; *bhavanti* – are; *na bhavanti* – are not; *ca* – and; *brahmaṇi* – within the Absolute Truth; *idam* – this; *tathā* – similarly; *viśvam* – universe; *avayavi* – having parts; *udaya* – because of generation; *apyayāt* – and dissolution.

TRANSLATION

Just as clouds in the sky come into being and are then dispersed by the amalgamation and dissolution of their constituent elements, this material universe is created and destroyed within the Absolute Truth by the amalgamation and dissolution of its elemental, constituent parts.

TEXT 4.27

*satyaṁ hy avayavaḥ proktaḥ
sarvāvayavinām iha
vinārthena pratiyeran
paṭasyevāṅga tantavaḥ*

satyam – real; *hi* – because; *avayavaḥ* – the ingredient cause; *proktaḥ* – is said to be; *sarva-avayavinām* – of all constituted entities; *iha* – in this created world; *vinā* – apart from; *arthena* – their manifest product; *pratiyeran* – they can be perceived; *paṭasya* – of a cloth; *iva* – as; *aṅga* – my dear King; *tantavaḥ* – the threads.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, it is stated [in the Vedānta-sūtra] that the ingredient cause that constitutes any manifested product in this universe can be perceived as a separate reality, just as the threads that make up a cloth can be perceived separately from their product.

TEXT 4.28

*yat sāmānya-viśeṣābhyām
upalabhyeta sa bhramaḥ
anyonyāpāśrayāt sarvam
ādy-antavad avastu yat*

yat – whatever; *sāmānya* – in terms of general cause; *viśeṣābhyām* – and specific product; *upalabhyeta* – is experienced; *saḥ* – that; *bhramaḥ*

– is illusion; *anyonya* – mutual; *apāśrayāt* – because of dependence; *sarvam* – everything; *ādi-anta-vat* – subject to beginning and end; *avastu* – unreal; *yat* – which.

TRANSLATION

Anything experienced in terms of general cause and specific effect must be an illusion, because such causes and effects exist only relative to each other. Indeed, whatever has a beginning and an end is unreal.

PURPORT

The nature of a material cause cannot be perceived without perception of the effect. For example, the burning nature of fire cannot be perceived without observing the effect of fire, such as a burning object or ashes. Similarly, the saturating quality of water cannot be understood without observing the effect, a saturated cloth or paper. The organizational power of a man cannot be understood without observing the effect of his dynamic work, namely a solid institution. In this way, not only do effects depend upon their causes, but the perception of the cause also depends upon observation of the effect. Thus both are defined relatively and have a beginning and an end. The conclusion is that all such material causes and effects are essentially temporary and relative, and consequently illusory.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, although the cause of all causes, has no beginning or end. Therefore He is neither material nor illusory. Lord Kṛṣṇa's opulences and potencies are absolute reality, beyond the interdependence of material cause and effect.

TEXT 4.29

*vikāraḥ khyāyamāno 'pi
pratyag-ātmānam antarā
na nirūpyo 'sty aṇur api
syāc cec cit-sama ātma-vat*

vikāraḥ – the transformation of created existence; *khyāyamānaḥ* – appearing; *api* – although; *pratyag-ātmānam* – the Supreme Soul; *antarā* – without; *na* – not; *nirūpyaḥ* – conceivable; *asti* – is; *aṇuḥ* – a single atom; *api* – even; *syāt* – it is so; *cet* – if; *cit-samaḥ* – equally spirit; *ātma-vat* – remaining as it is, without change.

TRANSLATION

Although perceived, the transformation of even a single atom of material nature has no ultimate definition without reference to the Supreme Soul. To be accepted as factually existing, something must possess the same quality as pure spirit – eternal, unchanging existence.

PURPORT

A mirage of water appearing in the desert is actually a manifestation of light; the false appearance of water is a specific transformation of light. That which falsely appears as independent material nature is similarly a transformation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Material nature is the external potency of the Lord.

TEXT 4.30

*na hi satyasya nānātvam
avidvān yadi manyate
nānātvam chidrayor yadvaj
jyotiṣor vātayor iva*

na – there is no; *hi* – indeed; *satyasya* – of the Absolute Truth; *nānātvam* – duality; *avidvān* – a person not in true knowledge; *yadi* – if; *manyate* – he thinks; *nānātvam* – the duality; *chidrayoḥ* – of the two skies; *yadvat* – just as; *jyotiṣoḥ* – of the two celestial lights; *vātayoḥ* – of the two winds; *iva* – as.

TRANSLATION

There is no material duality in the Absolute Truth. The duality perceived by an ignorant person is like the difference between the sky contained in an empty pot and the sky outside the pot, or the difference between the reflection of the sun in water and the sun itself in the sky, or the difference between the vital air within one living body and that within another body.

TEXT 4.31

*yathā hiraṇyam bahudhā samīyate
nṛbhiḥ kriyābhir vyavahāra-vartmasu
evam vacobhir bhagavān adhokṣajo
vyākhyāyate laukika-vaidikair janaiḥ*

yathā – just as; *hiraṇyam* – gold; *bahudhā* – in many forms; *samīyate* – appears; *nṛbhiḥ* – to men; *kriyābhiḥ* – in terms of different functions;

vyavahāra-vartmasu – in ordinary usage; *evam* – similarly; *vacobhiḥ* – in varying terms; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *adhokṣajaḥ* – the transcendental Lord, who is inconceivable to material senses; *vyākhyāyate* – is described; *laukika* – mundane; *vaidikaiḥ* – and Vedic; *janaiḥ* – by men.

TRANSLATION

According to their different purposes, men utilize gold in various ways, and gold is therefore perceived in various forms. In the same way, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is inaccessible to material senses, is described in various terms, both ordinary and Vedic, by different types of men.

PURPORT

All those who are not pure devotees of the Supreme Lord are basically trying to exploit the Lord and His energies. According to their strategy of exploitation, they conceive of and describe the Absolute Truth in various ways. In *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the Absolute Truth presents Himself as He actually is for the benefit of sincere people who do not foolishly try to conceptually manipulate the Supreme Godhead.

TEXT 4.32

*yathā ghaṇo 'rka-prabhavo 'rka-darśito
hy arkāṁśa-bhūtasya ca cakṣuṣas tamaḥ
evam tv ahaṁ brahma-guṇas tad-ikṣito
brahmāṁśakasyātmana ātma-bandhanaḥ*

yathā – as; *ghanaḥ* – a cloud; *arka* – of the sun; *prabhavaḥ* – the product; *arka* – by the sun; *darśitaḥ* – made visible; *hi* – indeed; *arka* – of the sun; *amśa-bhūtasya* – which is the partial expansion; *ca* – and; *cakṣuṣaḥ* – of the eye; *tamaḥ* – darkness; *evam* – in the same way; *tu* – indeed; *ahaṁ* – false ego; *brahma-guṇaḥ* – a quality of the Absolute Truth; *tad-ikṣitaḥ* – visible through the agency of that Absolute Truth; *brahma-amśakasya* – of the partial expansion of the Absolute Truth; *ātmanaḥ* – of the *jīva* soul; *ātma-bandhanaḥ* – serving to obstruct perception of the Supreme Soul.

TRANSLATION

Although a cloud is a product of the sun and is also made visible by the sun, it nevertheless creates darkness for the viewing eye,

which is another partial expansion of the sun. Similarly, material false ego, a particular product of the Absolute Truth made visible by the Absolute Truth, obstructs the individual soul, another partial expansion of the Absolute Truth, from realizing the Absolute Truth.

TEXT 4.33

*ghano yadārka-prabhavo vidīryate
cakṣuḥ svarūpaṁ ravim ikṣate tadā
yadā hy ahaṅkāra upādhir ātmano
jijñāsayā naśyati tarhi anusmaret*

ghanaḥ – the cloud; *yadā* – when; *arka-prabhavaḥ* – the product of the sun; *vidīryate* – is torn apart; *cakṣuḥ* – the eye; *svarūpaṁ* – in its real form; *ravim* – the sun; *ikṣate* – sees; *tadā* – then; *yadā* – when; *hi* – indeed also; *ahaṅkāraḥ* – false ego; *upādhiḥ* – the superficial covering; *ātmanaḥ* – of the spirit soul; *jijñāsayā* – by spiritual inquiry; *naśyati* – is destroyed; *tarhi* – at that time; *anusmaret* – one gains his proper remembrance.

TRANSLATION

When the cloud originally produced from the sun is torn apart, the eye can see the actual form of the sun. Similarly, when the spirit soul destroys his material covering of false ego by inquiring into the transcendental science, he regains his original spiritual awareness.

PURPORT

Just as the sun can burn away the clouds that prevent one from seeing it, the Supreme Lord (and He alone) can remove the false ego that prevents one from seeing Him. There are some creatures, however, like owls, who are averse to seeing the sun. In the same way, those who are not interested in spiritual knowledge will never receive the privilege of seeing God.

TEXT 4.34

*yadaivam etena viveka-hetinā
māyā-mayāhaṅkaraṇātma-bandhanam
chittvācyutātmānubhavo ’vatiṣṭhate
tam āhur ātyantikam aṅga samplavam*

yadā – when; *evam* – in this way; *etena* – by this; *viveka* – of discrimination; *hetinā* – sword; *māyā-maya* – illusory; *ahaṅkaraṇa* – false ego; *ātma* – of the soul; *bandhanam* – the cause of bondage; *chittvā* – cutting off; *acyuta* – of the infallible; *ātma* – Supreme Soul; *anubhavaḥ* – realization; *avatiṣṭhate* – develops firmly; *tam* – that; *āhuḥ* – they call; *ātyantikam* – ultimate; *aṅga* – my dear King; *samplavam* – annihilation.

TRANSLATION

My dear Parīkṣit, when the illusory false ego that binds the soul has been cut off with the sword of discriminating knowledge and one has developed realization of Lord Acyuta, the Supreme Soul, this is called the ātyantika, or ultimate, annihilation of material existence.

TEXT 4.35

*nityadā sarva-bhūtānām
brahmādinām parantapa
utpatti-pralayāv eke
sūkṣma-jñāḥ sampracakṣate*

nityadā – constantly; *sarva-bhūtānām* – of all created beings; *brahmādinām* – beginning with Lord Brahmā; *param-tapa* – O subduer of the enemies; *utpatti* – creation; *pralayau* – and annihilation; *eke* – some; *sūkṣma-jñāḥ* – expert knowers of subtle things; *sampracakṣate* – declare.

TRANSLATION

Experts in the subtle workings of nature, O subduer of the enemy, have declared that there are continuous processes of creation and annihilation that all created beings, beginning with Brahmā, constantly undergo.

TEXT 4.36

*kāla-sroto-javenāśu
hriyamāṇasya nityadā
pariṇāminām avasthās tā
janma-pralaya-hetavaḥ*

kāla – of time; *srotaḥ* – of the mighty current; *javena* – by the force; *āśu* – rapidly; *hriyamāṇasya* – of that which is being taken away;

nityadā – constantly; *pariṇāminām* – of things subject to transformation; *avasthāḥ* – the various conditions; *tāḥ* – they; *janma* – of birth; *pralaya* – and annihilation; *hetavaḥ* – the causes.

TRANSLATION

All material entities undergo transformation and are constantly and swiftly eroded by the mighty currents of time. The various stages of existence that material things exhibit are the perpetual causes of their generation and annihilation.

TEXT 4.37

*anādy-antavatānena
kāleneśvara-mūrtinā
avasthā naiva dṛśyante
viyati jyotiṣām iva*

anādi-anta-vatā – without beginning or end; *anena* – by this; *kālena* – time; *īśvara* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *mūrtinā* – the representation; *avasthāḥ* – the different stages; *na* – not; *eva* – indeed; *dṛśyante* – are seen; *viyati* – in outer space; *jyotiṣām* – of the moving planets; *iva* – just as.

TRANSLATION

These stages of existence created by beginningless and endless time, the impersonal representative of the Supreme Lord, are not visible, just as the infinitesimal momentary changes of position of the planets in the sky cannot be directly seen.

PURPORT

Although everyone knows that the sun is constantly moving in the sky, one cannot normally see the sun moving. Similarly, no one can directly perceive his hair or nails growing, although with the passing of time we perceive the fact of growth. Time, the potency of the Lord, is very subtle and powerful and is an insurmountable barrier to fools who are trying to exploit the material creation.

TEXT 4.38

*nityo naimittikaś caiva
tathā prākṛtiko layaḥ
ātyantikaś ca kathitaḥ
kālasya gatir īdrśī*

nityaḥ – continuous; *naimittikaḥ* – occasional; *ca* – and; *eva* – indeed; *tathā* – also; *prākṛtikaḥ* – natural; *layaḥ* – annihilation; *ātyantikaḥ* – final; *ca* – and; *kathitaḥ* – are described; *kālasya* – of time; *gatiḥ* – the progress; *īdṛśī* – like this.

TRANSLATION

In this way the progress of time is described in terms of the four kinds of annihilation – continuous, occasional, elemental and final.

TEXT 4.39

*etāḥ kuru-śreṣṭha jagad-vidhātur
nārāyaṇasyākhila-sattva-dhāmnāḥ
līlā-kathās te kathitāḥ samāsataḥ
kārtsnyena nājo 'py abhidhātum īśaḥ*

etāḥ – these; *kuru-śreṣṭha* – O best of the Kurus; *jagat-vidhātuḥ* – of the creator of the universe; *nārāyaṇasya* – of Lord Nārāyaṇa; *akhila-sattva-dhāmnāḥ* – the reservoir of all existences; *līlā-kathāḥ* – the pastime narrations; *te* – to you; *kathitāḥ* – have been related; *samāsataḥ* – in summary; *kārtsnyena* – entirely; *na* – not; *ajāḥ* – unborn Brahmā; *api* – even; *abhidhātum* – to enumerate; *īśaḥ* – is capable.

TRANSLATION

O best of the Kurus, I have related to you these narrations of the pastimes of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the creator of this world and the ultimate reservoir of all existence, presenting them to you only in brief summary. Even Lord Brahmā himself would be incapable of describing them entirely.

TEXT 4.40

*saṁsāra-sindhūm atī-dustaram uttīrṣor
nānyaḥ plavo bhagavataḥ puruṣottamasya
līlā-kathā-rasa-niṣevāṇam antareṇa
puṁso bhaved vividha-duḥkha-davārditasya*

saṁsāra – of material existence; *sindhūm* – the ocean; *atī-dustaram* – impossible to cross; *uttīrṣoḥ* – for one who desires to cross; *na* – there is not; *anyaḥ* – any other; *plavaḥ* – boat; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Personality of Godhead; *puruṣa-uttamasya* – the Supreme Lord; *līlā-kathā* – of the narrations of the pastimes; *rasa* – to the transcendental

taste; *niṣevanam* – the rendering of service; *antareṇa* – apart from; *puṁsaḥ* – for a person; *bhavet* – there can be; *vividha* – various; *duḥkha* – of material miseries; *dava* – by the fire; *arditasya* – who is distressed.

TRANSLATION

For a person who is suffering in the fire of countless miseries and who desires to cross the insurmountable ocean of material existence, there is no suitable boat except that of cultivating devotion to the transcendental taste for the narrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead’s pastimes.

PURPORT

Although it is not possible to completely describe the pastimes of the Lord, even a partial appreciation can save one from the unbearable miseries of material existence. The fever of material existence can be removed only by the medicine of the holy name and pastimes of the Supreme Lord, which are perfectly narrated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 4.41

*purāṇa-saṁhitām etām
ṛṣir nārāyaṇo ’vyayaḥ
nāradāya purā prāha
kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyanāya saḥ*

purāṇa – of all the *Purāṇas*; *saṁhitām* – the essential compendium; *etām* – this; *ṛṣiḥ* – the great sage; *nārāyaṇaḥ* – Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa; *avyayaḥ* – the infallible; *nāradāya* – to Nārada Muni; *purā* – previously; *prāha* – spoke; *kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyanāya* – to Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa; *saḥ* – he, Nārada.

TRANSLATION

Long ago this essential anthology of all the Purāṇas was spoken by the infallible Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi to Nārada, who then repeated it to Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa.

TEXT 4.42

*sa vai mahyam mahā-rāja
bhagavān bādarāyaṇaḥ
imām bhāgavatīm prītaḥ
saṁhitām veda-saṁmitām*

saḥ – he; *vai* – indeed; *mahyam* – to me, Śukadeva Gosvāmī; *mahārāja*

– O King Parīkṣit; *bhagavān* – the powerful incarnation of the Supreme Lord; *bādarāyaṇaḥ* – Śrīla Vyāsadeva; *imām* – this; *bhāgavatīm* – *Bhāgavata* scripture; *prītaḥ* – being satisfied; *saṁhitām* – the anthology; *veda-sammitām* – equal in status to the four *Vedas*.

TRANSLATION

My dear Mahārāja Parīkṣit, that great personality Śrīla Vyāsadeva taught me this same scripture, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is equal in stature to the four Vedas.

TEXT 4.43

*imām vakṣyaty asau sūta
ṛṣibhyo naimiṣālaye
dīrgha-satre kuru-śreṣṭha
samprṣtaḥ śaunakādibhiḥ*

imām – this; *vakṣyati* – will speak; *asau* – present before us; *sūtaḥ* – Sūta Gosvāmī; *ṛṣibhyaḥ* – to the sages; *naimiṣa-ālaye* – in the forest of Naimiṣa; *dīrgha-satre* – at the lengthy sacrificial performance; *kuru-śreṣṭha* – O best of the Kurus; *samprṣtaḥ* – questioned; *śaunaka-ādibhiḥ* – by the assembly led by Śaunaka.

TRANSLATION

O best of the Kurus, the same Sūta Gosvāmī who is sitting before us will speak this Bhāgavatam to the sages assembled in the great sacrifice at Naimiṣāraṇya. This he will do when questioned by the members of the assembly, headed by Śaunaka.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Fourth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Four Categories of Universal Annihilation.”

CHAPTER FIVE

**Śukadeva Gosvāmī's
Final Instructions to
Mahārāja Parīkṣit**

This chapter explains how King Parīkṣit’s fear of death from the snake-bird Takṣaka was averted by Śukadeva Gosvāmī’s brief instructions on the Absolute Truth.

Having in the last chapter described the four processes of annihilation that act in this material world, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī now reminds Parīkṣit Mahārāja how he had previously, in the Third Canto, discussed the measurement of time and of the various millennia of universal history. During a single day of Lord Brahmā, constituting one thousand cycles of four ages, fourteen different Manus rule and die. Thus death is unavoidable for every embodied being, but the soul itself never dies, being entirely distinct from the material body. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī then states that in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* he has repeatedly chanted the glories of the Supreme Soul, Lord Śrī Hari, from whose satisfaction Brahmā takes birth and from whose anger Rudra is born. The idea “I will die” is simply the mentality of animals, because the soul does not undergo the bodily phases of previous nonexistence, birth, existence and death. When the body’s subtle mental covering is destroyed by transcendental knowledge, the soul within the body again exhibits his original identity. Just as the temporal existence of a lamp comes about by the combination of oil, the vessel, the wick and the fire, the material body comes about by the amalgamation of the three modes of nature. The material body appears at birth and displays life for some time. Finally, the combination of material modes dissolves, and the body undergoes death, a phenomenon similar to the extinguishing of a lamp. Śukadeva addresses the king, saying, “You should fix yourself in meditation upon Lord Vāsudeva, and thus the bite of the snake-bird will not affect you.”

TEXT 5.1

śrī-śuka uvāca

*atrānuvarṇyate ’bhikṣṇam
viśvātmā bhagavān hariḥ
yasya prasāda-jo brahmā
rudraḥ krodha-samudbhavaḥ*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *atra* – in this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *anuvāṇyate* – is elaborately described; *abhikṣṇam* – repeatedly; *viśva-ātmā* – the soul of the entire universe; *bhagavān* – the

Supreme Personality of Godhead; *hariḥ* – Lord Hari; *yasya* – of whom; *prasāda* – from the satisfaction; *jaḥ* – born; *brahmā* – Lord Brahmā; *rudraḥ* – Lord Śiva; *krodha* – from the anger; *samudbhavaḥ* – whose birth.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: This Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam has elaborately described in various narrations the Supreme Soul of all that be – the Personality of Godhead, Hari – from whose satisfaction Brahmā is born and from whose anger Rudra takes birth.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given a very elaborate summary of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in his commentary on this verse. The essence of the great *ācārya*'s statement is that unconditional loving surrender to the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, as described by Śukadeva Gosvāmī, is the highest perfection of life. The exclusive purpose of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is to convince the conditioned soul to execute such surrender to the Lord and go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 5.2

*tvam tu rājan mariṣyeti
paśu-buddhim imām jahi
na jātaḥ prāg abhūto 'dya
deha-vat tvam na naṅkṣyasi*

tvam – you; *tu* – but; *rājan* – O King; *mariṣye* – I am about to die; *iti* – thus thinking; *paśu-buddhim* – animalistic mentality; *imām* – this; *jahi* – give up; *na* – not; *jātaḥ* – born; *prāk* – previously; *abhūtaḥ* – nonexistent; *adya* – today; *deha-vat* – like the body; *tvam* – you; *na naṅkṣyasi* – will not be destroyed.

TRANSLATION

O King, give up the animalistic mentality of thinking, “I am going to die.” Unlike the body, you have not taken birth. There was not a time in the past when you did not exist, and you are not about to be destroyed.

PURPORT

At the end of the First Canto (1.19.15) King Parīkṣit stated:

*taṁ mopajātaṁ pratiyantu viprā
gaṅgā ca devī dhṛta-cittam īśe
dvijopasṛṣṭaḥ kuhakas takṣako vā
daśatv alaṁ gāyata viṣṇu-gāthāḥ*

“O *brāhmaṇas*, just accept me as a completely surrendered soul, and let mother Ganges, the representative of the Lord, also accept me in that way, for I have already taken the lotus feet of the Lord into my heart. Let the snake-bird – or whatever magical thing the *brāhmaṇa* created – bite me at once. I only desire that you all continue singing the deeds of Lord Viṣṇu.”

Even before hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, King Parīkṣit was a *mahā-bhāgavata*, a great and pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. There was actually no animalistic fear of death within the King, but for our sake Śukadeva Gosvāmī is speaking very strongly to his disciple, just as Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks strongly to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 5.3

*na bhaviṣyasi bhūtvā tvam
putra-pauṭrādi-rūpavān
bijāṅkura-vad dehāder
vyatirikto yathānalaḥ*

na bhaviṣyasi – you will not come into being; *bhūtvā* – becoming; *tvam* – you; *putra* – of children; *pauṭra* – grandchildren; *ādi* – and so on; *rūpa-vān* – assuming the forms; *bija* – the seed; *ānkura* – and the sprout; *vat* – like; *deha-ādeḥ* – from the material body and its paraphernalia; *vyatiriktaḥ* – distinct; *yathā* – as; *analaḥ* – the fire (from the wood).

TRANSLATION

You will not take birth again in the form of your sons and grandsons, like a sprout taking birth from a seed and then generating a new seed. Rather, you are entirely distinct from the material body and its paraphernalia, in the same way that fire is distinct from its fuel.

PURPORT

Sometimes one dreams of being reborn as the son of one’s son, in the hope of perpetually remaining in the same material family. As stated in the *śruti-mantra*, *pitā putreṇa pitṛmān yoni-yonau*: “A father has a

father in his son, because he may take birth as his own grandson.” The purpose of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is spiritual liberation and not the foolish prolonging of the illusion of bodily identification. That is clearly stated in this verse.

TEXT 5.4

*svapne yathā śiraś-chedaṁ
pañcatvādy ātmanaḥ svayam
yasmāt paśyati dehasya
tata ātmā hy ajo ’maraḥ*

svapne – in a dream; *yathā* – as; *śiraḥ* – of one’s head; *chedaṁ* – the cutting off; *pañcatva-ādi* – the condition of being composed of the five material elements, and other material conditions; *ātmanaḥ* – one’s own; *svayam* – oneself; *yasmāt* – because; *paśyati* – one sees; *dehasya* – of the body; *tataḥ* – therefore; *ātmā* – the soul; *hi* – certainly; *ajaḥ* – unborn; *amaraḥ* – immortal.

TRANSLATION

In a dream one can see his own head being cut off and thus understand that his actual self is standing apart from the dream experience. Similarly, while awake one can see that his body is a product of the five material elements. Therefore it is to be understood that the actual self, the soul, is distinct from the body it observes and is unborn and immortal.

TEXT 5.5

*ghaṭe bhinne ghaṭākāśa
ākāśaḥ syād yathā purā
evam dehe mṛte jīvo
brahma sampadyate punaḥ*

ghaṭe – a pot; *bhinne* – when it is broken; *ghaṭa-ākāśaḥ* – the sky within the pot; *ākāśaḥ* – sky; *syāt* – remains; *yathā* – as; *purā* – previously; *evam* – similarly; *dehe* – the body; *mṛte* – when it is given up, in the liberated condition; *jīvaḥ* – the individual soul; *brahma* – his spiritual status; *sampadyate* – attains; *punaḥ* – once again.

TRANSLATION

When a pot is broken, the portion of sky within the pot remains as the element sky, just as before. In the same way, when the

gross and subtle bodies die, the living entity within resumes his spiritual identity.

TEXT 5.6

*manaḥ sṛjati vai dehān
guṇān karmāṇi cātmanaḥ
tan manaḥ sṛjate māyā
tato jīvasya saṁsṛtiḥ*

manaḥ – the mind; *sṛjati* – produces; *vai* – indeed; *dehān* – the material bodies; *guṇān* – the qualities; *karmāṇi* – the activities; *ca* – and; *ātmanaḥ* – of the soul; *tat* – that; *manaḥ* – mind; *sṛjate* – produces; *māyā* – the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord; *tataḥ* – thus; *jīvasya* – of the individual living being; *saṁsṛtiḥ* – the material existence.

TRANSLATION

The material bodies, qualities and activities of the spirit soul are created by the material mind. That mind is itself created by the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord, and thus the soul assumes material existence.

TEXT 5.7

*snehādhiṣṭhāna-varty-agni-
saṁyogo yāvad īyate
tāvad dīpasya dīpatvam
evam deha-kṛto bhavaḥ
rajaḥ-sattva-tamo-ṛtṭyā
jāyate 'tha vinaśyati*

sneha – of the oil; *adhiṣṭhāna* – the vessel; *varti* – the wick; *agni* – and the fire; *saṁyogaḥ* – the combination; *yāvat* – to which extent; *īyate* – is seen; *tāvat* – to that extent; *dīpasya* – of the lamp; *dīpatvam* – the status of functioning as a lamp; *evam* – similarly; *deha-kṛtaḥ* – due to the material body; *bhavaḥ* – material existence; *rajaḥ-sattva-tamaḥ* – of the modes of passion, goodness and ignorance; *ṛtṭyā* – by the action; *jāyate* – arises; *atha* – and; *vinaśyati* – is destroyed.

TRANSLATION

A lamp functions as such only by the combination of its fuel, vessel, wick and fire. Similarly, material life, based on the soul's identification with the body, is developed and destroyed by the

workings of material goodness, passion and ignorance, which are the constituent elements of the body.

TEXT 5.8

*na tatrātmā svayaṁ-jyotir
yo vyaktāvyaktayoḥ paraḥ
ākāśa iva cādhāro
dhruvo 'nantopamas tataḥ*

na – not; *tatra* – there; *ātmā* – the soul; *svayaṁ-jyotiḥ* – self-luminous; *yaḥ* – who; *vyakta-avyaktayoḥ* – from the manifest and the unmanifest (the gross and subtle bodies); *paraḥ* – different; *ākāśaḥ* – the sky; *iva* – as; *ca* – and; *ādhāraḥ* – the basis; *dhruvaḥ* – fixed; *ananta* – without end; *upamaḥ* – or comparison; *tataḥ* – thus.

TRANSLATION

The soul within the body is self-luminous and is separate from the visible gross body and invisible subtle body. It remains as the fixed basis of changing bodily existence, just as the ethereal sky is the unchanging background of material transformation. Therefore the soul is endless and without material comparison.

TEXT 5.9

*evam ātmānam ātma-stham
ātmanaivāmr̥śa prabho
buddhyānumāna-garbhiṇyā
vāsudevānucintayā*

evam – in this way; *ātmānam* – your true self; *ātma-stham* – situated within the bodily covering; *ātmanā* – with your mind; *eva* – indeed; *āmr̥śa* – consider carefully; *prabho* – O master of the self (King Parikṣit); *buddhyā* – with intelligence; *anumāna-garbhiṇyā* – conceived by logic; *vāsudeva-anucintayā* – with meditation upon Lord Vāsudeva.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, by constantly meditating upon the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva, and by applying clear and logical intelligence, you should carefully consider your true self and how it is situated within the material body.

TEXT 5.10

codito vipra-vākyena

*na tvām dhakṣyati takṣakaḥ
mṛtyavo nopadhakṣyanti
mṛtyūnām mṛtyum īśvaram*

coditaḥ – sent; *vipra-vākyena* – by the words of the *brāhmaṇa*; *na* – not; *tvām* – you; *dhakṣyati* – will burn; *takṣakaḥ* – the snake-bird Takṣaka; *mṛtyavaḥ* – the agents of death personified; *na upadhakṣyanti* – cannot burn; *mṛtyūnām* – of these causes of death; *mṛtyum* – the very death; *īśvaram* – the master of the self.

TRANSLATION

The snake-bird Takṣaka, sent by the curse of the brāhmaṇa, will not burn your true self. The agents of death will never burn such a master of the self as you, for you have already conquered all dangers on your path back to Godhead.

PURPORT

Real death is the covering of one’s eternal Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For the soul, material illusion is just like death, but Parīkṣit Mahārāja had already destroyed all those dangers that threaten one’s spiritual life, such as lust, envy and fear. Śukadeva Gosvāmī here congratulates the great saintly king, who, as a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa homeward bound to the spiritual sky, was far beyond the reach of death.

TEXTS 5.11–12

*aham brahma param dhāma
brahmāham paramam padam
evam samikṣya cātmānam
ātmany ādhāya niṣkale
daśantam takṣakam pāde
lelihanam viṣānanaiḥ
na drakṣyasi śarīram ca
viśvam ca pṛthag ātmanaḥ*

aham – I; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *param* – supreme; *dhāma* – the abode; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *aham* – I; *paramam* – the supreme; *padam* – destination; *evam* – thus; *samikṣya* – considering; *ca* – and; *ātmānam* – yourself; *ātmani* – in the Supreme Self; *ādhāya* – placing; *niṣkale* – which is free from material designation; *daśantam* – biting; *takṣakam* – Takṣaka; *pāde* – upon your foot; *lelihanam* – the snake, licking his lips; *viṣānanaiḥ* – with his mouth full of poison; *na*

drakṣyasi – you will not even notice; *śarīram* – your body; *ca* – and; *viśvam* – the entire material world; *ca* – and; *prthak* – separate; *ātmanaḥ* – from the self.

TRANSLATION

You should consider, “I am nondifferent from the Absolute Truth, the supreme abode, and that Absolute Truth, the supreme destination, is nondifferent from me.” Thus resigning yourself to the Supreme Soul, who is free from all material misidentifications, you will not even notice the snake-bird Takṣaka when he approaches with his poison-filled fangs and bites your foot. Nor will you see your dying body or the material world around you, because you will have realized yourself to be separate from them.

TEXT 5.13

*etat te kathitaṁ tāta
yad ātmā prṣṭavān nṛpa
harer viśvātmanaś ceṣṭām
kim bhūyaḥ śrotum icchasi*

etat – this; *te* – to you; *kathitam* – narrated; *tāta* – my dear Parīkṣit; *yad* – which; *ātmā* – you; *prṣṭavān* – inquired; *nṛpa* – O King; *hareḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *viśva-ātmanaḥ* – of the Soul of the universe; *ceṣṭām* – the pastimes; *kim* – what; *bhūyaḥ* – further; *śrotum* – to hear; *icchasi* – do you wish.

TRANSLATION

Beloved King Parīkṣit, I have narrated to you the topics you originally inquired about – the pastimes of Lord Hari, the Supreme Soul of the universe. Now, what more do you wish to hear?

PURPORT

In his commentary on this text, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has elaborately demonstrated, by citing many *Bhāgavatam* verses, the exalted devotional position of King Parīkṣit, who was fully determined to fix his mind upon Lord Kṛṣṇa and go back home, back to Godhead.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Fifth Chapter, of

*the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Śukadeva Gosvāmī’s Final Instructions
to Mahārāja Parīkṣit.”*

CHAPTER SIX

Mahārāja Parīkṣit Passes Away

This chapter describes Mahārāja Parīkṣit's attainment of liberation, Mahārāja Janamejaya's performance of sacrifice for killing all snakes, the origin of the *Vedas*, and Śrīla Vedavyāsa's dividing of the Vedic literature.

After hearing the words of Śrī Śukadeva, Mahārāja Parīkṣit stated that by having listened to the *Bhāgavatam*, which is the compendium of the *Purāṇas* and which is full of the nectarean pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Uttamaḥśloka, Parīkṣit had attained the transcendental position of fearlessness and oneness with the Supreme. His ignorance had been dispelled, and by the mercy of Śrī Śukadeva he had gained sight of the supremely auspicious personal form of God, namely the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Hari. As a result, he had cast aside all fear of death. Śrī Parīkṣit Mahārāja then begged Śukadeva Gosvāmī to permit him to fix his heart upon the lotus feet of Lord Hari and give up his life. Granting this permission, Śrī Śukadeva rose and departed. Subsequently Mahārāja Parīkṣit, free of all doubts, sat down in yogic posture and merged himself in meditation upon the Supersoul. Then the snake-bird Takṣaka, arriving in the disguise of a *brāhmaṇa*, bit him, and the body of the saintly king immediately burned to ashes.

Janamejaya, the son of Parīkṣit, became very angry when he received news of his father's death, and he began a sacrificial performance for the purpose of destroying all the snakes. Even though Takṣaka received protection from Indra, he nevertheless became attracted by the *mantras* and was about to fall into the fire. Seeing this, Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgirā Ṛṣi, came and advised Mahārāja Janamejaya that Takṣaka could not be killed because he had drunk the nectar of the demigods. Furthermore, Bṛhaspati said that all living entities must enjoy the fruits of their past activities. Therefore the king should give up this sacrifice. Janamejaya was thus convinced by the words of Bṛhaspati and stopped his sacrifice.

Thereafter Sūta Gosvāmī, in response to questions from Śrī Śaunaka, described the divisions of the *Vedas*. From the heart of the topmost demigod, Brahmā, came the subtle transcendental vibration, and from this subtle sound vibration arose the syllable *om*, greatly potent and self-luminous. Using this *omkāra*, Lord Brahmā created the original *Vedas* and taught them to his sons, Marīci and others, who were all saintly leaders of the *brāhmaṇa* community. This body of

Vedic knowledge was handed down through the disciplic succession of spiritual masters until the end of Dvāpara-yuga, when Lord Vyāsadeva divided it into four parts and instructed various schools of sages in these four *samhitās*. When the sage Yājñavalkya was rejected by his spiritual master, he had to give up all the Vedic *mantras* he had received from him. To obtain new *mantras* of the *Yajur Veda*, Yājñavalkya worshiped the Supreme Lord in the form of the sun-god. Śrī Sūryadeva subsequently fulfilled his prayer.

TEXT 6.1

sūta uvāca

*etan niśamya muninābhihitam parīkṣid
vyāsātmajena nikhilātma-dṛśā samena
tat-pāda-mūlam upasṛtya natena mūrdhnā
baddhāñjalis tam idam āha sa viṣṇurātaḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *etat* – this; *niśamya* – hearing; *muninā* – by the sage (Śukadeva); *abhihitam* – narrated; *parīkṣit* – Mahārāja Parīkṣit; *vyāsa-ātma-jena* – by the son of Vyāsadeva; *nikhila* – of all living beings; *ātma* – the Supreme Lord; *dṛśā* – who sees; *samena* – who is perfectly equipoised; *tat* – of him (Śukadeva); *pāda-mūlam* – to the lotus feet; *upasṛtya* – going up; *natena* – bowed down; *mūrdhnā* – with his head; *baddha-añjaliḥ* – his arms folded in supplication; *tam* – to him; *idam* – this; *āha* – said; *saḥ* – he; *viṣṇu-rātaḥ* – Parīkṣit, who while still in the womb had been protected by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: After hearing all that was narrated to him by the self-realized and equipoised Śukadeva, the son of Vyāsadeva, Mahārāja Parīkṣit humbly approached his lotus feet. Bowing his head down upon the sage’s feet, the King, who had lived his entire life under the protection of Lord Viṣṇu, folded his hands in supplication and spoke as follows.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, some of the sages present while Śukadeva was instructing King Parīkṣit were impersonalist philosophers. Thus the word *samena* indicates that in the previous chapter Śukadeva Gosvāmī had spoken the philosophy of self-realization in a way pleasing to such intellectual yogīs.

TEXT 6.2

rājovāca

*siddho 'smy anugrḥīto 'smi
bhavatā karuṇātmanā
śrāvito yac ca me sākṣād
anādi-nidhano hariḥ*

rājā uvāca – King Parīkṣit said; *siddhaḥ* – fully successful; *asmi* – I am; *anugrḥītaḥ* – shown great mercy; *asmi* – I am; *bhavatā* – by your good self; *karuṇā-ātmanā* – who are full of mercy; *śrāvitaḥ* – has been described aurally; *yac* – because; *ca* – and; *me* – to me; *sākṣāt* – directly; *anādi* – who has no beginning; *nidhanaḥ* – or end; *hariḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Parīkṣit said: I have now achieved the purpose of my life, because a great and merciful soul like you has shown such kindness to me. You have personally spoken to me this narration of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who is without beginning or end.

TEXT 6.3

*nāty-adbhutam ahaṁ manye
mahatām acyutātmanām
ajñeṣu tāpa-tapteṣu
bhūteṣu yad anugrahaḥ*

na – not; *ati-adbhutam* – very surprising; *ahaṁ* – I; *manye* – think; *mahatām* – for the great souls; *acyuta-ātmanām* – whose minds are always absorbed in Lord Kṛṣṇa; *ajñeṣu* – upon the ignorant; *tāpa* – by the distresses of material life; *tapteṣu* – tormented; *bhūteṣu* – upon the conditioned souls; *yad* – which; *anugrahaḥ* – mercy.

TRANSLATION

I do not consider it at all amazing that great souls such as yourself, whose minds are always absorbed in the infallible Personality of Godhead, show mercy to the foolish conditioned souls, tormented as we are by the problems of material life.

TEXT 6.4

purāṇa-saṁhitām etām

*aśrauṣma bhavato vāyam
yasyām khalūttamaḥ-śloka
bhagavān anuvarṇyate*

purāṇa-saṁhitām – essential summary of all the *Purāṇas*; *etām* – this; *aśrauṣma* – have heard; *bhavataḥ* – from you; *vāyam* – we; *yasyām* – in which; *khalu* – indeed; *uttamaḥ-ślokaḥ* – who is always described in choice poetry; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *anuvarṇyate* – is fittingly described.

TRANSLATION

I have heard from you this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is the perfect summary of all the Purāṇas and which perfectly describes the Supreme Lord, Uttamaḥśloka.

TEXT 6.5

*bhagavaṁs takṣakādibhyo
mṛtyubhyo na bibhemy aham
praviṣṭo brahma nirvāṇam
abhayaṁ darśitam tvayā*

bhagavan – my lord; *takṣaka* – from the snake-bird Takṣaka; *ādibhyaḥ* – or other living entities; *mṛtyubhyaḥ* – from repeated deaths; *na bibhemi* – do not fear; *aham* – I; *praviṣṭaḥ* – having entered; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *nirvāṇam* – exclusive of everything material; *abhayaṁ* – fearlessness; *darśitam* – shown; *tvayā* – by you.

TRANSLATION

My lord, I now have no fear of Takṣaka or any other living being, or even of repeated deaths, because I have absorbed myself in that purely spiritual Absolute Truth, which you have revealed and which destroys all fear.

TEXT 6.6

*anujānīhi mām brahman
vācam yacchāmy adhokṣaje
mukta-kāmāśayaṁ cetaḥ
praveśya visṛjāmy asūn*

anujānīhi – please give your permission; *mām* – to me; *brahman* – O great *brāhmaṇa*; *vācam* – my speech (and all other sensory functions); *yacchāmi* – I shall place; *adhokṣaje* – within the Supreme Personality of

Godhead; *mukta* – having given up; *kāma-āśayam* – all lusty desires; *cetaḥ* – my mind; *praveśya* – absorbing; *visṛjāmi* – I shall give up; *asūn* – my life air.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇa, please give me permission to resign my speech and the functions of all my senses unto Lord Adhokṣaja. Allow me to absorb my mind, purified of lusty desires, within Him and to thus give up my life.

PURPORT

Śukadeva Gosvāmī asked King Parīkṣit, “What more do you wish to hear?” Now the King replies that he has perfectly understood the message of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and that he is ready, without further discussion, to go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 6.7

*ajñānaṁ ca nirastaṁ me
jñāna-vijñāna-niṣṭhaya
bhavatā darśitaṁ kṣemaṁ
paraṁ bhagavataḥ padam*

ajñānam – ignorance; *ca* – also; *nirastam* – eradicated; *me* – my; *jñāna* – in knowledge of the Supreme Lord; *vijñāna* – and direct realization of His opulence and sweetness; *niṣṭhaya* – by becoming fixed; *bhavatā* – by you; *darśitam* – has been shown; *kṣemam* – all-auspicious; *param* – supreme; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Lord; *padam* – the Personality.

TRANSLATION

You have revealed to me that which is most auspicious, the supreme personal feature of the Lord. I am now fixed in knowledge and self-realization, and my ignorance has been eradicated.

TEXT 6.8

*sūta uvāca
ity uktas tam anujñāpya
bhagavān bādarāyaṇiḥ
jagāma bhikṣubhiḥ sākam
nara-devena pūjitaḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said; *iti* – thus; *uktaḥ* – spoken to; *tam* – him; *anujñāpya* – giving permission; *bhagavān* – the powerful saint; *bādarāyaṇiḥ* – Śukadeva, the son of Bādarāyaṇa Vedavyāsa; *jagāma* – went away; *bhikṣubhiḥ* – the renounced sages; *sākam* – along with; *nara-devena* – by the King; *pūjitaḥ* – worshiped.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus requested, the saintly son of Śrīla Vyāsadeva gave his permission to King Parīkṣit. Then, after being worshiped by the King and all the sages present, Śukadeva departed from that place.

TEXTS 6.9–10

parīkṣid api rājarṣir
ātmany ātmānam ātmanā
samādhāya param dadhyāv
aspandāsur yathā taruḥ

prāk-kūle barhiṣy āsīno
gaṅgā-kūla udak-mukhaḥ
brahma-bhūto mahā-yogī
niḥsaṅgaś chinna-saṁśayaḥ

parīkṣit – Mahārāja Parīkṣit; *api* – furthermore; *rāja-ṛṣiḥ* – the great saintly King; *ātmani* – within his own spiritual identity; *ātmānam* – his mind; *ātmanā* – by his intelligence; *samādhāya* – placing; *param* – upon the Supreme; *dadhyau* – he meditated; *aspanda* – motionless; *asuh* – his living air; *yathā* – just as; *taruḥ* – a tree; *prāk-kūle* – with the tips of its stalks facing east; *barhiṣi* – upon *darbha* grass; *āsīnaḥ* – sitting; *gaṅgā-kūle* – on the bank of the Gaṅgā; *udak-mukhaḥ* – facing north; *brahma-bhūtaḥ* – in perfect realization of his true identity; *mahā-yogī* – the exalted mystic; *niḥsaṅgaḥ* – free of all material attachment; *chinna* – broken off; *saṁśayaḥ* – all doubts.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Parīkṣit then sat down on the bank of the Ganges, upon a seat made of darbha grass with the tips of its stalks facing east, and turned himself toward the north. Having attained the perfection of yoga, he experienced full self-realization and was free of material attachment and doubt. The saintly King settled his mind within his spiritual self by pure intelligence and

proceeded to meditate upon the Supreme Absolute Truth. His life air ceased to move, and he became as stationary as a tree.

TEXT 6.11

*takṣakaḥ prahito viprāḥ
kruddhena dvija-sūnunā
hantu-kāmo nṛpaṁ gacchan
dadarśa pathi kaśyapam*

takṣakaḥ – the snake-bird Takṣaka; *prahitaḥ* – sent; *viprāḥ* – O learned *brāhmaṇas*; *kruddhena* – who had been angered; *dvija* – of the sage Śamīka; *sūnunā* – by the son; *hantu-kāmaḥ* – desirous of killing; *nṛpaṁ* – the King; *gacchan* – while going; *dadarśa* – he saw; *pathi* – upon the road; *kaśyapam* – Kaśyapa Muni.

TRANSLATION

O learned brāhmaṇas, the snake-bird Takṣaka, who had been sent by the angry son of a brāhmaṇa, was going toward the King to kill him when he saw Kaśyapa Muni on the path.

TEXT 6.12

*tam tarpayitvā draviṇair
nivartya viṣa-hāriṇam
dvija-rūpa-praticchannaḥ
kāma-rūpo 'daśat nṛpaṁ*

tam – him (Kaśyapa); *tarpayitvā* – gratifying; *draviṇaiḥ* – with valuable offerings; *nivartya* – stopping; *viṣa-hāriṇam* – an expert in counteracting poison; *dvija-rūpa* – in the form of a *brāhmaṇa*; *praticchannaḥ* – disguising himself; *kāma-rūpaḥ* – Takṣaka, who could assume any form he wished; *adaśat* – bit; *nṛpaṁ* – King Parīkṣit.

TRANSLATION

Takṣaka flattered Kaśyapa by presenting him with valuable offerings and thereby stopped the sage, who was expert in counteracting poison, from protecting Mahārāja Parīkṣit. Then the snake-bird, who could assume any form he wished, disguised himself as a brāhmaṇa, approached the King and bit him.

PURPORT

Kaśyapa could counteract the poison of Takṣaka and demonstrated this power by bringing a palm tree back to life after Takṣaka had

burned it to ashes by biting it with his fangs. According to the arrangement of destiny, Kaśyapa was diverted by Takṣaka, and the inevitable took place.

TEXT 6.13

*brahma-bhūtasya rājarṣer
deho 'hi-garalāgninā
babhūva bhasmasāt sadyaḥ
paśyatām sarva-dehinām*

brahma-bhūtasya – of the fully self-realized; *rāja-ṛṣeḥ* – the saint among kings; *dehaḥ* – the body; *ahi* – of the snake; *garala* – from the poison; *agninā* – by the fire; *babhūva* – turned; *bhasma-sāt* – to ashes; *sadyaḥ* – immediately; *paśyatām* – while they were watching; *sarva-dehinām* – all embodied living beings.

TRANSLATION

While living beings all over the universe looked on, the body of the great self-realized saint among kings was immediately burned to ashes by the fire of the snake's poison.

TEXT 6.14

*hāhā-kāro mahān āsīd
bhuvī khe dikṣu sarvataḥ
vismitā hy abhavan sarve
devāsura-narādayaḥ*

hāhā-kāraḥ – a cry of lamentation; *mahān* – great; *āsīt* – there was; *bhuvī* – on the earth; *khe* – in the sky; *dikṣu* – in the directions; *sarvataḥ* – all about; *vismitāḥ* – amazed; *hi* – indeed; *abhavan* – they became; *sarve* – all; *deva* – the demigods; *asura* – demons; *nara* – human beings; *ādayaḥ* – and other creatures.

TRANSLATION

There arose a terrible cry of lamentation in all directions on the earth and in the heavens, and all the demigods, demons, human beings and other creatures were astonished.

TEXT 6.15

*deva-dundubhayo nedur
gandharvāpsaraso jaguḥ
vavrṣuḥ puṣpa-varṣāṇi*

vibudhāḥ sādhu-vādināḥ

deva – of the demigods; *dundubhayaḥ* – the kettledrums; *neduḥ* – resounded; *gandharva-apsarasah* – the Gandharvas and Apsarās; *jaguḥ* – sang; *vavrṣuḥ* – they showered down; *puṣpa-varṣāṇi* – rains of flowers; *vibudhāḥ* – the demigods; *sādhu-vādināḥ* – speaking praise.

TRANSLATION

Kettledrums sounded in the regions of the demigods, and the celestial Gandharvas and Apsarās sang. The demigods showered flowers and spoke words of praise.

PURPORT

Although lamenting at first, all learned persons, including the demigods, soon realized that a great soul had gone back home, back to Godhead. This was certainly a cause for celebration.

TEXT 6.16

janmejayaḥ sva-pitaram
śrutvā takṣaka-bhakṣitam
yathājuhāva saṅkruddho
nāgān satre saha dvijaiḥ

janmejayaḥ – King Janamejaya, the son of Parīkṣit; *sva-pitaram* – his own father; *śrutvā* – hearing; *takṣaka* – by Takṣaka, the snake-bird; *bhakṣitam* – bitten; *yathā* – properly; *ājūhāva* – offered as oblations; *saṅkruddhaḥ* – extremely angry; *nāgān* – the snakes; *satre* – in a great sacrifice; *saha* – along with; *dvijaiḥ* – *brāhmaṇas*.

TRANSLATION

Hearing that his father had been fatally bitten by the snake-bird, Mahārāja Janamejaya became extremely angry and had brāhmaṇas perform a mighty sacrifice in which he offered all the snakes in the world into the sacrificial fire.

TEXT 6.17

sarpa-satre samiddhāgnau
dahyamānān mahoragān
dr̥ṣṭvendram bhaya-saṁvignas
takṣakah śaraṇam yayau

sarpa-satre – in the snake sacrifice; *samiddha* – blazing; *agnau* – in the

fire; *dahyamānān* – being burned; *mahā-uragān* – the great serpents; *ḍṛṣṭvā* – seeing; *indram* – to Indra; *bhaya* – with fear; *saṁvignaḥ* – very disturbed; *takṣakaḥ* – Takṣaka; *śaraṇam* – for shelter; *yayau* – went.

TRANSLATION

When Takṣaka saw even the most powerful serpents being burned in the blazing fire of that snake sacrifice, he was overwhelmed with fear and approached Lord Indra for shelter.

TEXT 6.18

*apaśyaṁs takṣakam tatra
rājā pārīkṣito dvijān
uvāca takṣakaḥ kasmān
na dahyetaḥ*

apaśyan – not seeing; *takṣakam* – Takṣaka; *tatra* – there; *rājā* – the King; *pārīkṣitaḥ* – Janamejaya; *dvijān* – to the *brāhmaṇas*; *uvāca* – said; *takṣakaḥ* – Takṣaka; *kasmāt* – why; *na dahyeta* – has not been burned; *uraga* – of all the serpents; *adhamah* – the lowest.

TRANSLATION

When King Janamejaya did not see Takṣaka entering his sacrificial fire, he said to the *brāhmaṇas*: Why is not Takṣaka, the lowest of all serpents, burning in this fire?

TEXT 6.19

*tam gopāyati rājendra
śakraḥ śaraṇam āgatam
tena saṁstambhitaḥ sarpaḥ
tasmān nāgnau pataty asau*

tam – him (Takṣaka); *gopāyati* – is hiding; *rāja-indra* – O best of kings; *śakraḥ* – Lord Indra; *śaraṇam* – for shelter; *āgatam* – who has approached; *tena* – by that Indra; *saṁstambhitaḥ* – kept; *sarpaḥ* – the snake; *tasmāt* – thus; *na* – not; *agnau* – into the fire; *patati* – does fall; *asau* – he.

TRANSLATION

The *brāhmaṇas* replied: O best of kings, the snake Takṣaka has not fallen into the fire because he is being protected by Indra, whom he has approached for shelter. Indra is holding him back from the fire.

TEXT 6.20

*pārikṣita iti śrutvā
prāhartvija udāra-dhīḥ
sahendras takṣako viprā
nāgnau kim iti pātyate*

pārikṣitaḥ – King Janamejaya; *iti* – these words; *śrutvā* – hearing; *prāha* – replied; *ṛtvijaḥ* – to the priests; *udāra* – broad; *dhīḥ* – whose intelligence; *saha* – along with; *indraḥ* – Indra; *takṣakaḥ* – Takṣaka; *viprāḥ* – O *brāhmaṇas*; *na* – not; *agnau* – into the fire; *kim* – why; *iti* – indeed; *pātyate* – is made to fall.

TRANSLATION

The intelligent King Janamejaya, hearing these words, replied to the priests: Then, my dear brāhmaṇas, why not make Takṣaka fall into the fire, along with his protector, Indra?

TEXT 6.21

*tac chrutvājuhuvur viprāḥ
sahendram takṣakam makhe
takṣakāśu patasveha
sahendreṇa marutvatā*

tat – that; *śrutvā* – hearing; *ājuhuvuḥ* – they performed the ritual of offering oblation; *viprāḥ* – the *brāhmaṇa* priests; *saha* – along with; *indram* – King Indra; *takṣakam* – the snake-bird Takṣaka; *makhe* – into the sacrificial fire; *takṣaka* – O Takṣaka; *āśu* – quickly; *patasva* – you should fall; *iha* – here; *saha indreṇa* – together with Indra; *marut-vatā* – who is accompanied by all the demigods.

TRANSLATION

Hearing this, the priests then chanted this mantra for offering Takṣaka together with Indra as an oblation into the sacrificial fire: O Takṣaka, fall immediately into this fire, together with Indra and his entire host of demigods!

TEXT 6.22

*iti brahmoditākṣepaiḥ
sthānād indraḥ pracāliṭaḥ
babhūva sambhrānta-matiḥ
sa-vimānaḥ sa-takṣakaḥ*

iti – thus; *brahma* – by the *brāhmaṇas*; *udita* – spoken; *ākṣepaiḥ* – by the insulting words; *sthānāt* – from his place; *indraḥ* – Lord Indra; *pracālitaḥ* – thrown; *babhūva* – became; *sambhrānta* – disturbed; *matiḥ* – in his mind; *sa-vimānaḥ* – along with his heavenly airplane; *sataḥsakāḥ* – along with Takṣaka.

TRANSLATION

When Lord Indra, along with his airplane and Takṣaka, was suddenly thrown from his position by these insulting words of the brāhmaṇas, he became very disturbed.

TEXT 6.23

*tam patantam vimānena
saha-takṣakam ambarāt
vilokyāṅgirasah prāha
rājānam tam brhaspatiḥ*

tam – him; *patantam* – falling; *vimānena* – in his airplane; *saha-takṣakam* – with Takṣaka; *ambarāt* – from the sky; *vilokya* – observing; *āṅgirasah* – the son of Aṅgirā; *prāha* – spoke; *rājānam* – to the King (Janamejaya); *tam* – to him; *brhaspatiḥ* – Bṛhaspati.

TRANSLATION

Bṛhaspati, the son of Aṅgirā Muni, seeing Indra falling from the sky in his airplane along with Takṣaka, approached King Janamejaya and spoke to him as follows.

TEXT 6.24

*naiṣa tvayā manuṣyendra
vadham arhati sarpa-rāt
anena pītam amṛtam
atha vā ajarāmarah*

na – not; *eṣaḥ* – this snake-bird; *tvayā* – by you; *manuṣya-indra* – O great ruler of men; *vadham* – murder; *arhati* – deserves; *sarpa-rāt* – the king of snakes; *anena* – by him; *pītam* – has been drunk; *amṛtam* – the nectar of the demigods; *atha* – therefore; *vai* – certainly; *ajara* – free from the effects of old age; *amaraḥ* – virtually immortal.

TRANSLATION

O King among men, it is not fitting that this king of snakes meet death at your hands, for he has drunk the nectar of the immortal

demigods. Consequently he is not subject to the ordinary symptoms of old age and death.

TEXT 6.25

*jīvitam maraṇam jantor
gatiḥ svenaiva karmaṇā
rājanḥ tato 'nyo nāsty asya
pradātā sukha-duḥkhayoḥ*

jīvitam – the living; *maraṇam* – the dying; *jantor* – of a living being; *gatiḥ* – the destination in his next life; *svena* – by his own; *eva* – only; *karmaṇā* – work; *rājan* – O King; *tataḥ* – than that; *anyaḥ* – another; *na asti* – there is not; *asya* – for him; *pradātā* – bestower; *sukha-duḥkhayoḥ* – of happiness and distress.

TRANSLATION

The life and death of an embodied soul and his destination in the next life are all caused by himself through his own activity. Therefore, O King, no other agent is actually responsible for creating one's happiness and distress.

PURPORT

Although King Parīkṣit apparently died by the bite of Takṣaka, it was Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself who brought the King back to the kingdom of God. Bṛhaspati wanted young King Janamejaya to see things from the spiritual point of view.

TEXT 6.26

*sarpa-caurāgni-vidyudbhyaḥ
kṣut-ṭṛṣṭ-vyādhy-ādibhir nṛpa
pañcatvam ṛcchate jantur
bhukta ārabdha-karma tat*

sarpa – from snakes; *caura* – thieves; *agni* – fire; *vidyudbhyaḥ* – and lightning; *kṣut* – from hunger; *ṭṛṣṭ* – thirst; *vyādhi* – disease; *ādibhiḥ* – and other agents; *nṛpa* – O King; *pañcatvam* – death; *ṛcchate* – obtains; *jantur* – the conditioned living entity; *bhukta* – he enjoys; *ārabdha* – already created by his past work; *karma* – the fruitive reaction; *tat* – that.

TRANSLATION

When a conditioned soul is killed by snakes, thieves, fire,

lightning, hunger, disease or anything else, he is experiencing the reaction to his own past work.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, King Parīkṣit obviously was not suffering the reaction of past *karma*. As a great devotee he was personally brought back home, back to Godhead, by the Lord.

TEXT 6.27

*tasmāt satram idam rājan
saṁsthīyetābhicārikam
sarpā anāgasah dagdhā
janair diṣṭam hi bhujyate*

tasmāt – therefore; *satram* – sacrifice; *idam* – this; *rājan* – O King; *saṁsthīyeta* – should be stopped; *ābhicārikam* – done with intent to harm; *sarpāḥ* – the serpents; *anāgasah* – innocent; *dagdhāḥ* – burned; *janaiḥ* – by persons; *diṣṭam* – fate; *hi* – indeed; *bhujyate* – is suffered.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, my dear King, please stop this sacrificial performance, which was initiated with the intent of doing harm to others. Many innocent snakes have already been burned to death. Indeed, all persons must suffer the unforeseen consequences of their past activities.

PURPORT

Brhaspati here admits that although the snakes appeared to be innocent, by the Lord's arrangement they were also being punished for previous vicious activities.

TEXT 6.28

*sūta uvāca
ity uktaḥ sa tathety āha
maharṣer mānayan vacaḥ
sarpa-satrād uparataḥ
pūjayām āsa vāk-patim*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *iti* – thus; *uktaḥ* – addressed; *sah* – he (Janamejaya); *tathā iti* – so be it; *āha* – he said; *mahā-ṛṣeḥ* – of the

great sage; *mānayan* – honoring; *vacaḥ* – the words; *sarpa-satrāt* – from the snake sacrifice; *uparataḥ* – ceasing; *pūjayām āsa* – he worshiped; *vāk-patim* – Bṛhaspati, the master of eloquence.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī continued: Advised in this manner, Mahārāja Janamejaya replied, “So be it.” Honoring the words of the great sage, he desisted from performing the snake sacrifice and worshiped Bṛhaspati, the most eloquent of sages.

TEXT 6.29

*saiṣā viṣṇor mahā-māyā-
bādhyayālakṣaṇā yayā
muhyanty asyaivātma-bhūtā
bhūteṣu guṇa-vṛttibhiḥ*

sā eṣā – this very; *viṣṇoḥ* – of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu; *mahā-māyā* – the illusory material energy; *abādhyayā* – by her who cannot be checked; *alakṣaṇā* – indiscernible; *yayā* – by whom; *muhyanti* – become bewildered; *asya* – of the Lord; *eva* – indeed; *ātma-bhūtāḥ* – the part-and-parcel spirit souls; *bhūteṣu* – within their material bodies; *guṇa* – of the modes of nature; *vṛttibhiḥ* – by the functions.

TRANSLATION

This is indeed the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu’s illusory energy, which is unstoppable and difficult to perceive. Although the individual spirit souls are part and parcel of the Lord, through the influence of this illusory energy they are bewildered by their identification with various material bodies.

PURPORT

The illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu is so powerful that even the illustrious son of King Parīkṣit was temporarily misdirected. Because he was a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, however, his bewilderment was quickly rectified. On the other hand, an ordinary, materialistic person without the special protection of the Lord plummets to the depths of material ignorance. Factually, materialistic persons are not interested in the protection of Lord Viṣṇu. Therefore their complete ruination is inevitable.

TEXTS 6.30–31

*na yatra dambhīty abhayā virājitā
māyātma-vāde 'sakṛd ātma-vādibhiḥ
na yad vivādo vividhas tad-āśrayo
manaś ca saṅkalpa-vikalpa-vṛtti yat*

*na yatra sṛjyam sṛjatobhayoḥ param
śreyaś ca jīvas tribhir anvitas tv aham
tat etad utsādita-bādhyā-bādhakam
niṣidhya cormīn virameta tan munih*

na – not; *yatra* – in which; *dambhī* – he is a hypocrite; *iti* – thinking thus; *abhayā* – fearless; *virājitā* – visible; *māyā* – the illusory energy; *ātma-vāde* – when spiritual inquiry is being conducted; *asakṛt* – constantly; *ātma-vādibhiḥ* – by those who describe spiritual science; *na* – not; *yad* – in which; *vivādaḥ* – materialistic argument; *vividhaḥ* – taking many different forms; *tad-āśrayaḥ* – founded upon that illusory energy; *manaḥ* – the mind; *ca* – and; *saṅkalpa* – decision; *vikalpa* – and doubt; *vṛtti* – whose functions; *yat* – in which; *na* – not; *yatra* – in which; *sṛjyam* – the created products of the material world; *sṛjatā* – along with their causes; *ubhayoḥ* – by both; *param* – achieved; *śreyaḥ* – the benefits; *ca* – and; *jīvaḥ* – the living entity; *tribhiḥ* – with the three (modes of nature); *anvitaḥ* – joined; *tu* – indeed; *aham* – (conditioned by) false ego; *tat etad* – that indeed; *utsādita* – excluding; *bādhyā* – the obstructed (conditioned living beings); *bādhakam* – and the obstructing (modes of material nature); *niṣidhya* – warding off; *ca* – and; *ūrmīn* – the waves (of false ego and so on); *virameta* – should take special pleasure; *tat* – in that; *munih* – a sage.

TRANSLATION

But there exists a supreme reality, in which the illusory energy cannot fearlessly dominate, thinking, “I can control this person because he is deceitful.” In that highest reality there are no illusory argumentative philosophies. Rather, there the true students of spiritual science constantly engage in authorized spiritual investigation. In that supreme reality there is no manifestation of the material mind, which functions in terms of alternating decision and doubt. Created material products, their subtle causes and the goals of enjoyment attained by their utilization do not exist there. Furthermore, in that supreme reality there is no conditioned spirit, covered by false ego and the three modes of nature. That reality excludes everything

limited or limiting. One who is wise should therefore stop the waves of material life and enjoy within that Supreme Truth.

PURPORT

The illusory energy of the Lord, Māyā, can freely exert her influence over those who are hypocritical, deceitful and disobedient to the laws of God. Since the Personality of Godhead is free of all material qualities, Māyā herself becomes fearful in His presence. As stated by Lord Brahmā (*vilajjamānayā yasya sthātum ikṣa-pate ’muyā*): “Māyā herself is ashamed to stand face to face with the Supreme Lord.”

In the supreme spiritual reality, useless academic wrangling is completely absent. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.4.31):

*yac-chaktayo vadatām vādinām vai
vivāda-saṁvāda-bhuvo bhavanti
kurvanti caiṣām muhur ātma-mohaṁ
tasmai namo ’nanta-guṇāya bhūmne*

“Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the all-pervading Supreme Personality of Godhead, who possesses unlimited transcendental qualities. Acting from within the cores of the hearts of all philosophers, who propagate various views, He causes them to forget their own souls while sometimes agreeing and sometimes disagreeing among themselves. Thus He creates within this material world a situation in which they are unable to come to a conclusion. I offer my obeisances unto Him.”

TEXT 6.32

*param padam vaiṣṇavam āmananti tad
yan neti netīy atad-utsisṛkṣavaḥ
visṛjya daurātmyam ananya-sauhrdā
hṛdopaguhyāvasitam samāhitaiḥ*

param – the supreme; *padam* – situation; *vaiṣṇavam* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *āmananti* – they designate; *tad* – that; *yad* – which; *na iti na iti* – “not this, not this”; *iti* – thus analyzing; *atat* – everything extraneous; *utsisṛkṣavaḥ* – those who are desirous of giving up; *visṛjya* – rejecting; *daurātmyam* – petty materialism; *ananya* – placing nowhere else; *sauhrdāḥ* – their affection; *hṛdā* – within their hearts; *opaguhyā* – embracing Him; *avasitam* – who is captured; *samāhitaiḥ* – by those who meditate upon Him in trance.

TRANSLATION

Those who desire to give up all that is not essentially real move systematically, by negative discrimination of the extraneous, to the supreme position of Lord Viṣṇu. Giving up petty materialism, they offer their love exclusively to the Absolute Truth within their hearts and embrace that highest truth in fixed meditation.

PURPORT

The words *yan neti netīy atad-utsisṛkṣavaḥ* indicate the process of negative discrimination, by which one engaged in the search for essential and absolute truth systematically rejects all that is superfluous, superficial and relative. Throughout the world people have gradually rejected the ultimate validity of political, social and even religious truths, but because they lack Kṛṣṇa consciousness they remain bewildered and cynical. However, as clearly stated here, *param padam vaiṣṇavam āmananti tat*. Those who actually desire perfect knowledge must not only reject the nonessential but must also ultimately understand the essential spiritual reality called *param padam vaiṣṇavam*: the supreme destination, the abode of Lord Viṣṇu. *Padam* indicates both the status and the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which can be understood only by those who give up petty materialism and adopt the position of *ananya-sauhṛdam*, exclusive love for the Lord. Such exclusive love is not narrow-minded or sectarian, because all living entities, being within the Lord, are automatically served when one directly serves the supreme entity. This process of rendering the highest service to the Lord and to all living entities constitutes the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is taught throughout *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 6.33

*ta etad adhigacchanti
viṣṇor yat paramam padam
aham mameti daurjanyam
na yeṣām deha-geha-jam*

te – they; *etat* – this; *adhigacchanti* – come to know; *viṣṇoḥ* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *yat* – which; *paramam* – the supreme; *padam* – personal situation; *aham* – I; *mama* – my; *iti* – thus; *daurjanyam* – the depravity; *na* – is not; *yeṣām* – for whom; *deha* – the body; *geha* – and home; *jam* – based upon.

TRANSLATION

Such devotees come to understand the supreme transcendental situation of the Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, because they are no longer polluted by the concepts of “I” and “my,” which are based on body and home.

TEXT 6.34

*ativādāms titikṣeta
nāvamanyeta kañcana
na cemaṁ deham āśritya
vairam kurvīta kenacit*

ati-vādān – insulting words; *titikṣeta* – one should tolerate; *na* – never; *avamanyeta* – one should disrespect; *kañcana* – anyone; *na ca* – nor; *imam* – this; *deham* – material body; *āśritya* – identifying with; *vairam* – enmity; *kurvīta* – one should have; *kenacit* – with anyone.

TRANSLATION

One should tolerate all insults and never fail to show proper respect to any person. Avoiding identification with the material body, one should not create enmity with anyone.

TEXT 6.35

*namo bhagavate tasmai
kṛṣṇāyākunṭha-medhase
yat-pādāmburuha-dhyānāt
saṁhitām adhyagām imām*

namaḥ – obeisances; *bhagavate* – to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tasmai* – to Him; *kṛṣṇāya* – Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *akunṭha-medhase* – whose power is never impeded; *yat* – whose; *pāda-ambu-ruha* – upon the lotus feet; *dhyānāt* – by meditation; *saṁhitām* – the scripture; *adhyagām* – I have assimilated; *imām* – this.

TRANSLATION

I offer my obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the invincible Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Simply by meditating upon His lotus feet I have been able to study and appreciate this great literature.

TEXT 6.36

śrī-śaunaka uvāca

*pailādibhir vyāsa-śiṣyair
vedācāryair mahātmabhiḥ
vedāś ca kathitā vyastā
etat saumyābhidhehi naḥ*

śrī-śaunakaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śaunaka Ṛṣi said; *paila-ādibhiḥ* – by Paila and others; *vyāsa-śiṣyaiḥ* – the disciples of Śrīla Vyāsadeva; *veda-ācāryaiḥ* – the standard authorities of the *Vedas*; *mahā-ātmabhiḥ* – whose intelligence was very great; *vedāḥ* – the *Vedas*; *ca* – and; *kathitāḥ* – spoken; *vyastāḥ* – divided; *etat* – this; *saumya* – O gentle Sūta; *abhidhehi* – please narrate; *naḥ* – to us.

TRANSLATION

Śaunaka Ṛṣi said: O gentle Sūta, please narrate to us how Paila and the other greatly intelligent disciples of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, who are known as the standard authorities of Vedic wisdom, spoke and edited the Vedas.

TEXT 6.37

sūta uvāca

*samāhitātmano brahman
brahmaṇaḥ parameṣṭhinaḥ
hr̥dy ākāśād abhūn nādo
vṛtti-rodhād vibhāvyate*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *samāhita-ātmanaḥ* – whose mind was perfectly fixed; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa* (Śaunaka); *brahmaṇaḥ* – of Lord Brahmā; *parame-ṣṭhinaḥ* – the most elevated of living beings; *hr̥di* – within the heart; *ākāśāt* – from out of the sky; *abhūt* – arose; *nādaḥ* – the transcendental subtle sound; *vṛtti-rodhāt* – by stopping the functioning (of the ears); *vibhāvyate* – is perceived.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: O brāhmaṇa, first the subtle vibration of transcendental sound appeared from the sky of the heart of the most elevated Lord Brahmā, whose mind was perfectly fixed in spiritual realization. One can perceive this subtle vibration when one stops all external hearing.

PURPORT

Because *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the supreme Vedic literature, the sages

headed by Śaunaka desired to trace out its source.

TEXT 6.38

*yad-upāsanayā brahman
yogino malam ātmanaḥ
dravya-kriyā-kāra-kākhyam
dhūtvā yānti apunar-bhavam*

yat – of which (subtle form of the *Vedas*); *upāsanayā* – by the worship; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*; *yoginaḥ* – mystic sages; *malam* – the contamination; *ātmanaḥ* – of the heart; *dravya* – substance; *kriyā* – activity; *kāra* – and performer; *kākyam* – designated as such; *dhūtvā* – cleansing away; *yānti* – they achieve; *apunar-bhavam* – freedom from rebirth.

TRANSLATION

By worship of this subtle form of the Vedas, O brāhmaṇa, mystic sages cleanse their hearts of all contamination caused by impurity of substance, activity and doer, and thus they attain freedom from repeated birth and death.

TEXT 6.39

*tato 'bhūt tri-vṛt omkāro
yo 'vyakta-prabhavaḥ sva-rāt
yat tal liṅgam bhagavato
brahmaṇaḥ paramātmanaḥ*

tataḥ – from that; *abhūt* – came into being; *tri-vṛt* – threefold; *omkāraḥ* – the syllable *om*; *yaḥ* – which; *avyakta* – not apparent; *prabhavaḥ* – its influence; *sva-rāt* – self-manifesting; *yat* – which; *tat* – that; *liṅgam* – the representation; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *brahmaṇaḥ* – of the Absolute Truth in His impersonal aspect; *parama-ātmanaḥ* – and of the Supersoul.

TRANSLATION

From that transcendental subtle vibration arose the omkāra composed of three sounds. The omkāra has unseen potencies and manifests automatically within a purified heart. It is the representation of the Absolute Truth in all three of His phases – the Supreme Personality, the Supreme Soul and the supreme impersonal truth.

TEXTS 6.40–41

*śṛṇoti ya imam sphoṭam
supta-śrotre ca śūnya-dṛk
yena vāg vyajyate yasya
vyaktir ākāśa ātmanah*

*sva-dhāmno brahmaṇah sāksād
vācakah paramātmanah
sa sarva-mantrapaniṣad
veda-bijam sanātanam*

śṛṇoti – hears; *yaḥ* – who; *imam* – this; *sphoṭam* – unmanifest and eternal subtle sound; *supta-śrotre* – when the sense of hearing is asleep; *ca* – and; *śūnya-dṛk* – devoid of material sight and other sensory functions; *yena* – by which; *vāg* – the expanse of Vedic sound; *vyajyate* – is elaborated; *yasya* – of which; *vyaktiḥ* – the manifestation; *ākāśe* – in the sky (of the heart); *ātmanah* – from the soul; *sva-dhāmnaḥ* – who is His own origin; *brahmaṇah* – of the Absolute Truth; *sāksāt* – directly; *vācakah* – the designating term; *parama-ātmanah* – of the Supersoul; *saḥ* – that; *sarva* – of all; *mantra* – Vedic hymns; *upaniṣat* – the secret; *veda* – of the Vedas; *bijam* – the seed; *sanātanam* – eternal.

TRANSLATION

This omkāra, ultimately nonmaterial and imperceptible, is heard by the Supersoul without His possessing material ears or any other material senses. The entire expanse of Vedic sound is elaborated from omkāra, which appears from the soul, within the sky of the heart. It is the direct designation of the self-originating Absolute Truth, the Supersoul, and is the secret essence and eternal seed of all Vedic hymns.

PURPORT

The senses of a sleeping person do not function until he has awakened. Therefore, when a sleeping person is awakened by a noise, one may ask, “Who heard the noise?” The words *supta-śrotre* in this verse indicate that the Supreme Lord within the heart hears the sound and awakens the sleeping living entities. The Lord’s sensory activities always function on a superior level. Ultimately, all sounds vibrate within the sky, and in the internal region of the heart there is a type of sky meant for the vibration of Vedic sounds. The seed, or source, of

all Vedic sounds is the *omkāra*. This is confirmed by the Vedic statement *om ity etad brahmaṇo nediṣṭham nāma*. The full elaboration of the Vedic seed sound is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the greatest Vedic literature.

TEXT 6.42

*tasya hy āsaṁs trayo varṇā
a-kārādyā bhṛgūdvaha
dhāryante yais trayo bhāvā
guṇa-nāmārtha-vṛttayah*

tasya – of that *omkāra*; *hi* – indeed; *āsan* – came into being; *trayah* – three; *varṇāḥ* – sounds of the alphabet; *a-kāra-ādyāḥ* – beginning with the letter *a*; *bhṛgu-udvaha* – O most eminent of the descendants of Bhṛgu; *dhāryante* – are sustained; *yaiḥ* – by which three sounds; *trayah* – the threefold; *bhāvāḥ* – states of existence; *guṇa* – the qualities of nature; *nāma* – names; *artha* – goals; *vṛttayah* – and states of consciousness.

TRANSLATION

Omkāra exhibited the three original sounds of the alphabet – A, U and M. These three, O most eminent descendant of Bhṛgu, sustain all the different threefold aspects of material existence, including the three modes of nature, the names of the Ṛg, Yajur and Sāma Vedas, the goals known as the Bhūr, Bhuvar and Svar planetary systems, and the three functional platforms called waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep.

TEXT 6.43

*tato 'kṣara-samāmnāyam
asṛjad bhagavān ajaḥ
antasthoṣma-svara-sparśa-
hrasva-dīrghādi-lakṣaṇam*

tataḥ – from that *omkāra*; *akṣara* – of the different sounds; *samāmnāyam* – the total collection; *asṛjat* – created; *bhagavān* – the powerful demigod; *ajaḥ* – unborn Brahmā; *anta-stha* – as the semivowels; *uṣma* – sibilants; *svara* – vowels; *sparśa* – and consonant stops; *hrasva-dīrgha* – in short and long forms; *ādi* – and so on; *lakṣaṇam* – characterized.

TRANSLATION

From that omkāra Lord Brahmā created all the sounds of the alphabet – the vowels, consonants, semivowels, sibilants and others – distinguished by such features as long and short measure.

TEXT 6.44

*tenāsau caturo vedāṁś
caturbhir vadanair vibhuḥ
sa-vyāhṛtikān somkārāṁś
cātur-hotra-vivakṣayā*

tena – with that body of sounds; *asau* – he; *caturaḥ* – the four; *vedān* – Vedas; *caturbhiḥ* – from his four; *vadanaiḥ* – faces; *vibhuḥ* – the all-powerful; *sa-vyāhṛtikān* – along with the *vyāhṛtis* (the invocations of the names of the seven planetary systems: *bhūḥ*, *bhuvah*, *svah*, *mahaḥ*, *janaḥ*, *tapaḥ* and *satya*); *sa-omkārān* – along with the seed, *om*; *cātuḥ-hotra* – the four aspects of ritual sacrifice performed by the priests of each of the four Vedas; *vivakṣayā* – with the desire of describing.

TRANSLATION

All-powerful Brahmā made use of this collection of sounds to produce from his four faces the four Vedas, which appeared together with the sacred omkāra and the seven vyāhṛti invocations. His intention was to propagate the process of Vedic sacrifice according to the different functions performed by the priests of each of the four Vedas.

TEXT 6.45

*putrān adhyāpayat tāṁs tu
brahmarṣīn brahma-kovidān
te tu dharmopadeṣṭāraḥ
sva-putrebhyaḥ samādiśan*

putrān – to his sons; *adhyāpayat* – he taught; *tān* – those Vedas; *tu* – and; *brahma-ṛṣīn* – to the great sages among the *brāhmaṇas*; *brahma* – in the art of Vedic recitation; *kovidān* – who were very expert; *te* – they; *tu* – moreover; *dharmā* – in religious rituals; *upadeṣṭāraḥ* – instructors; *sva-putrebhyaḥ* – to their own sons; *samādiśan* – imparted.

TRANSLATION

Brahmā taught these Vedas to his sons, who were great sages

among the brāhmaṇas and experts in the art of Vedic recitation. They in turn took the role of ācāryas and imparted the Vedas to their own sons.

TEXT 6.46

*te paramparayā prāptāḥ
tat-tat-chiṣyair dhṛta-vrataiḥ
catur-yugeṣv atha vyastā
dvāparādaḥ maharṣibhiḥ*

te – these Vedas; *paramparayā* – by continuous disciplic succession; *prāptāḥ* – received; *tat-tat* – of each succeeding generation; *śiṣyaiḥ* – by the disciples; *dhṛta-vrataiḥ* – who were firm in their vows; *catur-yugeṣu* – throughout the four ages; *atha* – then; *vyastāḥ* – were divided; *dvāpara-ādaḥ* – at the end of the Dvāpara millennium; *mahā-ṛṣibhiḥ* – by great authorities.

TRANSLATION

In this way, throughout the cycles of four ages, generation after generation of disciples – all firmly fixed in their spiritual vows – have received these Vedas by disciplic succession. At the end of each Dvāpara-yuga the Vedas are edited into separate divisions by eminent sages.

TEXT 6.47

*kṣīṇāyusaḥ kṣīṇa-sattvān
durmedhān vīkṣya kālataḥ
vedān brahmaṛṣayaḥ vyasyan
hr̥di-sthācyuta-coditāḥ*

kṣīṇa-āyusaḥ – their life span diminished; *kṣīṇa-sattvān* – their strength diminished; *durmedhān* – of less intelligence; *vīkṣya* – observing; *kālataḥ* – by the effect of time; *vedān* – the Vedas; *brahma-ṛṣayaḥ* – the chief sages; *vyasyan* – divided up; *hr̥di-sthā* – sitting within their hearts; *acyuta* – by the infallible Personality of Godhead; *coditāḥ* – inspired.

TRANSLATION

Observing that people in general were diminished in their life span, strength and intelligence by the influence of time, great sages took inspiration from the Personality of Godhead sitting

within their hearts and systematically divided the Vedas.

TEXTS 6.48–49

*asminn apy antare brahman
bhagavān loka-bhāvanaḥ
brahmeśādyair loka-pālair
yācito dharma-guptaye

parāśarāt satyavatyām
amśāṁśa-kalayā vibhuḥ
avatīrṇo mahā-bhāga
vedam cakre catur-vidham*

asmin – in this; *api* – also; *antare* – rule of Manu; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa* (Śaunaka); *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *loka* – of the universe; *bhāvanaḥ* – the protector; *brahma* – by Brahmā; *īśa* – Śiva; *ādyaiḥ* – and the others; *loka-pālaiḥ* – the rulers of the various planets; *yācitaḥ* – requested; *dharma-guptaye* – for the protection of the principles of religion; *parāśarāt* – by Parāśara Muni; *satyavatyām* – in the womb of Satyavati; *amśa* – of His plenary expansion (Sāṅkarṣaṇa); *amśa* – of the expansion (Viṣṇu); *kalayā* – as the partial expansion; *vibhuḥ* – the Lord; *avatīrṇaḥ* – descended; *mahā-bhāga* – O most fortunate one; *vedam* – the *Veda*; *cakre* – he made; *catur-vidham* – in four parts.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇa, in the present age of Vaivasvata Manu, the leaders of the universe, led by Brahmā and Śiva, requested the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the protector of all the worlds, to save the principles of religion. O most fortunate Śaunaka, the almighty Lord, exhibiting a divine spark of a portion of His plenary portion, then appeared in the womb of Satyavati as the son of Parāśara. In this form, named Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, he divided the one Veda into four.

TEXT 6.50

*ṛg-atharva-yajuh-sāmnām
rāśīr uddhṛtya vargaśaḥ
catasraḥ saṁhitāś cakre
mantrair maṇi-gaṇā iva*

ṛk-atharva-yajuh-sāmnām – of the *Ṛg*, *Atharva*, *Yajur* and *Sāma Vedas*;

rāśiḥ – the accumulation (of *mantras*); *uddhṛtya* – separating out; *vargaśaḥ* – in specific categories; *caturaḥ* – four; *saṁhitāḥ* – collections; *cakre* – he made; *mantraiḥ* – with the *mantras*; *maṇi-gaṇāḥ* – gems; *iva* – just as.

TRANSLATION

Śrīla Vyāsadeva separated the mantras of the Ṛg, Atharva, Yajur and Sāma Vedas into four divisions, just as one sorts out a mixed collection of jewels into piles. Thus he composed four distinct Vedic literatures.

PURPORT

When Lord Brahmā first spoke the four *Vedas* with his four mouths, the *mantras* were mixed together like an unsorted collection of various types of jewels. Śrīla Vyāsadeva sorted the Vedic *mantras* into four divisions (*saṁhitās*), which thus became the recognizable Ṛg, Atharva, Yajur and Sāma Vedas.

TEXT 6.51

*tāsāṁ sa caturaḥ śiṣyān
upāhūya mahā-matiḥ
ekaikāṁ saṁhitāṁ brahmann
ekaikasmai dadau vibhuḥ*

tāsām – of those four collections; *saḥ* – he; *caturaḥ* – four; *śiṣyān* – disciples; *upāhūya* – calling near; *mahā-matiḥ* – the powerfully intelligent sage; *eka-ekām* – one by one; *saṁhitām* – a collection; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*; *eka-ekasmai* – to each of them; *dadau* – he gave; *vibhuḥ* – the powerful Vyāsadeva.

TRANSLATION

The most powerful and intelligent Vyāsadeva called four of his disciples, O *brāhmaṇa*, and entrusted to each of them one of these four *saṁhitās*.

TEXTS 6.52–53

*pailāya saṁhitām ādyām
bahvṛcākhyām uvāca ha
vaiśampāyana-saṁjñāya
nigadākhyam yajur-gaṇam
sāmnām jaiminaye prāha*

*tathā chandoga-saṁhitām
atharvāṅgirasīm nāma
sva-śiṣyāya sumantave*

pailāya – to Paila; *saṁhitām* – the collection; *ādyām* – first (of the Ṛg Veda); *bahu-ṛca-ākhyam* – called *Bahvṛca*; *uvāca* – he spoke; *ha* – indeed; *vaiśampāyana-saṁjñāya* – to the sage named Vaiśampāyana; *nigada-ākhyam* – known as *Nigada*; *yajuḥ-gaṇam* – the collection of Yajur mantras; *sāmnām* – the mantras of the Sāma Veda; *jaiminaye* – to Jaimini; *prāha* – he spoke; *tathā* – and; *chandoga-saṁhitām* – the *saṁhitā* named *Chandoga*; *atharva-aṅgirasīm* – the Veda ascribed to the sages Atharva and Aṅgirā; *nāma* – indeed; *sva-śiṣyāya* – to his disciple; *sumantave* – Sumantu.

TRANSLATION

Śrīla Vyāsadeva taught the first *saṁhitā*, the Ṛg Veda, to Paila and gave this collection the name *Bahvṛca*. To the sage Vaiśampāyana he spoke the collection of Yajur mantras named *Nigada*. He taught the Sāma Veda mantras, designated as the *Chandoga-saṁhitā*, to Jaimini, and he spoke the Atharva Veda to his dear disciple Sumantu.

TEXTS 6.54–56

*pailaḥ sva-saṁhitām ūce
indrapramitaye muniḥ
bāṣkalāya ca so 'py āha
śiṣyebhyaḥ saṁhitām svakām*

*caturdhā vyasya bodhyāya
yājñavalkyāya bhārgava
parāśarāyāgnimitra
indrapramitir ātmavān*

*adhyāpayat saṁhitām svām
māṅḍūkeyam ṛṣim kavim
tasya śiṣyo devamitraḥ
saubhary-ādibhya ūcivān*

pailaḥ – Paila; *sva-saṁhitām* – his own collection; *ūce* – spoke; *indrapramitaye* – to Indrapramiti; *muniḥ* – the sage; *bāṣkalāya* – to Bāṣkala; *ca* – and; *saḥ* – he (Bāṣkala); *api* – moreover; *āha* – spoke; *śiṣyebhyaḥ* – to his disciples; *saṁhitām* – the collection; *svakām* – his

own; *caturdhā* – in four parts; *vyasya* – dividing; *bodhyāya* – to Bodhya; *yājñavalkyāya* – to Yājñavalkya; *bhārgava* – O descendant of Bhṛgu (Śaunaka); *parāśarāya* – to Parāśara; *agnimitre* – to Agnimitra; *indrapramitiḥ* – Indrapramiti; *ātma-vān* – the self-controlled; *adhyāpayat* – taught; *saṁhitām* – the collection; *svām* – his; *māṇḍūkeyam* – to Māṇḍūkeya; *ṛṣim* – the sage; *kavim* – scholarly; *tasya* – of him (Māṇḍūkeya); *śiṣyaḥ* – the disciple; *devamitraḥ* – Devamitra; *saubhari-ādibhyaḥ* – to Saubhari and others; *ūcivān* – spoke.

TRANSLATION

After dividing his *saṁhitā* into two parts, the wise Paila spoke it to Indrapramiti and Bāṣkala. Bāṣkala further divided his collection into four parts, O Bhārgava, and instructed them to his disciples Bodhya, Yājñavalkya, Parāśara and Agnimitra. Indrapramiti, the self-controlled sage, taught his *saṁhitā* to the learned mystic Māṇḍūkeya, whose disciple Devamitra later passed down the divisions of the Ṛg Veda to Saubhari and others.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, Māṇḍūkeya was the son of Indrapramiti, from whom he received Vedic knowledge.

TEXT 6.57

*śākalyas tat-sutaḥ svām tu
pañcadhā vyasya saṁhitām
vātsya-mudgala-śālīya-
gokhalya-śiśireṣv adhāt*

śākalyaḥ – Śākalya; *tat-sutaḥ* – the son of Māṇḍūkeya; *svām* – his own; *tu* – and; *pañcadhā* – in five parts; *vyasya* – dividing; *saṁhitām* – the collection; *vātsya-mudgala-śālīya* – to Vātsya, Mudgala and Śālīya; *gokhalya-śiśireṣu* – and to Gokhalya and Śiśira; *adhāt* – gave.

TRANSLATION

The son of Māṇḍūkeya, named Śākalya, divided his own collection into five, entrusting one subdivision each to Vātsya, Mudgala, Śālīya, Gokhalya and Śiśira.

TEXT 6.58

*jātūkarṇyaś ca tac-chiṣyaḥ
sa-niruktām sva-saṁhitām*

*balāka-paila-jābāla-
virajebhyo dadau muniḥ*

jātūkarṇyaḥ – Jātūkarṇya; *ca* – and; *tat-śiṣyaḥ* – the disciple of Śākalya; *sa-niruktām* – along with a glossary explaining obscure terms; *sva-saṁhitām* – the collection he received; *balāka-paila-jābāla-virajebhyaḥ* – to Balāka, Paila, Jābāla and Viraja; *dadau* – passed down; *muniḥ* – the sage.

TRANSLATION

The sage Jātūkarṇya was also a disciple of Śākalya, and after dividing the saṁhitā he received from Śākalya into three parts, he added a fourth section, a Vedic glossary. He taught one of these parts to each of four disciples – Balāka, the second Paila, Jābāla and Viraja.

TEXT 6.59

*bāṣkaliḥ prati-śākhābhyo
vālahilyākhyā-saṁhitām
cakre vālāyanir bhajyaḥ
kāśāraś caiva tām dadhuḥ*

bāṣkaliḥ – Bāṣkali, the son of Bāṣkala; *prati-śākhābhyaḥ* – from all the different branches; *vālahilyā-ākhyā* – entitled *Vālahilya*; *saṁhitām* – the collection; *cakre* – he made; *vālāyaniḥ* – Vālāyani; *bhajyaḥ* – Bhajya; *kāśāraḥ* – Kāśāra; *ca* – and; *eva* – indeed; *tām* – that; *dadhuḥ* – they accepted.

TRANSLATION

Bāṣkali assembled the Vālahilya-saṁhitā, a collection from all the branches of the Ṛg Veda. This collection was received by Vālāyani, Bhajya and Kāśāra.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, Vālāyani, Bhajya and Kāśāra belonged to the Daitya community.

TEXT 6.60

*bahvṛcāḥ saṁhitā hy etā
ebhir brahmaṛṣibhir dhṛtāḥ
śrutvaitac-chandasāṁ vyāsāṁ
sarva-pāpaiḥ pramucyate*

bahu-rcāḥ – of the *Ṛg Veda*; *saṁhitāḥ* – the collections; *hi* – indeed; *etāḥ* – these; *ebhiḥ* – by these; *brahma-ṛṣibhiḥ* – saintly *brāhmaṇas*; *dhṛtāḥ* – maintained through disciplic succession; *śrutvā* – hearing; *etat* – their; *chandasām* – of the sacred verses; *vyāsam* – the process of division; *sarva-pāpaiḥ* – from all sins; *pramucyate* – one becomes delivered.

TRANSLATION

Thus these various saṁhitās of the Ṛg Veda were maintained through disciplic succession by these saintly brāhmaṇas. Simply by hearing of this distribution of the Vedic hymns, one will be freed from all sins.

TEXT 6.61

*vaiśampāyana-śiṣyā vai
carakādhvaryavo 'bhavan
yac cerur brahma-hatyāṁhaḥ
kṣapaṇam sva-guror vratam*

vaiśampāyana-śiṣyāḥ – the disciples of Vaiśampāyana; *vai* – indeed; *caraka* – named the Carakas; *adhvaryavaḥ* – authorities of the *Atharva Veda*; *abhavan* – became; *yac* – because; *ceruḥ* – they executed; *brahma-hatyā* – due to the killing of a *brāhmaṇa*; *amhaḥ* – of the sin; *kṣapaṇam* – the expiation; *sva-guroḥ* – for their own *guru*; *vratam* – the vow.

TRANSLATION

The disciples of Vaiśampāyana became authorities in the Atharva Veda. They were known as the Carakas because they executed strict vows to free their guru from his sin of killing a brāhmaṇa.

TEXT 6.62

*yājñavalkyaś ca tac-chiṣya
āhāho bhagavan kiyat
caritenālpa-sārāṇām
cariṣye 'haṁ su-duścaram*

yājñavalkyaḥ – Yājñavalkya; *ca* – and; *tac-chiṣyaḥ* – the disciple of Vaiśampāyana; *āha* – said; *aho* – just see; *bhagavan* – O master; *kiyat* – how much value; *caritena* – with the endeavor; *alpa-sārāṇām* – of these weak fellows; *cariṣye* – shall execute; *aham* – I; *su-duścaram* – that which is very difficult to perform.

TRANSLATION

Once Yājñavalkya, one of the disciples of Vaiśampāyana, said: O master, how much benefit will be derived from the feeble endeavors of these weak disciples of yours? I will personally perform some outstanding penance.

TEXT 6.63

*ity ukto gurur apy āha
kupito yāhy alam tvayā
viprāvamantrā śiṣyeṇa
mad-adhītam tyajāśv iti*

iti – thus; *uktaḥ* – addressed; *guruḥ* – his spiritual master; *api* – indeed; *āha* – said; *kupitaḥ* – angry; *yāhi* – go away; *alam* – enough; *tvayā* – with you; *vipra-avamantrā* – the insulter of *brāhmaṇas*; *śiṣyeṇa* – such a disciple; *mat-adhītam* – what has been taught by me; *tyaja* – give up; *āśu* – immediately; *iti* – thus.

TRANSLATION

Addressed thus, the spiritual master Vaiśampāyana became angry and said: Go away from here! Enough of you, O disciple who insults *brāhmaṇas*! Furthermore, you must immediately give back everything I have taught you.

PURPORT

Śrī Vaiśampāyana was angry because one of his disciples, Yājñavalkya, was insulting the other disciples, who were, after all, qualified *brāhmaṇas*. Just as a father is disturbed when one son mistreats the father's other children, the spiritual master is very displeased if a proud disciple insults or mistreats the *guru's* other disciples.

TEXTS 6.64–65

*devarāta-sutaḥ so 'pi
charditvā yajuṣāṁ gaṇam
tato gato 'tha munayo
dadṛśus tān yajur-gaṇān
yajūṁṣi tittirā bhūtvā
tal-lolupatayādaduḥ
taittiriyā iti yajuḥ-
śākhā āsan su-peśalāḥ*

devarāta-sutaḥ – the son of Devarāta (Yājñavalkya); *saḥ* – he; *api* – indeed; *chardītvā* – vomiting; *yajuṣām* – of the *Yajur Veda*; *gaṇam* – the collected *mantras*; *tataḥ* – from there; *gataḥ* – having gone; *atha* – then; *munayaḥ* – the sages; *dadṛśuḥ* – saw; *tān* – those; *yajuḥ-gaṇān* – *yajur-mantras*; *yajūmsi* – these *yajur-mantras*; *tittirāḥ* – partridges; *bhūtvā* – becoming; *tat* – for those *mantras*; *lolupatayā* – with greedy desire; *ādaduḥ* – picked them up; *taittirīyāḥ* – known as *Taittirīya*; *iti* – thus; *yajuḥ-śākhāḥ* – branches of the *Yajur Veda*; *āsan* – came into being; *su-peśalāḥ* – most beautiful.

TRANSLATION

Yājñavalkya, the son of Devarāta, then vomited the mantras of the Yajur Veda and went away from there. The assembled disciples, looking greedily upon these yajur hymns, assumed the form of partridges and picked them all up. These divisions of the Yajur Veda therefore became known as the most beautiful Taittirīya-saṁhitā, the hymns collected by partridges [tittirāḥ].

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, it is improper for a *brāhmaṇa* to collect what has been vomited, and so the powerful *brāhmaṇa* disciples of Vaiśampāyana assumed the form of *tittiras*, partridges, and collected the valuable *mantras*.

TEXT 6.66

*yājñavalkyas tato brahmaṁś
chandāṁsy adhi gaveṣayan
guror avidyamānāni
sūpatasṭhe 'rkam īśvaram*

yājñavalkyaḥ – Yājñavalkya; *tataḥ* – thereafter; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*; *chandāṁsi* – *mantras*; *adhi* – additional; *gaveṣayan* – seeking out; *guroḥ* – to his spiritual master; *avidyamānāni* – not known; *su-upatasṭhe* – he carefully worshiped; *arkam* – the sun; *īśvaram* – the powerful controller.

TRANSLATION

My dear brāhmaṇa Śaunaka, Yājñavalkya then desired to find out new yajur-mantras unknown to even his spiritual master. With this in mind he offered attentive worship to the powerful lord of the sun.

TEXT 6.67

śrī-yājñavalkya uvāca

om namo bhagavate ādityāyākhila-jagatām ātma-svarūpeṇa kāla-svarūpeṇa catur-vidha-bhūta-nikāyānām brahmādi-stamba-paryantānām antar-hṛdayeṣu bahir api cākāśa ivopādhināvyavadhīyamāno bhavān eka eva kṣaṇa-lava-nimeṣāvayavopacita-saṁvatsara-gaṇenāpām ādāna-visargābhyām imām loka-yātrām anuvahati.

śrī-yājñavalkyaḥ uvāca – Śrī Yājñavalkya said; *om namaḥ* – I offer my respectful obeisances; *bhagavate* – to the Personality of Godhead; *ādityāya* – appearing as the sun-god; *akhila-jagatām* – of all the planetary systems; *ātma-svarūpeṇa* – in the form of the Supersoul; *kāla-svarūpeṇa* – in the form of time; *catur-vidha* – of four kinds; *bhūta-nikāyānām* – of all the living beings; *brahma-ādi* – beginning from Lord Brahmā; *stamba-paryantānām* – and extending down to the blades of grass; *antar-hṛdayeṣu* – within the recesses of their hearts; *bahir* – externally; *api* – also; *ca* – and; *ākāśaḥ iva* – in the same way as the sky; *upādhinā* – by material designations; *avyavadhīyamānaḥ* – not being covered; *bhavān* – yourself; *ekaḥ* – alone; *eva* – indeed; *kṣaṇa-lava-nimeṣa* – the *kṣaṇa*, *lava* and *nimeṣa* (the smallest fractions of time); *avayava* – by these fragments; *upacita* – collected together; *saṁvatsara-gaṇena* – by the years; *apām* – of the water; *ādāna* – by taking away; *visargābhyām* – and giving; *imām* – this; *loka* – of the universe; *yātrām* – the maintenance; *anuvahati* – carries out.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Yājñavalkya said: I offer my respectful obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead appearing as the sun. You are present as the controller of the four kinds of living entities, beginning from Brahmā and extending down to the blades of grass. Just as the sky is present both inside and outside every living being, you exist both within the hearts of all as the Supersoul and externally in the form of time. Just as the sky cannot be covered by the clouds present within it, you are never covered by any false material designation. By the flow of years, which are made up of the tiny fragments of time called kṣaṇas, lavas and nimeṣas, you alone maintain this world, drying up the waters and giving them back as rain.

PURPORT

This prayer is not offered to the sun-god as an independent or autonomous entity but rather to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, represented by His powerful expansion the solar deity.

TEXT 6.68

yad u ha vāva vibudharṣabha savitar adas tapaty anusavanam ahar ahar āmnāya-vidhinopatiṣṭhamānānām akhila-durita-vṛjina- bijāvabharjana bhagavataḥ samabhidhīmahī tapana maṇḍalam.

yat – which; *u ha vāva* – indeed; *vibudha-rṣabha* – O chief of the demigods; *savitaḥ* – O lord of the sun; *adaḥ* – that; *tapati* – is glowing; *anusavanam* – at each of the junctures of the day (sunrise, noon and sunset); *ahaḥ ahaḥ* – each day; *āmnāya-vidhinā* – by the Vedic path, as passed down through disciplic succession; *upatiṣṭhamānānām* – of those who are engaged in offering prayer; *akhila-durita* – all sinful activities; *vṛjina* – the consequent suffering; *bija* – and the original seed of such; *avabharjana* – O you who burn; *bhagavataḥ* – of the mighty controller; *samabhidhīmahī* – I meditate with full attention; *tapana* – O glowing one; *maṇḍalam* – upon the sphere.

TRANSLATION

O glowing one, O powerful lord of the sun, you are the chief of all the demigods. I meditate with careful attention on your fiery globe, because for those who offer prayers to you three times daily according to the Vedic method passed down through authorized disciplic succession, you burn away all sinful activities, all consequent suffering and even the original seed of desire.

TEXT 6.69

ya iha vāva sthira-cara-nikarāṇām nija-niketanānām mana-indriyāsu-gaṇān anātmanaḥ svayam ātmāntar-yāmī pracodayati.

yaḥ – who; *iha* – in this world; *vāva* – indeed; *sthira-cara-nikarāṇām* – of all the nonmoving and moving living beings; *nija-niketanānām* – who depend on your shelter; *manaḥ-indriya-asu-gaṇān* – the mind, senses and vital air; *anātmanaḥ* – which are nonliving matter; *svayam* – yourself; *ātma* – in their hearts; *antaḥ-yāmī* – the indwelling lord; *pracodayati* – inspires to activity.

TRANSLATION

You are personally present as the indwelling lord in the hearts of all moving and nonmoving beings, who depend completely on your shelter. Indeed, you animate their material minds, senses and vital airs to act.

TEXT 6.70

*ya evemaṁ lokam ati-karāla-vadanāndhakāra-sañjñājagara-graha-gilitam
mṛtakam iva vicetanam avalokyānukampayā parama-kāruṇika
īkṣayaivotthāpyāhar ahar anusavanam śreyasi sva-dharmākhyātmāva-
sthane pravartayati.*

yaḥ – who; *eva* – alone; *imam* – this; *lokam* – world; *ati-karāla* – very fearful; *vadana* – the mouth of which; *andhakāra-sañjñā* – known as darkness; *ajagara* – by the python; *graha* – seized; *gilitam* – and swallowed; *mṛtakam* – dead; *iva* – as if; *vicetanam* – unconscious; *avalokya* – by glancing; *anukampayā* – mercifully; *parama-kāruṇikaḥ* – supremely magnanimous; *īkṣayā* – by casting his glance; *eva* – indeed; *utthāpya* – raising them up; *ahaḥ ahaḥ* – day after day; *anu-savanam* – at the three sacred junctures of the day; *śreyasi* – in the ultimate benefit; *sva-dharma-ākhyā* – known as the soul’s proper duty; *ātma-avasthāne* – in the inclination toward spiritual life; *pravartayati* – engages.

TRANSLATION

The world has been seized and swallowed by the python of darkness in its horrible mouth and has become unconscious, as if dead. But mercifully glancing upon the sleeping people of the world, you raise them up with the gift of sight. Thus you are most magnanimous. At the three sacred junctures of each day, you engage the pious in the path of ultimate good, inducing them to perform religious duties that situate them in their spiritual position.

PURPORT

According to Vedic culture, the three higher classes of society (the intellectual, political and mercantile sections) are formally connected with the spiritual master by initiation and receive the Gāyatrī *mantra*. This purifying *mantra* is chanted three times daily – at sunrise, noon and sunset. Auspicious moments for the performance of spiritual duties are calculated according to the sun’s path in the sky, and this systematic scheduling of spiritual duties is here attributed to the sun

as the representative of God.

TEXT 6.71

avani-patir ivāsādhūnām bhayam udīrayann aṭati parita āsā-pālais tatra tatra kamala-kośāñjalibhir upahr̥tārhaṇaḥ.

avani-patiḥ – a king; *iva* – as; *asādhūnām* – of the unholy; *bhayam* – fear; *udīrayan* – creating; *aṭati* – travels about; *paritaḥ* – all around; *āsā-pālaiḥ* – by the controlling deities of the directions; *tatra tatra* – here and there; *kamala-kośa* – holding lotus flowers; *añjalibhiḥ* – with folded palms; *upahr̥ta* – offered; *arhaṇaḥ* – honorable presentations.

TRANSLATION

Just like an earthly king, you travel about everywhere spreading fear among the unholy as the powerful deities of the directions offer you in their folded palms lotus flowers and other respectful presentations.

TEXT 6.72

atha ha bhagavaṁs tava caraṇa-nalina-yugalam tri-bhuvana-gurubhir abhivanditam aham ayāta-yāma-yajuṣ-kāma upasarāmi.

atha – thus; *ha* – indeed; *bhagavan* – O lord; *tava* – your; *caraṇa-nalina-yugalam* – two lotus feet; *tri-bhuvana* – of the three worlds; *gurubhiḥ* – by the spiritual masters; *abhivanditam* – honored; *aham* – I; *ayāta-yāma* – unknown to anyone else; *yajuṣ-kāmaḥ* – desiring to have the *yajur-mantras*; *upasarāmi* – am approaching with worship; *iti* – thus.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, my lord, I am prayerfully approaching your lotus feet, which are honored by the spiritual masters of the three worlds, because I hope to receive from you mantras of the Yajur Veda unknown to anyone else.

TEXT 6.73

sūta uvāca

*evam stutaḥ sa bhagavān
vāji-rūpa-dharo raviḥ
yajūṁsy ayāta-yāmāni
munaye 'dāt prasāditaḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *evam* – in this way; *stutaḥ* – offered

glorification; *saḥ* – he; *bhagavān* – the powerful demigod; *vāji-rūpa* – the form of a horse; *dharah* – assuming; *raviḥ* – the sun-god; *yajūṁṣi* – *yajur-* mantras; *ayāta-yāmāni* – never learned by any other mortal; *munaye* – to the sage; *adāt* – presented; *prasāditaḥ* – being satisfied.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Satisfied by such glorification, the powerful sun-god assumed the form of a horse and presented to the sage Yājñavalkya yajur-mantras previously unknown in human society.

TEXT 6.74

*yajurbhir akaroc chākhā
daśa pañca śatair vibhuḥ
jagrhur vājasanyas tāḥ
kāṇva-mādhyandinādayaḥ*

yajurbhiḥ – with the *yajur-*mantras; *akarot* – he made; *śākhāḥ* – branches; *daśa* – ten; *pañca* – plus five; *śataiḥ* – with the hundreds; *vibhuḥ* – the powerful; *jagrhuḥ* – they accepted; *vāja-sanyaḥ* – produced from the hairs of the horse’s mane and thus known as *Vājasaneyī*; *tāḥ* – them; *kāṇva-mādhyandina-ādayaḥ* – the disciples of Kāṇva and Mādhyandina, and other ṛṣis.

TRANSLATION

From these countless hundreds of mantras of the Yajur Veda, the powerful sage compiled fifteen new branches of Vedic literature. These became known as the Vājasaneyi-saṁhitā because they were produced from the hairs of the horse’s mane, and they were accepted in disciplic succession by the followers of Kāṇva, Mādhyandina and other ṛṣis.

TEXT 6.75

*jaimineḥ sama-gasyāsīt
sumantus tanayo muniḥ
sutvāṁs tu tat-sutas tābhyām
ekaikāṁ prāha saṁhitām*

jaimineḥ – of Jaimini; *sama-gasya* – the singer of the *Sāma Veda*; *āsīt* – there was; *sumantuḥ* – Sumantu; *tanayaḥ* – the son; *muniḥ* – the sage (Jaimini); *sutvān* – Sutvān; *tu* – and; *tat-sutaḥ* – the son of Sumantu;

tābhyām – to each of them; *eka-ekām* – one of each of the two parts; *prāha* – he spoke; *saṁhitām* – collection.

TRANSLATION

Jaimini Ṛṣi, the authority of the Sāma Veda, had a son named Sumantu, and the son of Sumantu was Sutvān. The sage Jaimini spoke to each of them a different part of the Sāma-veda-saṁhitā.

TEXTS 6.76–77

sukarmā cāpi tac-chiṣyaḥ
sāma-veda-taroḥ mahān
sahasra-saṁhitā-bhedam
cakre sāmnam tato dvija

hiraṇyanābhaḥ kauśalyaḥ
paṣyañjīś ca sukarmaṇaḥ
śiṣyau jagrhatuś cānya
āvantyo brahma-vittamaḥ

sukarmā – Sukarmā; *ca* – and; *api* – indeed; *tac-śiṣyaḥ* – the disciple of Jaimini; *sāma-veda-taroḥ* – of the tree of the Sāma Veda; *mahān* – the great thinker; *sahasra-saṁhitā* – of one thousand collections; *bhedam* – a division; *cakre* – he made; *sāmnam* – of the *sāma-mantras*; *tataḥ* – and then; *dvija* – O *brāhmaṇa* (Śaunaka); *hiraṇyanābhaḥ kauśalyaḥ* – Hiraṇyanābha, the son of Kuśala; *paṣyañjīḥ* – Pausyañji; *ca* – and; *sukarmaṇaḥ* – of Sukarmā; *śiṣyau* – the two disciples; *jagrhatuḥ* – took; *ca* – and; *anyaḥ* – another; *āvantyaḥ* – Āvantya; *brahma-vit-tamaḥ* – most perfectly realized in knowledge of the Absolute Truth.

TRANSLATION

Sukarmā, another disciple of Jaimini, was a great scholar. He divided the mighty tree of the Sāma Veda into one thousand saṁhitās. Then, O brāhmaṇa, three disciples of Sukarmā – Hiraṇyanābha, the son of Kuśala; Pausyañji; and Āvantya, who was very advanced in spiritual realization – took charge of the sāma-mantras.

TEXT 6.78

udīcyāḥ sāma-gāḥ śiṣyā
āsan pañca-śatāni vai
paṣyañjy-āvantyayoś cāpi

tāmś ca prācyān pracakṣate

udīcyāḥ – belonging to the north; *sāma-gāḥ* – the singer of the *Sāma Veda*; *śiṣyāḥ* – the disciples; *āsan* – there were; *pañca-śatāni* – five hundred; *vai* – indeed; *pauṣyañji-āvantyayoḥ* – of Pausyañji and Āvantya; *ca* – and; *api* – indeed; *tān* – they; *ca* – also; *prācyān* – easterners; *pracakṣate* – are called.

TRANSLATION

The five hundred disciples of Pausyañji and Āvantya became known as the northern singers of the Sāma Veda, and in later times some of them also became known as eastern singers.

TEXT 6.79

*laugākṣir māṅgaliḥ kulyaḥ
kuśīdaḥ kuḁṣir eva ca
pauṣyañji-śiṣyā jagrhuḥ
samhitās te śatam śatam*

laugākṣiḥ māṅgaliḥ kulyaḥ – Laugākṣi, Māṅgali and Kulya; *kuśīdaḥ kuḁṣiḥ* – Kuśīda and Kuḁṣi; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *pauṣyañji-śiṣyāḥ* – disciples of Pausyañji; *jagrhuḥ* – they took; *samhitāḥ* – collections; *te* – they; *śatam śatam* – each one hundred.

TRANSLATION

Five other disciples of Pausyañji, namely Laugākṣi, Māṅgali, Kulya, Kuśīda and Kuḁṣi, each received one hundred samhitās.

TEXT 6.80

*kṛto hiraṇyanābhasya
catur-vimśati samhitāḥ
śiṣya ūce sva-śiṣyebhyaḥ
śeṣā āvantya ātmavān*

kṛtaḥ – Kṛta; *hiraṇyanābhasya* – of Hiraṇyanābha; *catur-vimśati* – twenty-four; *samhitāḥ* – collections; *śiṣyaḥ* – the disciple; *ūce* – spoke; *sva-śiṣyebhyaḥ* – to his own disciples; *śeṣāḥ* – the remaining (collections); *āvantyāḥ* – Āvantya; *ātma-vān* – the self-controlled.

TRANSLATION

Kṛta, the disciple of Hiraṇyanābha, spoke twenty-four samhitās to his own disciples, and the remaining collections were passed

down by the self-realized sage Āvantya.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Sixth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Mahārāja Parīkṣit Passes Away.”

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Purāṇic Literatures

In this chapter Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī describes the expansion of the branches of the *Atharva Veda*, enumerates the compilers of the *Purāṇas* and explains the characteristics of a *Purāṇa*. He then lists the eighteen major *Purāṇas* and finishes his account by stating that any person who hears about these matters from someone in a proper disciplic succession will acquire spiritual potency.

TEXT 7.1

sūta uvāca

*atharva-vit sumantuś ca
śiṣyam adhyāpayat svakām
samhitām so 'pi pathyāya
vedadarśāya cuktavān*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *atharva-vit* – the expert knower of the *Atharva Veda*; *sumantuḥ* – Sumantu; *ca* – and; *śiṣyam* – to his disciple; *adhyāpayat* – instructed; *svakām* – his own; *samhitām* – collection; *saḥ* – he, the disciple of Sumantu; *api* – also; *pathyāya* – to Pathya; *vedadarśāya* – to Vedadarśa; *ca* – and; *uktavān* – spoke.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Sumantu Ṛṣi, the authority on the Atharva Veda, taught his samhitā to his disciple Kabandha, who in turn spoke it to Pathya and Vedadarśa.

PURPORT

As confirmed in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

*atharva-vedaṁ sa muniḥ
sumantur amita-dyutiḥ
śiṣyam adhyāpayām āsa
kabandhaṁ so 'pi ca dvidhā
kṛtvā tu vedadarśāya
tathā pathyāya dattavān*

“That sage Sumantu, whose brilliance was immeasurable, taught the *Atharva Veda* to his disciple Kabandha. Kabandha in turn divided it into two parts and passed them down to Vedadarśa and Pathya.”

TEXT 7.2

śauklāyanir brahmabalir

*modoṣaḥ pippalāyaniḥ
vedadarśasya śiṣyās te
pathya-śiṣyān atho śṛṇu
kumudaḥ śunako brahman
jājaliś cāpy atharva-vit*

śauklāyaniḥ brahmabaliḥ – Śauklāyani and Brahmabali; *modoṣaḥ pippalāyaniḥ* – Modoṣa and Pippalāyani; *vedadarśasya* – of Vedadarśa; *śiṣyāḥ* – the disciples; *te* – they; *pathya-śiṣyān* – the disciples of Pathya; *atho* – furthermore; *śṛṇu* – please hear; *kumudaḥ śunakaḥ* – Kumuda and Śunaka; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*, Śaunaka; *jājaliḥ* – Jājali; *ca* – and; *api* – also; *atharva-vit* – full in knowledge of the *Atharva Veda*.

TRANSLATION

Śauklāyani, Brahmabali, Modoṣa and Pippalāyani were disciples of Vedadarśa. Hear from me also the names of the disciples of Pathya. My dear brāhmaṇa, they are Kumuda, Śunaka and Jājali, all of whom knew the Atharva Veda very well.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, Vedadarśa divided his edition of the *Atharva Veda* into four parts and instructed them to his four disciples. Pathya divided his edition into three parts and instructed it to the three disciples mentioned here.

TEXT 7.3

*babhruḥ śiṣyo 'thāṅgirasah
saindhavāyana eva ca
adhīyetām saṁhite dve
sāvarṇādyās tathāpare*

babhruḥ – Babhru; *śiṣyaḥ* – the disciple; *atha* – then; *aṅgirasah* – of Śunaka (also known as Aṅgirā); *saindhavāyanaḥ* – Saindhavāyana; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *adhīyetām* – they learned; *saṁhite* – collections; *dve* – two; *sāvarṇa* – Sāvarṇa; *ādyāḥ* – headed by; *tathā* – similarly; *apare* – other disciples.

TRANSLATION

Babhru and Saindhavāyana, disciples of Śunaka, studied the two divisions of their spiritual master's compilation of the Atharva Veda. Saindhavāyana's disciple Sāvarṇa and disciples of other

great sages also studied this edition of the Atharva Veda.

TEXT 7.4

*nakṣatrakalpaḥ śāntiś ca
kaśyapāṅgirasādayaḥ
ete ātharvaṇācāryāḥ
śṛṇu paurāṇikān mune*

nakṣatrakalpaḥ – Nakṣatrakalpa; *śāntiḥ* – Śāntikalpa; *ca* – also; *kaśyapa-āṅgirasa-ādayaḥ* – Kaśyapa, Āṅgirasa and others; *ete* – these; *ātharvaṇa-ācāryāḥ* – spiritual masters of the *Atharva Veda*; *śṛṇu* – now hear; *paurāṇikān* – the authorities of the *Purāṇas*; *mune* – O sage, Śaunaka.

TRANSLATION

Nakṣatrakalpa, Śāntikalpa, Kaśyapa, Āṅgirasa and others were also among the ācāryas of the Atharva Veda. Now, O sage, listen as I name the authorities on Purāṇic literature.

TEXT 7.5

*trayyāruṇiḥ kaśyapaś ca
sāvarṇir akṛtavraṇaḥ
vaiśampāyana-hārītau
ṣaḍ vai paurāṇikā ime*

trayyāruṇiḥ kaśyapaḥ ca – Trayyāruṇi and Kaśyapa; *sāvarṇiḥ akṛtavraṇaḥ* – Sāvarṇi and Akṛtavraṇa; *vaiśampāyana-hārītau* – Vaiśampāyana and Hārīta; *ṣaḍ* – six; *vai* – indeed; *paurāṇikāḥ* – spiritual masters of the *Purāṇas*; *ime* – these.

TRANSLATION

Trayyāruṇi, Kaśyapa, Sāvarṇi, Akṛtavraṇa, Vaiśampāyana and Hārīta are the six masters of the Purāṇas.

TEXT 7.6

*adhīyanta vyāsa-śiṣyāt
samhitām mat-pitur mukhāt
ekaikām aham eteṣām
śiṣyaḥ sarvāḥ samadhyagām*

adhīyanta – they have learned; *vyāsa-śiṣyāt* – from the disciple of Vyāsadeva (Romaharṣaṇa); *samhitām* – the collection of the *Purāṇas*;

mat-pituh – of my father; *mukhāt* – from the mouth; *eka-ekām* – each learning one portion; *aham* – I; *eteṣām* – of these; *śiṣyaḥ* – the disciple; *sarvāḥ* – all the collections; *samadhyagām* – I have thoroughly learned.

TRANSLATION

Each of them studied one of the six anthologies of the Purāṇas from my father, Romaharṣaṇa, who was a disciple of Śrīla Vyāsadeva. I became the disciple of these six authorities and thoroughly learned all their presentations of Purāṇic wisdom.

TEXT 7.7

*kaśyapo 'ham ca sāvarṇī
rāma-śiṣyo 'kṛtavraṇaḥ
adhīmaḥi vyāsa-śiṣyāc
catvāro mūla-saṁhitāḥ*

kaśyapaḥ – Kaśyapa; *aham* – I; *ca* – and; *sāvarṇīḥ* – Sāvarṇī; *rāma-śiṣyaḥ* – a disciple of Rāma; *akṛtavraṇaḥ* – namely Akṛtavraṇa; *adhīmaḥi* – we have assimilated; *vyāsa-śiṣyāt* – from the disciple of Vyāsa (Romaharṣaṇa); *catvāraḥ* – four; *mūla-saṁhitāḥ* – basic collections.

TRANSLATION

Romaharṣaṇa, a disciple of Vedavyāsa, divided the Purāṇas into four basic compilations. The sage Kaśyapa and I, along with Sāvarṇī and Akṛtavraṇa, a disciple of Rāma, learned these four divisions.

TEXT 7.8

*purāṇa-lakṣaṇam brahman
brahmarsibhir nirūpitam
śṛṇuṣva buddhim āśritya
veda-śāstrānusārataḥ*

purāṇa-lakṣaṇam – the characteristics of a *Purāṇa*; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*, Śaunaka; *brahma-rṣibhiḥ* – by great learned *brāhmaṇas*; *nirūpitam* – ascertained; *śṛṇuṣva* – please hear; *buddhim* – intelligence; *āśritya* – resorting to; *veda-śāstra* – the Vedic scriptures; *anusārataḥ* – in accordance with.

TRANSLATION

O Śaunaka, please hear with attention the characteristics of a

Purāṇa, which have been defined by the most eminent learned brāhmaṇas in accordance with Vedic literature.

TEXTS 7.9–10

*sargo 'syātha visargaś ca
vṛtti-rakṣāntarāṇi ca
vaṁśo vaṁśānucaritam
saṁsthā hetur apāśrayaḥ
daśabhir lakṣaṇair yuktaṁ
purāṇaṁ tad-vido viduḥ
kecit pañca-vidham brahman
mahad-alpa-vyavasthaya*

sargaḥ – the creation; *asya* – of this universe; *atha* – then; *visargaḥ* – the secondary creation; *ca* – and; *vṛtti* – maintenance; *rakṣā* – protection by sustenance; *antarāṇi* – the reigns of the Manus; *ca* – and; *vaṁśaḥ* – the dynasties of great kings; *vaṁśa-anucaritam* – the narrations of their activities; *saṁsthā* – the annihilation; *hetuḥ* – the motivation (for the living entities' involvement in material activities); *apāśrayaḥ* – the supreme shelter; *daśabhiḥ* – with the ten; *lakṣaṇaiḥ* – characteristics; *yuktaṁ* – endowed; *purāṇaṁ* – a *Purāṇa*; *tat* – of this matter; *viduḥ* – those who know; *viduḥ* – they know; *kecit* – some authorities; *pañca-vidham* – fivefold; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*; *mahat* – of great; *alpa* – and lesser; *vyavasthaya* – according to the distinction.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇa, authorities on the matter understand a Purāṇa to contain ten characteristic topics: the creation of this universe, the subsequent creation of worlds and beings, the maintenance of all living beings, their sustenance, the rule of various Manus, the dynasties of great kings, the activities of such kings, annihilation, motivation and the supreme shelter. Other scholars state that the great Purāṇas deal with these ten topics, while lesser Purāṇas may deal with five.

PURPORT

The ten subjects of a great *Purāṇa* are also described in the Second Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.10.1):

śrī-śuka uvāca

*atra sargo visargaś ca
sthānaṁ poṣaṇam ūtayaḥ
manvantareśānukathā
nirodho muktir āśrayaḥ*

“Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there are ten divisions of statements regarding the following: the creation of the universe, subcreation, planetary systems, protection by the Lord, the creative impetus, the change of Manus, the science of God, returning home (back to Godhead), liberation and the *summum bonum*.”

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, *Purāṇas* such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* deal with these ten topics, whereas lesser *Purāṇas* deal with only five. As stated in Vedic literature:

*sargaś ca pratisargaś ca
vaṁśo manvantarāṇi ca
vaṁśānucaritaṁ ceti
purāṇaṁ pañca-lakṣaṇam*

“Creation, secondary creation, the dynasties of kings, the reigns of Manus and the activities of various dynasties are the five characteristics of a *Purāṇa*.” *Purāṇas* covering five categories of knowledge are understood to be secondary Purāṇic literature.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has explained that the ten principal topics of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are found within each of the twelve cantos. One should not try to assign each of the ten topics to a particular canto. Nor should the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* be artificially interpreted to show that it deals with the topics successively. The simple fact is that all aspects of knowledge important to human beings, summarized in the ten categories mentioned above, are described with various degrees of emphasis and analysis throughout the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 7.11

*avyākṛta-guṇa-kṣobhān
mahatas tri-vṛto ’hamaḥ
bhūta-sūkṣmendriyārthānām
sambhavaḥ sarga ucyaṭe*

avyākṛta – of the unmanifest stage of nature; *guṇa-kṣobhāt* – by the agitation of the modes; *mahataḥ* – from the basic *mahat-tattva*; *tri-vṛtaḥ* – threefold; *ahamaḥ* – from the false ego; *bhūta-sūkṣma* – of the subtle

forms of perception; *indriya* – of the senses; *arthānām* – and the objects of sense perception; *sambhavaḥ* – the generation; *sargaḥ* – creation; *ucyate* – is called.

TRANSLATION

From the agitation of the original modes within the unmanifest material nature, the mahat-tattva arises. From the mahat-tattva comes the element false ego, which divides into three aspects. This threefold false ego further manifests as the subtle forms of perception, as the senses and as the gross sense objects. The generation of all these is called creation.

TEXT 7.12

puruṣānuḡrhitānām
eteṣāṃ vāsanā-mayaḥ
visargo 'yaṃ samāhāro
bījād bijaṃ carācaram

puruṣa – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His pastime role of creation; *anuḡrhitānām* – which have received the mercy; *eteṣāṃ* – of these elements; *vāsanā-mayaḥ* – consisting predominantly of the remnants of past desires of the living entities; *visargaḥ* – the secondary creation; *ayaṃ* – this; *samāhāraḥ* – manifest amalgamation; *bījāt* – from a seed; *bijaṃ* – another seed; *cara* – moving beings; *acaram* – and nonmoving beings.

TRANSLATION

The secondary creation, which exists by the mercy of the Lord, is the manifest amalgamation of the desires of the living entities. Just as a seed produces additional seeds, activities that promote material desires in the performer produce moving and nonmoving life forms.

PURPORT

Just as a seed grows into a tree that produces thousands of new seeds, material desire develops into fruitive activity that stimulates thousands of new desires within the heart of the conditioned soul. The word *puruṣānuḡrhitānām* indicates that by the mercy of the Supreme Lord one is allowed to desire and act in this world.

TEXT 7.13

*vṛttir bhūtāni bhūtānām
carāṇām acarāṇi ca
kṛtā svena nṛṇām tatra
kāmāc codanayāpi vā*

vṛttiḥ – the sustenance; *bhūtāni* – living beings; *bhūtānām* – of living beings; *carāṇām* – of those that move; *acarāṇi* – those that do not move; *ca* – and; *kṛtā* – executed; *svena* – by one’s own conditioned nature; *nṛṇām* – for human beings; *tatra* – therein; *kāmāt* – out of lust; *codanayā* – in pursuit of Vedic injunction; *api* – indeed; *vā* – or.

TRANSLATION

Vṛtti means the process of sustenance, by which the moving beings live upon the nonmoving. For a human, vṛtti specifically means acting for one’s livelihood in a manner suited to his personal nature. Such action may be carried out either in pursuit of selfish desire or in accordance with the law of God.

TEXT 7.14

*rakṣācyutāvatārehā
viśvasyānu yuge yuge
tiryak-martyarṣi-deveṣu
hanyante yais trayī-dviṣaḥ*

rakṣā – protection; *acyuta-avatāra* – of the incarnations of Lord Acyuta; *ihā* – the activities; *viśvasya* – of this universe; *anu yuge yuge* – in each age; *tiryak* – among the animals; *martya* – human beings; *ṛṣi* – sages; *deveṣu* – and demigods; *hanyante* – are killed; *yaiḥ* – by which incarnations; *trayī-dviṣaḥ* – the Daityas, who are enemies of Vedic culture.

TRANSLATION

In each age, the infallible Lord appears in this world among the animals, human beings, sages and demigods. By His activities in these incarnations He protects the universe and kills the enemies of Vedic culture.

PURPORT

The protective activities of the Lord, indicated by the word *rakṣā*, constitute one of the ten fundamental topics of a *Mahā-purāṇa*, or a great Purāṇic literature.

TEXT 7.15

*manvantaram manur devā
manu-putrāḥ sureśvarāḥ
ṛṣayo 'mśāvatārāś ca
hareḥ ṣaḍ-vidham ucyate*

manu-antaram – the reign of each Manu; *manuḥ* – the Manu; *devāḥ* – the demigods; *manu-putrāḥ* – the sons of Manu; *sura-īśvarāḥ* – the different Indras; *ṛṣayaḥ* – the chief sages; *amśa-avatārāḥ* – the incarnations of portions of the Supreme Lord; *ca* – and; *hareḥ* – of Lord Hari; *ṣaḍ-vidham* – sixfold; *ucyate* – is said.

TRANSLATION

In each reign of Manu, six types of personalities appear as manifestations of Lord Hari: the ruling Manu, the chief demigods, the sons of Manu, Indra, the great sages and the partial incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 7.16

*rājñām brahma-prasūtānām
vaṁśas trai-kāliko 'nvayaḥ
vaṁśānucaritam teṣām
vṛttam vaṁśa-dharās ca ye*

rājñām – of the kings; *brahma-prasūtānām* – born originally from Brahmā; *vaṁśaḥ* – dynasty; *trai-kālikaḥ* – extending into the three phases of time (past, present and future); *anvayaḥ* – the series; *vaṁśa-anucaritam* – histories of the dynasties; *teṣām* – of these dynasties; *vṛttam* – the activities; *vaṁśa-dharāḥ* – the prominent members of the dynasties; *ca* – and; *ye* – which.

TRANSLATION

Dynasties are lines of kings originating with Lord Brahmā and extending continuously through past, present and future. The accounts of such dynasties, especially of their most prominent members, constitute the subject of dynastic history.

TEXT 7.17

*naimittikaḥ prākṛtiko
nitya ātyantiko layaḥ
saṁstheti kavibhiḥ proktaś*

caturdhāsyā svabhāvataḥ

naimittikaḥ – occasional; *prākṛtikaḥ* – elemental; *nityaḥ* – continuous; *ātyantikaḥ* – ultimate; *layaḥ* – annihilation; *saṁsthā* – the dissolution; *iti* – thus; *kavibhiḥ* – by learned scholars; *proktaḥ* – described; *caturdhā* – in four aspects; *asya* – of this universe; *svabhāvataḥ* – by the inherent energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

There are four types of cosmic annihilation – occasional, elemental, continuous and ultimate – all of which are effected by the inherent potency of the Supreme Lord. Learned scholars have designated this topic dissolution.

TEXT 7.18

*hetur jīvo 'sya sargāder
avidyā-karma-kāraḥ
yam cānuśāyinaṁ prāhur
avyākṛtam utāpare*

hetuḥ – the cause; *jīvaḥ* – the living being; *asya* – of this universe; *sarga-ādeḥ* – of the creation, maintenance and destruction; *avidyā* – out of ignorance; *karma-kāraḥ* – the performer of material activities; *yam* – whom; *ca* – and; *anuśāyinaṁ* – the underlying personality; *prāhuḥ* – they call; *avyākṛtam* – the unmanifest; *uta* – indeed; *apare* – others.

TRANSLATION

Out of ignorance the living being performs material activities and thereby becomes in one sense the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. Some authorities call the living being the personality underlying the material creation, while others say he is the unmanifest self.

PURPORT

The Supreme Lord Himself creates, maintains and annihilates the cosmos. However, such activities are performed in response to the desires of conditioned souls, who are described herein as *hetu*, or the cause of cosmic activity. The Lord creates this world to facilitate the conditioned soul's attempt to exploit nature and ultimately to facilitate his self-realization.

Since conditioned souls cannot perceive their own constitutional identity, they are described here as *avyākṛtam*, or unmanifest. In other words, the living entity cannot perceive his real form unless he is completely Kṛṣṇa conscious.

TEXT 7.19

*vyatirekānvayo yasya
jāgrat-svapna-suṣuptiṣu
māyā-mayeṣu tad brahma
jīva-vṛttiṣv apāśrayaḥ*

vyatireka – the presence as separate; *anvayaḥ* – and as conjoint; *yasya* – of which; *jāgrat* – within waking consciousness; *svapna* – sleep; *suṣuptiṣu* – and deep sleep; *māyā-mayeṣu* – within the products of the illusory energy; *tad* – that; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *jīva-vṛttiṣu* – within the functions of the living entities; *apāśrayaḥ* – the unique shelter.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Absolute Truth is present throughout all the stages of awareness – waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep – throughout all the phenomena manifested by the illusory energy, and within the functions of all living entities, and He also exists separate from all these. Thus situated in His own transcendence, He is the ultimate and unique shelter.

TEXT 7.20

*padārtheṣu yathā dravyam
sat-mātram rūpa-nāmasu
bījādi-pañcatāntāsu
hy avasthāsu yutāyutam*

pada-artheṣu – within material objects; *yathā* – just as; *dravyam* – the basic substance; *sat-mātram* – the sheer existence of things; *rūpa-nāmasu* – among their forms and names; *bīja-ādi* – beginning from the seed (i.e., from the time of conception); *pañcatā-antāsu* – ending with death; *hi* – indeed; *avasthāsu* – throughout the various phases of bodily existence; *yuta-ayutam* – both conjoined and separate.

TRANSLATION

Although a material object may assume various forms and

names, its essential ingredient is always present as the basis of its existence. Similarly, both conjointly and separately, the Supreme Absolute Truth is always present with the created material body throughout its phases of existence, beginning with conception and ending with death.

PURPORT

Moist clay can be molded into various shapes and named “waterpot,” “flowerpot” or “storage pot.” Despite the various names and forms, the essential ingredient, earth, is constantly present. Similarly, the Supreme Lord is present throughout a material body’s stages of bodily existence. The Lord is identical with material nature, being its ultimate generating source. At the same time, the unique Supreme Being exists separately, aloof in His own abode.

TEXT 7.21

*virameta yadā cittam
hitvā vṛtti-trayam svayam
yogena vā tadātmānam
vedehāyā nivartate*

virameta – desists; *yadā* – when; *cittam* – the mind; *hitvā* – giving up; *vṛtti-trayam* – the functions of material life in the three phases of waking, sleep and deep sleep; *svayam* – automatically; *yogena* – by regulated spiritual practice; *vā* – or; *tadā* – then; *ātmānam* – the Supreme Soul; *veda* – he knows; *ihāyāḥ* – from material endeavor; *nivartate* – he ceases.

TRANSLATION

Either automatically or because of one’s regulated spiritual practice, one’s mind may stop functioning on the material platform of waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep. Then one understands the Supreme Soul and withdraws from material endeavor.

PURPORT

As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.33), *jarayaty āśu yā kośam nigīrṇam analo yathā*: “*Bhakti*, devotional service, dissolves the subtle body of the living entity without separate endeavor, just as fire in the stomach digests all that we eat.” The subtle material body is inclined to exploit nature through sex, greed, false pride and madness. Loving

service to the Lord, however, dissolves the stubborn false ego and lifts one to pure blissful consciousness, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the sublime perfection of existence.

TEXT 7.22

*evam lakṣaṇa-lakṣyāṇi
purāṇāni purā-vidaḥ
munayo 'ṣṭādaśa prāhuḥ
kṣullakāni mahānti ca*

evam – in this way; *lakṣaṇa-lakṣyāṇi* – symptomized by their characteristics; *purāṇāni* – the *Purāṇas*; *purā-vidaḥ* – those who are expert in such ancient histories; *munayaḥ* – the sages; *aṣṭādaśa* – eighteen; *prāhuḥ* – say; *kṣullakāni* – minor; *mahānti* – great; *ca* – also.

TRANSLATION

Sages expert in ancient histories have declared that the Purāṇas, according to their various characteristics, can be divided into eighteen major Purāṇas and eighteen secondary Purāṇas.

TEXTS 7.23–24

*brāhmaṇam pādmanam vaiṣṇavam ca
śaivam laiṅgam sa-gāruḍam
nāradyam bhāgavatam
āgneyam skānda-saṁjñitam
bhaviṣyam brahma-vaivartam
mārkaṇḍeyam sa-vāmanam
vārāham mātṣyam kaurmam ca
brahmāṇḍākhyam iti tri-ṣaṭ*

brāhmaṇam – the *Brahma Purāṇa*; *pādmanam* – the *Padma Purāṇa*; *vaiṣṇavam* – the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*; *ca* – and; *śaivam* – the *Śiva Purāṇa*; *laiṅgam* – the *Liṅga Purāṇa*; *sa-gāruḍam* – along with the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*; *nāradyam* – the *Nārada Purāṇa*; *bhāgavatam* – the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*; *āgneyam* – the *Agni Purāṇa*; *skānda* – the *Skanda Purāṇa*; *saṁjñitam* – known as; *bhaviṣyam* – the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*; *brahma-vaivartam* – the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*; *mārkaṇḍeyam* – the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*; *sa-vāmanam* – together with the *Vāmana Purāṇa*; *vārāham* – the *Varāha Purāṇa*; *mātṣyam* – the *Matsya Purāṇa*; *kaurmam* – the *Kūrma Purāṇa*; *ca* – and; *brahmāṇḍa-ākhyam* – known as the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*; *iti* – thus; *tri-ṣaṭ* – three times six.

TRANSLATION

The eighteen major Purāṇas are the Brahma, Padma, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Liṅga, Garuḍa, Nārada, Bhāgavata, Agni, Skanda, Bhaviṣya, Brahma-vaivarta, Mārkaṇḍeya, Vāmana, Varāha, Matsya, Kūrma and Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇas.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted from the *Varāha Purāṇa*, *Śiva Purāṇa* and *Matsya Purāṇa* in confirmation of the above two verses.

TEXT 7.25

*brahmann idam samākhyātam
śākhā-praṇayanam muneh
śiṣya-śiṣya-praśiṣyāṇām
brahma-tejo-vivardhanam*

brahman – O brāhmaṇa; *idam* – this; *samākhyātam* – thoroughly described; *śākhā-praṇayanam* – the expansion of the branches; *muneh* – of the sage (Śrīla Vyāsadeva); *śiṣya* – of the disciples; *śiṣya-praśiṣyāṇām* – and the subsequent disciples of his disciples; *brahma-tejaḥ* – spiritual potency; *vivardhanam* – which increases.

TRANSLATION

I have thoroughly described to you, O brāhmaṇa, the expansion of the branches of the Vedas by the great sage Vyāsadeva, his disciples and the disciples of his disciples. One who listens to this narration will increase in spiritual strength.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Seventh Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Purāṇic Literatures.”

CHAPTER EIGHT

Mārkaṇḍeya's Prayers to Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi

This chapter describes how Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi performed austerities, defeated by his potency Cupid and all his associates, and offered prayers to Lord Śrī Hari in His forms of Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

Śrī Śaunaka was confused about the extraordinarily long life span of Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya, who had taken birth in Śaunaka's own dynasty yet who had moved about alone in the ocean of devastation millions of years previously and seen a wonderful young child lying upon a banyan leaf. It seemed to Śaunaka that Mārkaṇḍeya had lived through two days of Brahmā, and he asked Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī to explain this.

Suta Gosvāmī replied that the sage Mārkaṇḍeya, after receiving the purificatory ritual of brahminical initiation from his father, had fixed himself in the vow of lifelong celibacy. He then worshiped the Supreme Lord Hari for six lifetimes of Manu. In the seventh *manvantara*, Lord Indra sent Kāmadeva (Cupid) and his associates to interrupt the sage's austerities. But Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi defeated them by the potency generated from his penance.

Then, to show mercy to Mārkaṇḍeya, Lord Śrī Hari appeared before him in the form of Nara-Nārāyaṇa. Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya prostrated himself in obeisance and then worshiped the Lords by offering Them comfortable seats, water for washing Their feet, and other respectful presentations. He then prayed, "O Almighty Lord, You bring to life the vital air of all creatures, and You also protect the three worlds, vanquish distress and award liberation. You never allow those who have taken shelter of You to be defeated by any kind of misery. Attaining Your lotus feet is the only auspicious goal for the conditioned souls, and service to You fulfills all their desires. Your pastimes, enacted in the mode of pure goodness, can award everyone salvation from material life. Therefore those who are intelligent worship Your personal form of pure goodness named Śrī Nārāyaṇa, along with Nara, who represents Your unalloyed devotee.

"The living entity bewildered by illusion can directly understand You if he receives the knowledge presented in the *Vedas* and promulgated by You, the spiritual master of the entire universe. Even great thinkers like Brahmā are simply bewildered when they try to understand Your identity by struggling on the path of *sāṅkhya-yoga*. You Yourself manifest the proponents of Sāṅkhya and other philosophies, and thus Your true personal identity remains hidden beneath the designative covering of the *jīva* soul. I offer my homage to

You, the Mahāpuruṣa.”

TEXT 8.1

śrī-śaunaka uvāca
sūta jīva ciraṁ sādho
vada no vadatām vara
tamasy apāre bhramatām
nṛṇām tvam pāra-darśanaḥ

śrī-śaunakaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śaunaka said; *sūta* – O Sūta Gosvāmī; *jīva* – may you live; *ciraṁ* – for a long time; *sādho* – O saint; *vada* – please speak; *naḥ* – to us; *vadatām* – of speakers; *vara* – O you who are the best; *tamasi* – in darkness; *apāre* – unbounded; *bhramatām* – who are wandering; *nṛṇām* – for men; *tvam* – you; *pāra-darśanaḥ* – the seer of the opposite shore.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śaunaka said: O Sūta, may you live a long life! O saintly one, best of speakers, please continue speaking to us. Indeed, only you can show men the path out of the ignorance in which they are wandering.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the sages saw that Sūta Gosvāmī was about to end his narration of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and thus they urged him to first tell the story of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi.

TEXTS 8.2–5

āhuś cirāyuṣam ṛṣiṁ
mṛkaṇḍu-tanayaṁ janāḥ
yaḥ kalpānte hy urvarito
yena grastam idaṁ jagat
sa vā asmat-kuloṭpannaḥ
kalpe ’smin bhārgavarṣabhaḥ
naivādhunāpi bhūtānām
samplavaḥ ko ’pi jāyate
eka evārṇave bhrāmyan
dadarśa puruṣaṁ kila
vaṭa-patra-puṭe tokaṁ
śayānaṁ tv ekam adbhutam

*eṣa naḥ samśayo bhūyān
sūta kautūhalaṁ yataḥ
taṁ naś chindhi mahā-yogin
purāṇeṣv api sammataḥ*

āhuḥ – they say; *cira-āyusaṁ* – having an extraordinarily long life span; *ṛṣim* – the sage; *mṛkaṇḍu-tanayam* – the son of Mṛkaṇḍu; *janāḥ* – people; *yaḥ* – who; *kalpa-ante* – at the end of the day of Lord Brahmā; *hi* – indeed; *urvaritaḥ* – remaining alone; *yena* – by which (annihilation); *grastam* – seized; *idam* – this; *jagat* – entire universe; *saḥ* – he, Mārkaṇḍeya; *vai* – indeed; *asmat-kula* – in my own family; *utpannaḥ* – born; *kalpe* – in the day of Brahmā; *asmin* – this; *bhārgava-ṛṣabhaḥ* – the most eminent descendant of Bhṛgu Muni; *na* – not; *eva* – certainly; *adhunā* – in our age; *api* – even; *bhūtānām* – of all creation; *samplavaḥ* – annihilation by flood; *kaḥ* – any; *api* – at all; *jāyate* – has arisen; *ekaḥ* – alone; *eta* – indeed; *aṇave* – in the great ocean; *bhrāmyan* – wandering; *dadarśa* – he saw; *puruṣam* – a personality; *kila* – it is said; *vaṭa-patra* – of a banyan leaf; *puṭe* – within the fold; *tokam* – an infant boy; *śayānam* – lying; *tu* – but; *ekam* – one; *adbhutam* – wonderful; *eṣaḥ* – this; *naḥ* – our; *samśayaḥ* – doubt; *bhūyān* – great; *sūta* – O Sūta Gosvāmī; *kautūhalaṁ* – curiosity; *yataḥ* – due to which; *taṁ* – that; *naḥ* – for us; *chindhi* – please cut; *mahā-yogin* – O great yogī; *purāṇeṣu* – of the *Purāṇas*; *api* – indeed; *sammataḥ* – universally accepted (as the expert knower).

TRANSLATION

Authorities say that Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, the son of Mṛkaṇḍu, was an exceptionally long-lived sage who was the only survivor at the end of Brahmā's day, when the entire universe was merged in the flood of annihilation. But this same Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, the foremost descendant of Bhṛgu, took birth in my own family during the current day of Brahmā, and we have not yet seen any total annihilation in this day of Brahmā. Also, it is well known that Mārkaṇḍeya, while wandering helplessly in the great ocean of annihilation, saw in those fearful waters a wonderful personality – an infant boy lying alone within the fold of a banyan leaf. O Sūta, I am most bewildered and curious about this great sage, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi. O great yogī, you are universally accepted as the authority on all the Purāṇas. Therefore kindly dispel my confusion.

PURPORT

Lord Brahmā's day, consisting of his 12 hours, lasts 4 billion 320 million years, and his night is of the same duration. Apparently Mārkaṇḍeya lived throughout one such day and night and in the following day of Brahmā continued living as the same Mārkaṇḍeya. It seems that when annihilation occurred during Brahmā's night, the sage wandered throughout the fearful waters of destruction and saw within those waters an extraordinary personality lying on a banyan leaf. All of these mysteries concerning Mārkaṇḍeya will be clarified by Sūta Gosvāmī at the request of the great sages.

TEXT 8.6

sūta uvāca

*praśnas tvayā maharṣe 'yaṁ
kṛto loka-bhramāpahaḥ
nārāyaṇa-kathā yatra
gītā kali-malāpahā*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *praśnaḥ* – question; *tvayā* – by you; *mahā-ṛṣe* – O great sage, Śaunaka; *ayaṁ* – this; *kṛtaḥ* – made; *loka* – of the entire world; *bhrama* – the delusion; *apahaḥ* – which takes away; *nārāyaṇa-kathā* – discussion of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa; *yatra* – in which; *gītā* – is sung; *kali-mala* – the contamination of the present Age of Kali; *apahā* – removing.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: O great sage Śaunaka, your very question will help remove everyone's illusion, for it leads to the topics of Lord Nārāyaṇa, which cleanse away the contamination of this Kali age.

TEXTS 8.7–11

*prāpta-dvijāti-saṁskāro
mārkaṇḍeyaḥ pituḥ kramāt
chandāṁsy adhitya dharmeṇa
tapaḥ-svādhyāya-saṁyutaḥ
brhad-vrata-dharaḥ śānto
jaṭilo valkalāmbaraḥ
bibhrat kamaṇḍalum daṇḍam*

upavītaṁ sa-mekhalam
kṛṣṇājinaṁ sākṣa-sūtraṁ
kuśāṁś ca niyamarddhaye
agny-arka-guru-viprātmasv
arcayan sandhyayor harim

sāyam prātaḥ sa gurave
bhaikṣyam āhṛtya vāg-yataḥ
bubhuje gurv-anujñātaḥ
sakṛn no ced upoṣitaḥ

evam tapaḥ-svādhyāya-paro
varṣāṇām ayutāyutam
ārādhayan hṛṣikeśam
jigye mṛtyum su-durjayam

prāpta – having received; *dvi-jāti* – of second birth; *saṁskāraḥ* – the purificatory rituals; *mārkaṇḍeyaḥ* – Mārkaṇḍeya; *pituḥ* – from his father; *kramāt* – by proper sequence; *chandāmsi* – the Vedic hymns; *adhītya* – studying; *dharmeṇa* – along with regulative principles; *tapaḥ* – in austerities; *svādhyāya* – and study; *saṁyutaḥ* – full; *brhat-vrata* – the great vow of lifelong celibacy; *dharāḥ* – maintaining; *śāntaḥ* – peaceful; *jaṭilaḥ* – with matted hair; *valkala-ambaraḥ* – wearing bark as his clothing; *bibhrat* – carrying; *kamaṇḍalum* – a waterpot; *daṇḍam* – a mendicant’s staff; *upavītam* – the sacred thread; *sa-mekhalam* – along with the ritual belt of a *brahmacārī*; *kṛṣṇa-ajinam* – the skin of a black deer; *sa-akṣa-sūtram* – and prayer beads made of lotus seeds; *kuśān* – *kuśa* grass; *ca* – also; *niyama-rddhaye* – to facilitate his spiritual progress; *agni* – in the form of fire; *arka* – the sun; *guru* – the spiritual master; *vipra* – the *brāhmaṇas*; *ātmasu* – and the Supersoul; *arcayan* – worshipping; *sandhyayoḥ* – at the beginning and the end of the day; *harim* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *sāyam* – in the evening; *prātaḥ* – in the early morning; *saḥ* – he; *gurave* – unto his spiritual master; *bhaikṣyam* – alms obtained by begging; *āhṛtya* – bringing; *vāk-yataḥ* – with controlled speech; *bubhuje* – he partook; *guru-anujñātaḥ* – invited by his spiritual master; *sakṛt* – once; *na* – not (invited); *u* – indeed; *cet* – if; *upoṣitaḥ* – fasting; *evam* – in this way; *tapaḥ-svādhyāya-paraḥ* – dedicated to austerities and studies of the Vedic literature; *varṣāṇām* – years; *ayuta-ayutam* – ten thousand times ten thousand; *ārādhayan* – worshipping; *hṛṣika-īśam* – the supreme master of the senses, Lord Viṣṇu; *jigye* – he conquered; *mṛtyum* – death; *su-durjayam*

– impossible to conquer.

TRANSLATION

After being purified by his father’s performance of the prescribed rituals leading to Mārkaṇḍeya’s brahminical initiation, Mārkaṇḍeya studied the Vedic hymns and strictly observed the regulative principles. He became advanced in austerity and Vedic knowledge and remained a lifelong celibate. Appearing most peaceful with his matted hair and his clothing made of bark, he furthered his spiritual progress by carrying the mendicant’s waterpot, staff, sacred thread, brahmacārī belt, black deerskin, lotus-seed prayer beads and bundles of kuśa grass. At the sacred junctures of the day he regularly worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead in five forms – the sacrificial fire, the sun, his spiritual master, the brāhmaṇas and the Supersoul within his heart. Morning and evening he would go out begging, and upon returning he would present all the food he had collected to his spiritual master. Only when his spiritual master invited him would he silently take his one meal of the day; otherwise he would fast. Thus devoted to austerity and Vedic study, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi worshiped the supreme master of the senses, the Personality of Godhead, for countless millions of years, and in this way he conquered unconquerable death.

TEXT 8.12

*brahmā bhṛgur bhavo dakṣo
brahma-putrāś ca ye ’pare
nṛ-deva-pitr-bhūtāni
tenāsann ati-vismitāḥ*

brahmā – Lord Brahmā; *bhṛguḥ* – Bhṛgu Muni; *bhavaḥ* – Lord Śiva; *dakṣaḥ* – Prajāpati Dakṣa; *brahma-putrāḥ* – the great sons of Brahmā; *ca* – and; *ye* – who; *apare* – others; *nṛ* – human beings; *deva* – demigods; *pitr* – forefathers; *bhūtāni* – and ghostly spirits; *tena* – with that (conquest of death); *āsan* – they all became; *ati-vismitāḥ* – extremely amazed.

TRANSLATION

Lord Brahmā, Bhṛgu Muni, Lord Śiva, Prajāpati Dakṣa, the great sons of Brahmā, and many others among the human beings, demigods, forefathers and ghostly spirits – all were astonished by

the achievement of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi.

TEXT 8.13

*ittham bṛhad-vrata-dharas
tapaḥ-svādhyāya-saṁyamaiḥ
dadhyāv adhokṣajam yogī
dhvasta-kleśāntarātmanā*

ittham – in this manner; *bṛhat-vrata-dharaḥ* – maintaining the vow of celibacy, *brahmacarya*; *tapaḥ-svādhyāya-saṁyamaiḥ* – by his austerities, study of the *Vedas* and regulative principles; *dadhyau* – he meditated; *adhokṣajam* – upon the transcendental Lord; *yogī* – the *yogī*; *dhvasta* – destroyed; *kleśa* – all troubles; *antaḥ-ātmanā* – with his introspective mind.

TRANSLATION

In this way the devotional mystic Mārkaṇḍeya maintained rigid celibacy through penance, study of the Vedas and self-discipline. With his mind thus free of all disturbances, he turned it inward and meditated on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who lies beyond the material senses.

TEXT 8.14

*tasyaivam yuñjatas cittaṁ
mahā-yogena yoginaḥ
vyatīyāya mahān kālo
manvantara-ṣaḍ-ātmakaḥ*

tasya – he; *evam* – thus; *yuñjataḥ* – while fixing; *cittam* – his mind; *mahā-yogena* – by powerful practice of *yoga*; *yoginaḥ* – the mystic sage; *vyatīyāya* – passed by; *mahān* – a great; *kālaḥ* – period of time; *manvantara* – lifetimes of Manu; *ṣaḍ* – six; *ātmakaḥ* – consisting of.

TRANSLATION

While the mystic sage thus concentrated his mind by powerful yoga practice, the tremendous period of six lifetimes of Manu passed by.

TEXT 8.15

*etat purandaro jñātvā
saptame 'smin kilāntare
tapo-viśaṅkito brahmann*

ārebhe tad-vighātanam

etat – this; *purandaraḥ* – Lord Indra; *jñātvā* – learning; *saptame* – in the seventh; *asmin* – this; *kila* – indeed; *antare* – reign of Manu; *tapaḥ* – of the austerities; *viśāṅkitaḥ* – becoming fearful; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa* Śaunaka; *ārebhe* – he set into motion; *tat* – of that austerity; *vighātanam* – obstruction.

TRANSLATION

O *brāhmaṇa*, during the seventh reign of Manu, the current age, Lord Indra came to know of Mārkaṇḍeya's austerities and became fearful of his growing mystic potency. Thus he tried to impede the sage's penance.

TEXT 8.16

gandharvāpsarasaḥ kāmam
vasanta-malayānilau
munaye preṣayām āsa
rajas-toka-madau tathā

gandharva-apsarasaḥ – the celestial singers and dancing girls; *kāmam* – Cupid; *vasanta* – the spring season; *malaya-anilau* – and the refreshing breeze from the Malaya Hills; *munaye* – to the sage; *preṣayām āsa* – he sent; *rajaḥ-toka* – the child of passion, greed; *madau* – and intoxication; *tathā* – also.

TRANSLATION

To ruin the sage's spiritual practice, Lord Indra sent Cupid, beautiful celestial singers, dancing girls, the season of spring and the sandalwood-scented breeze from the Malaya Hills, along with greed and intoxication personified.

TEXT 8.17

te vai tad-āśramam jagmur
himādreḥ pārśva uttare
puṣpabhadrā nadī yatra
citrākhyā ca śilā vibho

te – they; *vai* – indeed; *tat* – of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi; *āśramam* – to the hermitage; *jagmuḥ* – went; *hima-adreḥ* – of the Himālaya Mountains; *pārśve* – to the side; *uttare* – on the north; *puṣpabhadrā nadī* – the Puṣpabhadrā River; *yatra* – where; *citrā-ākhyā* – named Citrā; *ca* –

and; *śilā* – the peak; *vibho* – O powerful Śaunaka.

TRANSLATION

O most powerful Śaunaka, they went to Mārkaṇḍeya's hermitage, on the northern side of the Himālaya Mountains where the Puṣpabhadra River passes by the famous peak Citrā.

TEXTS 8.18–20

*tad-āśrama-padam puṇyam
puṇya-druma-latāñcitam
puṇya-dvija-kulākīrṇam
puṇyāmala-jalāśayam*

*matta-bhramara-saṅgītam
matta-kokila-kūjītam
matta-barhi-naṭāṭopam
matta-dvija-kulākulam*

*vāyuḥ praviṣṭa ādāya
hima-nirjhara-śīkarān
sumanobhiḥ pariṣvaktō
vavāv uttambhayan smaram*

tat – his; *āśrama-padam* – place of hermitage; *puṇyam* – pious; *puṇya* – pious; *druma* – with trees; *latā* – and creepers; *añcitam* – specially marked; *puṇya* – pious; *dvija* – of brāhmaṇa sages; *kula* – with the groups; *ākīrṇam* – brimming; *puṇya* – pious; *amala* – spotless; *jala-āśayam* – having reservoirs of water; *matta* – maddened; *bhramara* – of bees; *saṅgītam* – with singing; *matta* – maddened; *kokila* – of cuckoos; *kūjītam* – with cooing; *matta* – maddened; *barhi* – of peacocks; *naṭā-āṭopam* – with the frenzy of dancing; *matta* – maddened; *dvija* – of birds; *kula* – with the families; *ākulam* – filled; *vāyuḥ* – the wind of the Malaya Hills; *praviṣṭaḥ* – entering; *ādāya* – taking up; *hima* – chilling; *nirjhara* – of the waterfalls; *śīkarān* – the drops of mist; *sumanobhiḥ* – by the flowers; *pariṣvaktāḥ* – being embraced; *vavau* – blew; *uttambhayan* – evoking; *smaram* – Cupid.

TRANSLATION

Groves of pious trees decorated the holy āśrama of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, and many saintly brāhmaṇas lived there, enjoying the abundant pure, sacred ponds. The āśrama resounded with the buzzing of intoxicated bees and the cooing of excited cuckoos,

while jubilant peacocks danced about. Indeed, many families of maddened birds crowded that hermitage. The springtime breeze sent by Lord Indra entered there, carrying cooling drops of spray from nearby waterfalls. Fragrant from the embrace of forest flowers, that breeze entered the hermitage and began evoking the lusty spirit of Cupid.

TEXT 8.21

*udyat-candra-niśā-vakraḥ
pravāla-stabakālibhiḥ
gopa-druma-latā-jālais
tatrāsīt kusumākaraḥ*

udyat – rising; *candra* – with the moon; *niśā* – nighttime; *vakraḥ* – whose face; *pravāla* – of new sprouts; *stabaka* – and blossoms; *ālibhiḥ* – with rows; *gopa* – being hidden; *druma* – of the trees; *latā* – and creepers; *jālaiḥ* – along with the multitude; *tatra* – there; *āsīt* – appeared; *kusuma-ākaraḥ* – the spring season.

TRANSLATION

Springtime then appeared in Mārkaṇḍeya’s āśrama. Indeed, the evening sky, glowing with the light of the rising moon, became the very face of spring, and sprouts and fresh blossoms virtually covered the multitude of trees and creepers.

TEXT 8.22

*anvīyamāno gandharvair
gīta-vāditra-yūthakaiḥ
adrśyatātta-cāpeṣuḥ
svaḥ-śtrī-yūtha-patiḥ smaraḥ*

anvīyamānaḥ – being followed; *gandharvaiḥ* – by Gandharvas; *gīta* – of singers; *vāditra* – and players of musical instruments; *yūthakaiḥ* – by companies; *adrśyata* – was seen; *ātta* – holding up; *cāpa-iṣuḥ* – his bow and arrows; *svaḥ-śtrī-yūtha* – of hoards of heavenly women; *patiḥ* – the master; *smaraḥ* – Cupid.

TRANSLATION

Cupid, the master of many heavenly women, then came there holding his bow and arrows. He was followed by groups of Gandharvas playing musical instruments and singing.

TEXT 8.23

*hutvāgnim samupāsinaṁ
dadṛśuḥ śakra-kiṅkarāḥ
mīlitākṣam durādharṣam
mūrtimantam ivānalam*

hutvā – having offered oblations; *agnim* – to the sacrificial fire; *samupāsinaṁ* – sitting in yogic meditation; *dadṛśuḥ* – they saw; *śakra* – of Indra; *kiṅkarāḥ* – the servants; *mīlita* – closed; *akṣam* – his eyes; *durādharṣam* – invincible; *mūrti-mantam* – personified; *iva* – as if; *analam* – fire.

TRANSLATION

These servants of Indra found the sage sitting in meditation, having just offered his prescribed oblations into the sacrificial fire. His eyes closed in trance, he seemed invincible, like fire personified.

TEXT 8.24

*nanṛtus tasya purataḥ
striyo 'tho gāyakā jaguḥ
mṛdaṅga-viṇā-pañavair
vādyam cakrur mano-ramam*

nanṛtuḥ – danced; *tasya* – of him; *purataḥ* – in front; *striyaḥ* – women; *atha u* – and furthermore; *gāyakāḥ* – singers; *jaguḥ* – sang; *mṛdaṅga* – with drums; *viṇā* – stringed instruments; *pañavaiḥ* – and cymbals; *vādyam* – instrumental music; *cakruḥ* – they made; *manaḥ-ramam* – charming.

TRANSLATION

The women danced before the sage, and the celestial singers sang to the charming accompaniment of drums, cymbals and viṇās.

TEXT 8.25

*sandadhe 'stram sva-dhanuṣi
kāmaḥ pañca-mukham tadā
madhur mano rajas-toka
indra-bhr̥tyā vyakampayan*

sandadhe – he fixed; *astram* – the weapon; *sva-dhanuṣi* – upon his bow; *kāmaḥ* – Cupid; *pañca-mukham* – having five heads (sight, sound,

smell, touch and taste); *tadā* – then; *madhuḥ* – spring; *manaḥ* – the mind of the sage; *rajaḥ-tokaḥ* – the child of passion, greed; *indra-bhṛtyāḥ* – the servants of Indra; *vyakampayan* – attempted to agitate.

TRANSLATION

While the son of passion [greed personified], spring and the other servants of Indra all tried to agitate Mārkaṇḍeya’s mind, Cupid drew his five-headed arrow and fixed it upon his bow.

TEXTS 8.26–27

*krīḍantyāḥ puñjikasthalyāḥ
kandukaiḥ stana-gauravāt
bhṛśam udvigna-madhyāyāḥ
keśa-visraṁsita-srajaḥ
itas tato bhramad-drṣteś
calantyā anu kandukam
vāyur jahāra tad-vāsaḥ
sūkṣmaṁ truṭita-mekhalam*

krīḍantyāḥ – who was playing; *puñjikasthalyāḥ* – of the Apsarā named Puñjikasthalī; *kandukaiḥ* – with a number of balls; *stana* – of her breasts; *gauravāt* – because of the great weight; *bhṛśam* – very much; *udvigna* – overburdened; *madhyāyāḥ* – whose waist; *keśa* – from her hair; *visraṁsita* – falling; *srajaḥ* – the flower garland; *itaḥ tataḥ* – here and there; *bhramat* – wandering; *drṣteḥ* – whose eyes; *calantyāḥ* – who was running about; *anu kandukam* – after her ball; *vāyur* – the wind; *jahāra* – stole away; *tad-vāsaḥ* – her garment; *sūkṣmam* – fine; *truṭita* – loosened; *mekhalam* – the belt.

TRANSLATION

The Apsarā Puñjikasthalī made a show of playing with a number of toy balls. Her waist seemed weighed down by her heavy breasts, and the wreath of flowers in her hair became disheveled. As she ran about after the balls, glancing here and there, the belt of her thin garment loosened, and suddenly the wind blew her clothes away.

TEXT 8.28

*visasarja tadā bāṇam
matvā taṁ sva-jitam smaraḥ*

*sarvaṃ tatrābhavan mogham
anīśasya yathodyamaḥ*

visasarja – shot; *tadā* – then; *bāṇam* – the arrow; *matvā* – thinking; *tam* – him; *sva* – by himself; *jitam* – conquered; *smaraḥ* – Cupid; *sarvam* – all this; *tatra* – directed at the sage; *abhavat* – became; *mogham* – futile; *anīśasya* – of an atheist disbeliever; *yathā* – just as; *udyamaḥ* – the endeavors.

TRANSLATION

Cupid, thinking he had conquered the sage, then shot his arrow. But all these attempts to seduce Mārkaṇḍeya proved futile, just like the useless endeavors of an atheist.

TEXT 8.29

*ta ittham apakurvanto
munes tat-tejasā mune
dahyamānā nivavṛtuḥ
prabodhyāhim ivārbhakāḥ*

te – they; *ittham* – in this way; *apakurvantaḥ* – trying to do harm; *muneḥ* – to the sage; *tat* – his; *tejasā* – by the potency; *mune* – O sage (Śaunaka); *dahyamānāḥ* – feeling burned; *nivavṛtuḥ* – they desisted; *prabodhya* – having awakened; *ahim* – a snake; *iva* – as if; *arbhakāḥ* – children.

TRANSLATION

O learned Śaunaka, while Cupid and his followers tried to harm the sage, they felt themselves being burned alive by his potency. Thus they stopped their mischief, just like children who have aroused a sleeping snake.

TEXT 8.30

*itīndrānucarair brahman
dharṣito 'pi mahā-muniḥ
yan nāgād ahamo bhāvaṃ
na tac citraṃ mahatsu hi*

iti – thus; *indra-anucaraiḥ* – by the followers of Indra; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*; *dharṣitaḥ* – impudently attacked; *api* – although; *mahā-muniḥ* – the elevated sage; *yat* – that; *na agāt* – he did not succumb; *ahamaḥ* – of false ego; *bhāvaṃ* – to the transformation; *na* – not; *tat* –

that; *citram* – surprising; *mahatsu* – for great souls; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇa, the followers of Lord Indra had impudently attacked the saintly Mārkaṇḍeya, yet he did not succumb to any influence of false ego. For great souls such tolerance is not at all surprising.

TEXT 8.31

*dr̥ṣṭvā nistejasam kāmam
sa-gaṇam bhagavān svarāt
śrutvānubhāvam brahmarṣer
vismayam samagāt param*

dr̥ṣṭvā – seeing; *nistejasam* – deprived of his power; *kāmam* – Cupid; *sa-gaṇam* – along with his associates; *bhagavān* – the powerful lord; *sva-rāt* – King Indra; *śrutvā* – and hearing; *anubhāvam* – the influence; *brahma-rṣeḥ* – of the sage among the *brāhmaṇas*; *vismayam* – astonishment; *samagāt* – he attained; *param* – great.

TRANSLATION

The mighty King Indra was most astonished when he heard of the mystic prowess of the exalted sage Mārkaṇḍeya and saw how Cupid and his associates had become powerless in his presence.

TEXT 8.32

*tasyaivam yuñjataś cittam
tapaḥ-svādhyāya-saṁyamaiḥ
anugrahāyāvirāsīn
nara-nārāyaṇo hariḥ*

tasya – while he, Mārkaṇḍeya; *evam* – in this way; *yuñjataḥ* – was fixing; *cittam* – his mind; *tapaḥ* – by austerity; *svādhyāya* – study of the *Vedas*; *saṁyamaiḥ* – and regulative principles; *anugrahāya* – for showing mercy; *āvirāsīt* – made Himself manifest; *nara-nārāyaṇaḥ* – exhibiting the forms of Nara and Nārāyaṇa; *hariḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

Desiring to bestow His mercy upon the saintly Mārkaṇḍeya, who had perfectly fixed his mind in self-realization through penance, Vedic study and observance of regulative principles, the Supreme

Personality of Godhead personally appeared before the sage in the forms of Nara and Nārāyaṇa.

TEXTS 8.33–34

*tau śukla-kṛṣṇau nava-kañja-locanau
catur-bhujau raurava-valkalāambarau
pavitra-pāṇī upavītakam tri-vṛt
kamaṇḍalum daṇḍam ṛjum ca vaiṇavam
padmākṣa-mālām uta jantu-mārjanam
vedam ca sākṣāt tapa eva rūpiṇau
tapat-taḍid-varṇa-piśaṅga-rociṣā
prāṁsū dadhānau vibudharṣabhārcitau*

tau – the two of Them; *śukla-kṛṣṇau* – one white and the other black; *nava-kañja* – like blooming lotus flowers; *locanau* – Their eyes; *catur-bhujau* – having four arms; *raurava* – black deerskin; *valkala* – and bark; *ambarau* – as Their clothing; *pavitra* – most purifying; *pāṇī* – Their hands; *upavītakam* – sacred thread; *tri-vṛt* – threefold; *kamaṇḍalum* – waterpot; *daṇḍam* – staff; *ṛjum* – straight; *ca* – and; *vaiṇavam* – made of bamboo; *padma-akṣa* – of lotus seeds; *mālām* – prayer beads; *uta* – and; *jantu-mārjanam* – which purifies all living beings; *vedam* – the *Vedas* (represented by bundles of *darbha* grass); *ca* – and; *sākṣāt* – directly; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *eva* – indeed; *rūpiṇau* – personified; *tapat* – blazing; *taḍit* – lightning; *varṇa* – the color; *piśaṅga* – yellowish; *rociṣā* – with Their effulgence; *prāṁsū* – very tall; *dadhānau* – bearing; *vibudha-ṛṣabha* – by the chief of the demigods; *arcitau* – worshiped.

TRANSLATION

One of Them was of a whitish complexion, the other blackish, and They both had four arms. Their eyes resembled the petals of blooming lotuses, and They wore garments of black deerskin and bark, along with the three-stranded sacred thread. In Their hands, which were most purifying, They carried the mendicant’s waterpot, straight bamboo staff and lotus-seed prayer beads, as well as the all-purifying *Vedas* in the symbolic form of bundles of *darbha* grass. Their bearing was tall and Their yellow effulgence the color of radiant lightning. Appearing as austerity personified, They were being worshiped by the foremost demigods.

TEXT 8.35

*te vai bhagavato rūpe
nara-nārāyaṇāv ṛṣī
dr̥ṣṭvotthāyādareṇocair
nanāmāṅgena daṇḍa-vat*

te – They; *vai* – indeed; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Personality of Godhead; *rūpe* – the personal manifestations; *nara-nārāyaṇau* – Nara and Nārāyaṇa; *ṛṣī* – the two sages; *dr̥ṣṭvā* – seeing; *utthāya* – standing up; *ādareṇa* – with respect; *uccaiḥ* – great; *nanāma* – bowed down; *aṅgena* – with his entire body; *daṇḍa-vat* – just like a stick.

TRANSLATION

These two sages, Nara and Nārāyaṇa, were the direct personal forms of the Supreme Lord. When Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi saw Them, he immediately stood up and then with great respect offered Them obeisances by falling down flat on the ground like a stick.

TEXT 8.36

*sa tat-sandarśanānanda-
nirvṛtātmendriyāśayaḥ
hṛṣṭa-romāśru-pūrṇākṣo
na sehe tāv udikṣitum*

saḥ – he, Mārkaṇḍeya; *tat* – of Them; *sandarśana* – because of seeing; *ānanda* – by the ecstasy; *nirvṛta* – pleased; *ātma* – whose body; *indriya* – senses; *āśayaḥ* – and mind; *hṛṣṭa* – standing on end; *romā* – his bodily hairs; *śru* – with tears; *pūrṇa* – filled; *akṣaḥ* – his eyes; *na sehe* – he was unable; *tau* – upon them; *udikṣitum* – to glance.

TRANSLATION

The ecstasy of seeing Them completely satisfied Mārkaṇḍeya’s body, mind and senses and caused the hairs on his body to stand on end and his eyes to fill with tears. Overwhelmed, Mārkaṇḍeya found it difficult to look at Them.

TEXT 8.37

*utthāya prāñjaliḥ prahva
autsukyād āśliṣann iva
namo nama itīśānau
babhāṣe gadgadākṣaram*

utthāya – standing up; *prāñjaliḥ* – with folded hands; *prahva* –

humble; *autsukyāt* – out of eagerness; *āśliṣan* – embracing; *iva* – as if; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *iti* – thus; *īśānau* – to the two Lords; *babhāṣe* – he spoke; *gadgada* – choking with ecstasy; *akṣaram* – the syllables.

TRANSLATION

Standing with his hands folded in supplication and his head bowed in humility, Mārkaṇḍeya felt such eagerness that he imagined he was embracing the two Lords. In a voice choked with ecstasy, he repeatedly said, “I offer You my humble obeisances.”

TEXT 8.38

*tayor āsanam ādāya
pādayor avaniḥya ca
arhaṇenānulepena
dhūpa-mālyair apūjayat*

tayoḥ – to Them; *āsanam* – sitting places; *ādāya* – offering; *pādayoḥ* – Their feet; *avaniḥya* – bathing; *ca* – and; *arhaṇena* – with suitable respectful offerings; *anulepena* – by anointing Them with sandalwood pulp and other fragrant substances; *dhūpa* – with incense; *mālyaiḥ* – and flower garlands; *apūjayat* – he worshiped.

TRANSLATION

He gave Them sitting places and washed Their feet, and then he worshiped Them with presentations of arghya, sandalwood pulp, fragrant oils, incense and flower garlands.

TEXT 8.39

*sukham āsanam āsīnau
prasādābhimukhau munī
punar ānamya pādābhyām
gariṣṭhāv idam abravīt*

sukham – comfortably; *āsanam* – on sitting places; *āsīnau* – seated; *prasāda* – mercy; *abhimukhau* – ready to give; *munī* – to the Lord’s incarnation as the two sages; *punaḥ* – again; *ānamya* – bowing down; *pādābhyām* – at Their feet; *gariṣṭhau* – to the supremely worshipable; *idam* – this; *abravīt* – he spoke.

TRANSLATION

Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi once again bowed down at the lotus feet of those two most worshipable sages, who were sitting at ease, ready to bestow all mercy upon him. He then addressed Them as follows.

TEXT 8.40

śrī-mārkaṇḍeya uvāca

*kim varṇaye tava vibho yad-udīrito 'suh
saṁspandate tam anu vān-mana-indriyāṇi
spandanti vai tanu-bhṛtām aja-śarvayoś ca
svasyāpy athāpi bhajatām asi bhāva-bandhuḥ*

śrī-mārkaṇḍeyaḥ uvāca – Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said; *kim* – what; *varṇaye* – shall I describe; *tava* – about You; *vibho* – O Almighty Lord; *yat* – by whom; *udīritaḥ* – moved; *asuḥ* – the vital air; *saṁspandate* – comes to life; *tam anu* – following it; *vān* – the power of speech; *manaḥ* – the mind; *indriyāṇi* – and the senses; *spandanti* – begin to act; *vai* – indeed; *tanu-bhṛtām* – of all embodied living beings; *aja-śarvayoḥ* – of Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva; *ca* – as well; *svasya* – of myself; *api* – also; *atha api* – nevertheless; *bhajatām* – for those who are worshiping; *asi* – You become; *bhāva-bandhuḥ* – the intimate loving friend.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said: O Almighty Lord, how can I possibly describe You? You awaken the vital air, which then impels the mind, senses and power of speech to act. This is true for all ordinary conditioned souls and even for great demigods like Brahmā and Śiva. So it is certainly true for me. Nevertheless, You become the intimate friend of those who worship You.

TEXT 8.41

*mūrti ime bhagavato bhagavaṁs tri-lokyāḥ
kṣemāya tāpa-viramāya ca mṛtyu-jityai
nānā bibharṣy avitum anya-tanūr yathedaṁ
sṛṣṭvā punar grasasi sarvam ivorṇanābhiḥ*

mūrti – the two personal forms; *ime* – these; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhagavan* – O Lord; *tri-lokyāḥ* – of all the three worlds; *kṣemāya* – for the ultimate benefit; *tāpa* – of material misery; *viramāya* – for the cessation; *ca* – and; *mṛtyu* – of death; *jityai* – for the conquest; *nānā* – various; *bibharṣi* – You manifest; *avitum* – for

the purpose of protecting; *anya* – other; *tanūḥ* – transcendental bodies; *yathā* – just as; *idam* – this universe; *sṛṣṭvā* – having created; *punaḥ* – once again; *grasasi* – You swallow up; *sarvam* – entirely; *iva* – just like; *ūrṇa-nābhiḥ* – a spider.

TRANSLATION

O Supreme Personality of Godhead, these two personal forms of Yours have appeared to bestow the ultimate benefit for the three worlds – the cessation of material misery and the conquest of death. My Lord, although You create this universe and then assume many transcendental forms to protect it, You also swallow it up, just like a spider who spins and later withdraws its web.

TEXT 8.42

*tasyāvituḥ sthira-careṣitur aṅghri-mūlam
yat-stham na karma-guṇa-kāla-rajah sprśanti
yad vai stuvanti ninamanti yajanty abhikṣṇam
dhyāyanti veda-hṛdayā munayas tad-āptyai*

tasya – of Him; *avituḥ* – the protector; *sthira-cara* – of the stationary and moving living beings; *īṣituḥ* – the supreme controller; *aṅghri-mūlam* – the soles of His lotus feet; *yat-stham* – one who is situated at which; *na* – do not; *karma-guṇa-kāla* – of material work, material qualities and time; *rajah* – the contamination; *sprśanti* – touch; *yat* – whom; *vai* – indeed; *stuvanti* – praise; *ninamanti* – bow down to; *yajanti* – worship; *abhikṣṇam* – at every moment; *dhyāyanti* – meditate upon; *veda-hṛdayāḥ* – who have assimilated the essence of the *Vedas*; *munayaḥ* – sages; *tad-āptyai* – for the purpose of achieving Him.

TRANSLATION

Because You are the protector and the supreme controller of all moving and nonmoving beings, anyone who takes shelter of Your lotus feet can never be touched by the contamination of material work, material qualities or time. Great sages who have assimilated the essential meaning of the Vedas offer their prayers to You. To gain Your association, they bow down to You at every opportunity and constantly worship You and meditate upon You.

TEXT 8.43

nānyam tavāṅghry-upanayād apavarga-mūrteḥ

*kṣemaṁ janasya parito-bhiya īśa vidmaḥ
brahmā bibhety alam ato dvi-parārdha-dhiṣṇyaḥ
kālasya te kim uta tat-kṛta-bhautikānām*

na anyam – no other; *tava* – Your; *aṅghri* – of the lotus feet; *upanayāt* – than the attainment; *apavarga-mūrteḥ* – who are liberation personified; *kṣemam* – benefit; *janasya* – for the person; *paritaḥ* – on all sides; *bhiyaḥ* – who is fearful; *īśa* – O Lord; *vidmaḥ* – do we know; *brahmā* – Lord Brahmā; *bibhety* – is afraid; *alam* – very much; *ataḥ* – on account of this; *dvi-parārdha* – the entire duration of the universe; *dhiṣṇyaḥ* – the period of whose reign; *kālasya* – because of time; *te* – Your feature; *kim uta* – then what to speak; *tat-kṛta* – created by him, Brahmā; *bhautikānām* – of the mundane creatures.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, even Lord Brahmā, who enjoys his exalted position for the entire duration of the universe, fears the passage of time. Then what to speak of those whom Brahmā creates, the conditioned souls. They encounter fearful dangers at every step of their lives. I do not know of any relief from this fear except shelter at Your lotus feet, which are the very form of liberation.

TEXT 8.44

*tad vai bhajāmy ṛta-dhiyas tava pāda-mūlam
hitvedam ātma-cchadi cātma-guroḥ parasya
dehādy apārtham asad antyam abhijñā-mātram
vindeta te tarhi sarva-manīṣitārtham*

tat – therefore; *vai* – indeed; *bhajāmi* – I worship; *ṛta-dhiyaḥ* – of Him whose intelligence always perceives the truth; *tava* – of You; *pāda-mūlam* – the soles of the lotus feet; *hitvā* – giving up; *idam* – this; *ātma-chadi* – covering of the self; *ca* – and; *ātma-guroḥ* – of the master of the soul; *parasya* – who is the Supreme Truth; *deha-ādi* – the material body and other false designations; *apārtham* – useless; *asad* – insubstantial; *antyam* – temporary; *abhijñā-mātram* – only imagined to have a separate existence; *vindeta* – one obtains; *te* – from You; *tarhi* – then; *sarva* – all; *manīṣita* – desired; *artham* – objects.

TRANSLATION

Therefore I worship Your lotus feet, having renounced my identification with the material body and everything else that

covers my true self. These useless, insubstantial and temporary coverings are merely presumed to be separate from You, whose intelligence encompasses all truth. By attaining You – the Supreme Godhead and the master of the soul – one attains everything desirable.

PURPORT

One who falsely identifies himself as the material body or mind automatically feels entitled to exploit the material world. But when we realize our eternal spiritual nature and Lord Kṛṣṇa's supreme proprietorship over all that be, we renounce our false enjoying propensity by the strength of spiritual knowledge.

TEXT 8.45

*sattvaṁ rajas tama itīśa tavātma-bandho
māyā-mayāḥ sthiti-layodaya-hetavo 'sya
līlā dhṛtā yad api sattva-mayī praśāntyai
nānye nṛṇāṁ vyasana-moha-bhīyaś ca yābhyām*

sattvam – goodness; *rajaḥ* – passion; *tamaḥ* – ignorance; *itī* – the modes of nature thus termed; *īśa* – O Lord; *tava* – Your; *ātma-bandho* – O supreme friend of the soul; *māyā-mayāḥ* – produced from Your personal energy; *sthiti-laya-udaya* – of maintenance, destruction and creation; *hetavaḥ* – the causes; *asya* – of this universe; *līlāḥ* – as pastimes; *dhṛtāḥ* – assumed; *yad api* – although; *sattva-mayī* – that which is in the mode of goodness; *praśāntyai* – for liberation; *na* – not; *anye* – the other two; *nṛṇāṁ* – for persons; *vyasana* – danger; *moha* – bewilderment; *bhīyaḥ* – and fear; *ca* – also; *yābhyām* – from which.

TRANSLATION

O my Lord, O supreme friend of the conditioned soul, although for the creation, maintenance and annihilation of this world You accept the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance, which constitute Your illusory potency, You specifically employ the mode of goodness to liberate the conditioned souls. The other two modes simply bring them suffering, illusion and fear.

PURPORT

The words *līlā dhṛtāḥ* indicate that the creative activities of Lord Brahmā, the destructive activities of Lord Śiva and the sustaining functions of Lord Viṣṇu are all pastimes of the Absolute Truth, Lord

Kṛṣṇa. But ultimately only Lord Viṣṇu can award liberation from the clutches of material illusion, as indicated by the words *sattva-mayī praśāntyai*.

Our passionate and ignorant activities cause great suffering, illusion and fear for us and others; therefore they should be given up. One should become firmly situated in the mode of goodness and live peacefully on the spiritual platform. The essence of goodness is to renounce selfish interest in all one's activities and thus dedicate one's entire being to the Supreme Being, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the source of our existence.

TEXT 8.46

*tasmāt taveha bhagavann atha tāvakānām
śuklām tanum sva-dayitām kuśalā bhajanti
yat sātvatāḥ puruṣa-rūpam uśanti sattvam
loko yato 'bhayam utātma-sukham na cānyat*

tasmāt – therefore; *tava* – Your; *īha* – in this world; *bhagavan* – O Supreme Lord; *atha* – and; *tāvakānām* – of Your devotees; *śuklām* – transcendental; *tanum* – the personal form; *sva-dayitām* – most dear to them; *kuśalāḥ* – those who are expert in spiritual knowledge; *bhajanti* – worship; *yat* – because; *sātvatāḥ* – the great devotees; *puruṣa* – of the original Personality of Godhead; *rūpam* – the form; *uśanti* – consider; *sattvam* – the mode of goodness; *lokaḥ* – the spiritual world; *yataḥ* – from which; *abhayam* – fearlessness; *uta* – and; *ātma-sukham* – the happiness of the soul; *na* – not; *ca* – and; *anyat* – any other.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, because fearlessness, spiritual happiness and the kingdom of God are all achieved through the mode of pure goodness, Your devotees consider this mode, but never passion and ignorance, to be a direct manifestation of You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Intelligent persons thus worship Your beloved transcendental form, composed of pure goodness, along with the spiritual forms of Your pure devotees.

PURPORT

Intelligent persons do not worship the demigods, who represent the modes of passion and ignorance. Lord Brahmā represents passion, Lord Śiva represents ignorance, and demigods such as Indra also

represent the modes of material nature. But Lord Viṣṇu, or Nārāyaṇa, represents pure spiritual goodness, which brings one realization of the spiritual world, freedom from fear, and spiritual bliss. Such benefits can never be derived from impure, material goodness, for it is always mixed with the modes of passion and ignorance. As clearly indicated in this verse, the transcendental form of God is fully constituted of eternal spiritual goodness and thus has no tinge of the material mode of goodness, passion or ignorance.

TEXT 8.47

*tasmai namo bhagavate puruṣāya bhūmne
viśvāya viśva-gurave para-daivatāya
nārāyaṇāya ṛṣaye ca narottamāya
haṁsāya saṁyata-gire nigameśvarāya*

tasmai – to Him; *namah* – my obeisances; *bhagavate* – to the Godhead; *puruṣāya* – the Supreme Person; *bhūmne* – the all-pervading one; *viśvāya* – the all-inclusive manifestation of the universe; *viśva-gurave* – the spiritual master of the universe; *para-daivatāya* – the supremely worshipable Deity; *nārāyaṇāya* – to Lord Nārāyaṇa; *ṛṣaye* – the sage; *ca* – and; *nara-uttamāya* – to the best of human beings; *haṁsāya* – situated in perfect purity; *saṁyata-gire* – who has controlled his speech; *nigama-īśvarāya* – the master of the Vedic scriptures.

TRANSLATION

I offer my humble obeisances to Him, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the all-pervading and all-inclusive form of the universe, as well as its spiritual master. I bow down to Lord Nārāyaṇa, the supremely worshipable Deity appearing as a sage, and also to the saintly Nara, the best of human beings, who is fixed in perfect goodness, fully in control of his speech, and the propagator of the Vedic literatures.

TEXT 8.48

*yam vai na veda vitathākṣa-pathair bhramad-dhīḥ
santaṁ svakeṣv asuṣu hṛdy api dṛk-patheṣu
tan-māyayāvṛta-matiḥ sa u eva sākṣād
ādyas tavākhila-guror upasādya vedam*

yam – whom; *vai* – indeed; *na veda* – does not recognize; *vitatha* – deceptive; *ākṣa-pathaiḥ* – by methods of empirical perception; *bhramat*

– becoming diverted; *dhīḥ* – whose intelligence; *santam* – present; *svakeṣu* – within one’s own; *asuṣu* – senses; *hr̥di* – within the heart; *api* – even; *dr̥k-patheṣu* – among perceived objects of the external world; *tat-māyayā* – by His illusory potency; *āvṛta* – covered over; *matiḥ* – his understanding; *saḥ* – he; *u* – even; *eva* – indeed; *sākṣāt* – directly; *ādyah* – originally (in ignorance); *tava* – of You; *akhila-guroḥ* – the spiritual master of all living beings; *upasādyā* – obtaining; *vedam* – the knowledge of the *Vedas*.

TRANSLATION

A materialist, his intelligence perverted by the action of his deceptive senses, cannot recognize You at all, although You are always present within his own senses and heart and also among the objects of his perception. Yet even though one’s understanding has been covered by Your illusory potency, if one obtains Vedic knowledge from You, the supreme spiritual master of all, he can directly understand You.

TEXT 8.49

*yad-darśanam̐ nigama ātma-rahāḥ-prakāśam̐
muhyanti yatra kavayo ’ja-parā yatantaḥ
tam̐ sarva-vāda-viṣaya-pratirūpa-śīlam̐
vande mahā-puruṣam̐ ātma-nigūḍha-bodham*

yat – of whom; *darśanam* – the vision; *nigame* – in the *Vedas*; *ātma* – of the Supreme Soul; *rahāḥ* – the mystery; *prakāśam* – which reveals; *muhyanti* – become bewildered; *yatra* – about which; *kavayaḥ* – great learned authorities; *aja-parāḥ* – headed by Brahmā; *yatantaḥ* – endeavoring; *tam* – to Him; *sarva-vāda* – of all different philosophies; *viṣaya* – the subject matter; *pratirūpa* – adjusting itself as suitable; *śīlam* – whose personal nature; *vande* – I offer my homage; *mahā-puruṣam* – to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ātma* – from the spirit soul; *nigūḍha* – hidden; *bodham* – understanding.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, the Vedic literatures alone reveal confidential knowledge of Your supreme personality, and thus even such great scholars as Lord Brahmā himself are bewildered in their attempt to understand You through empirical methods. Each philosopher understands You according to his particular speculative conclusions. I worship that Supreme Person,

knowledge of whom is hidden by the bodily designations covering the conditioned soul's spiritual identity.

PURPORT

Even great demigods like Brahmā are bewildered in their speculative attempts to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Each philosopher is covered by a unique combination of the modes of nature and thus describes the Supreme Truth according to his own material conditioning. Therefore even strenuous empirical endeavor will never bring one to the conclusion of all knowledge. The highest knowledge is Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and one can understand Him only by fully surrendering to Him and serving Him with love. This is why Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi states here, *vande mahā-puruṣam*: “I simply worship that Supreme Personality.” Those who try to worship God but at the same time continue speculating or acting fruitively will attain only mixed and bewildering results. To be pure a devotee must give up all fruitive activity and mental speculation; in that way his loving service to the Lord will yield perfect knowledge of the Supreme. Only this perfection can satisfy the eternal soul.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Eighth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Mārkaṇḍeya’s Prayers to Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi.”

CHAPTER NINE

**Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi Sees
the Illusory Potency of
the Lord**

This chapter describes Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi's vision of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's illusory energy.

Satisfied by the prayers Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya had offered, the Supreme Lord told him to ask for a benediction, and the sage said he wanted to see the Lord's illusory energy. The Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, present before Mārkaṇḍeya in the form of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, replied, "So be it," and then left for Badarikāśrama. One day, as Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya was offering his evening prayers, the water of devastation suddenly flooded the three worlds. With great difficulty Mārkaṇḍeya moved about all alone in this water for a long time, until he came upon a banyan tree. Lying upon a leaf of that tree was an infant boy glowing with a charming effulgence. As Mārkaṇḍeya moved toward the leaf, he was pulled by the boy's inhalation and, just like a mosquito, drawn within His body.

Inside the boy's body, Mārkaṇḍeya was amazed to see the entire universe just as it had been before the annihilation. After a moment the sage was carried out by the force of the child's exhalation and hurled back into the ocean of annihilation. Then, seeing that the child on the leaf was actually Śrī Hari, the transcendental Lord situated within his own heart, Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya tried to embrace Him. But at that moment Lord Hari, the master of all mystic power, disappeared. Then the waters of annihilation disappeared as well, and Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya found himself in his own āśrama, just as before.

TEXT 9.1

sūta uvāca

*saṁstuto bhagavān ittham
mārkaṇḍeyena dhīmatā
nārāyaṇo nara-sakhaḥ
prīta āha bhṛgūdvaham*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *saṁstutaḥ* – properly glorified; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Lord; *ittham* – in this way; *mārkaṇḍeyena* – by Mārkaṇḍeya; *dhī-matā* – the intelligent sage; *nārāyaṇaḥ* – Lord Nārāyaṇa; *nara-sakhaḥ* – the friend of Nara; *prītaḥ* – satisfied; *āha* – spoke; *bhṛgu-udvaham* – to the most eminent descendant of Bhṛgu.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: The Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa, the friend of

Nara, was satisfied by the proper glorification offered by the intelligent sage Mārkaṇḍeya. Thus the Lord addressed that excellent descendant of Bhṛgu.

TEXT 9.2

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

*bho bho brahmarṣi-varyo 'si
siddha ātma-samādhinā
mayi bhaktyānapāyinyā
tapaḥ-svādhyāya-saṁyamaiḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *bhoḥ bhoḥ* – dear sage; *brahma-ṛṣi* – of all learned *brāhmaṇas*; *varyaḥ* – the best; *asi* – you are; *siddhaḥ* – perfect; *ātma-samādhinā* – by fixed meditation upon the Self; *mayi* – directed toward Me; *bhaktyā* – by devotional service; *anapāyinyā* – undeviating; *tapaḥ* – by austerities; *svādhyāya* – study of the *Vedas*; *saṁyamaiḥ* – and regulative principles.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Mārkaṇḍeya, you are indeed the best of all learned brāhmaṇas. You have perfected your life by practicing fixed meditation upon the Supreme Soul, as well as by focusing upon Me your undeviating devotional service, your austerities, your study of the Vedas and your strict adherence to regulative principles.

TEXT 9.3

*vayaṁ te parituṣṭāḥ sma
tvad-br̥had-vrata-caryayā
varam praciccha bhadraṁ te
vara-do 'smi tvad-īpsitam*

vayaṁ – We; *te* – with you; *parituṣṭāḥ* – perfectly satisfied; *sma* – have become; *tvad* – your; *br̥had-vrata* – of the vow of lifelong celibacy; *caryayā* – by performance; *varam* – a benediction; *praciccha* – please choose; *bhadraṁ* – all good; *te* – unto you; *vara-daḥ* – the giver of benedictions; *asmi* – I am; *tvad-īpsitam* – desired by you.

TRANSLATION

We are perfectly satisfied with your practice of lifelong celibacy. Please choose whatever benediction you desire, since I can grant

your wish. May you enjoy all good fortune.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the Lord used the plural form in the beginning of this verse – “We are satisfied” – because He was referring to Himself along with Śīva and Umā, who will later be glorified by Mārkaṇḍeya. The Lord then used the singular – “I am the bestower of benedictions” – because ultimately only Lord Nārāyaṇa (Kṛṣṇa) can award the highest perfection of life, eternal Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 9.4

śrī-ṛṣiḥ uvāca

*jitam te deva-deveśa
prapannārti-harācyuta
vareṇaitāvatālam no
yad bhavān samadrśyata*

śrī-ṛṣiḥ uvāca – the sage said; *jitam* – are victorious; *te* – You; *deva-deva-īśa* – O Lord of lords; *prapanna* – of one who is surrendered; *ārti-hara* – O remover of all distress; *acyuta* – O infallible one; *vareṇa* – with the benediction; *etāvatā* – this much; *alam* – enough; *naḥ* – by us; *yat* – that; *bhavān* – Your good self; *samadrśyata* – has been seen.

TRANSLATION

The sage said: O Lord of lords, all glories to You! O Lord Acyuta, You remove all distress for the devotees who surrender unto You. That you have allowed me to see You is all the benediction I want.

TEXT 9.5

*grhītvājādayo yasya
śrīmat-pādābja-darśanam
manasā yoga-pakvena
sa bhavān me 'kṣi-gocaraḥ*

grhītvā – receiving; *aja-ādayaḥ* – (became) Brahmā and others; *yasya* – whose; *śrīmat* – all-opulent; *pāda-abja* – of the lotus feet; *darśanam* – the sight; *manasā* – by the mind; *yoga-pakvena* – matured in *yoga* practice; *saḥ* – He; *bhavān* – Yourself; *me* – my; *akṣi* – to the eyes; *gocaraḥ* – perceptible.

TRANSLATION

Such demigods as Lord Brahmā achieved their exalted positions simply by seeing Your beautiful lotus feet after their minds had become mature in yoga practice. And now, my Lord, You have personally appeared before me.

PURPORT

Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi points out that exalted demigods like Lord Brahmā achieved their positions simply by glimpsing the Lord's lotus feet, and yet Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi was now able to see Lord Kṛṣṇa's entire body. Thus he could not even imagine the extent of his good fortune.

TEXT 9.6

*athāpy ambuja-patrākṣa
puṇya-śloka-śikhāmaṇe
drakṣye māyām yayā lokah
sa-pālo veda sad-bhidām*

atha api – nonetheless; *ambuja-patra* – like the petals of a lotus; *akṣa* – O You whose eyes; *puṇya-śloka* – of famous personalities; *śikhāmaṇe* – O crest jewel; *drakṣye* – I desire to see; *māyām* – the illusory energy; *yayā* – by which; *lokaḥ* – the entire world; *sa-pālah* – along with its ruling demigods; *veda* – considers; *sat* – of the absolute reality; *bhidām* – material differentiation.

TRANSLATION

O lotus-eyed Lord, O crest jewel of renowned personalities, although I am satisfied simply by seeing You, I do wish to see Your illusory potency, by whose influence the entire world, together with its ruling demigods, considers reality to be materially variegated.

PURPORT

A conditioned soul sees the material world to be constituted of independent, separate entities. Actually, all things are united, being potencies of the Supreme Lord. Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi is curious to witness the exact process by which *māyā*, the Lord's bewildering potency, casts living beings into illusion.

TEXT 9.7

sūta uvāca

*itīdīto 'rcitaḥ kāmam
ṛṣiṇā bhagavān mune
tatheti sa smayan prāgād
badary-āśramam īśvaraḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *iti* – in these words; *īditaḥ* – glorified; *arcitaḥ* – worshiped; *kāmam* – satisfactorily; *ṛṣiṇā* – by the sage Mārkaṇḍeya; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *mune* – O wise Śaunaka; *tathā iti* – “so be it”; *saḥ* – He; *smayan* – smiling; *prāgāt* – departed; *badari-āśramam* – for the hermitage Badarikāśrama; *īśvaraḥ* – the Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: O wise Śaunaka, thus satisfied by Mārkaṇḍeya’s praise and worship, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, smiling, replied, “So be it,” and then departed for His hermitage at Badarikāśrama.

PURPORT

The words *bhagavān* and *īśvara* in this verse refer to the Supreme Lord in His incarnation as the twin sages Nara and Nārāyaṇa. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the Supreme Lord smiled ruefully, because He prefers that His pure devotees stay away from His illusory energy. Curiosity to see the illusory energy of the Lord sometimes develops into sinful material desire. Nonetheless, to please His devotee Mārkaṇḍeya, the Lord granted his request, just as a father who cannot convince his son to give up pursuing a harmful desire may let him experience some painful reaction so that he will then voluntarily desist. Thus, understanding what would soon happen to Mārkaṇḍeya, the Lord smiled as He prepared to display the illusory potency to him.

TEXTS 9.8–9

*tam eva cintayann artham
ṛṣiḥ svāśrama eva saḥ
vasann agny-arka-somāmbu-
bhū-vāyu-viyad-ātmasu
dhyāyan sarvatra ca harim
bhāva-dravyair apūjayat
kvacit pūjāṁ visasmāra*

prema-prasara-samplutaḥ

tam – that; *eva* – indeed; *cintayan* – thinking of; *artham* – the goal; *ṛṣiḥ* – the sage Mārkaṇḍeya; *sva-āśrame* – at his own hermitage; *eva* – indeed; *saḥ* – he; *vasan* – remaining; *agni* – in the fire; *arka* – the sun; *soma* – the moon; *ambu* – the water; *bhū* – the earth; *vāyu* – the wind; *viyat* – the lightning; *ātmasu* – and in his own heart; *dhyāyan* – meditating; *sarvatra* – in all circumstances; *ca* – and; *harim* – upon Lord Hari; *bhāva-dravyaiḥ* – with paraphernalia conceived in his mind; *apūjayat* – he offered worship; *kvacit* – sometimes; *pūjām* – the worship; *visasmāra* – he forgot; *prema* – of pure love of God; *prasara* – in the flood; *samplutaḥ* – being drowned.

TRANSLATION

Thinking always of his desire to see the Lord's illusory energy, the sage remained in his āśrama, meditating constantly upon the Lord within fire, the sun, the moon, water, the earth, air, lightning and his own heart and worshipping Him with paraphernalia conceived in his mind. But sometimes, overwhelmed by waves of love for the Lord, Mārkaṇḍeya would forget to perform his regular worship.

PURPORT

It is apparent from these verses that Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi was a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa; therefore he wanted to see the illusory energy of the Lord not to fulfill some material ambition but to learn how His potency is working.

TEXT 9.10

*tasyaikadā bhṛgu-śreṣṭha
puṣpabhadrā-taṭe muneḥ
upāsīnasya sandhyāyām
brahman vāyur abhūn mahān*

tasya – while he; *ekadā* – one day; *bhṛgu-śreṣṭha* – O best of the descendants of Bhṛgu; *puṣpabhadrā-taṭe* – on the bank of the river Puṣpabhadrā; *muneḥ* – the sage; *upāsīnasya* – was performing worship; *sandhyāyām* – at the juncture of the day; *brahman* – O brāhmaṇa; *vāyuḥ* – a wind; *abhūt* – arose; *mahān* – great.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇa Śaunaka, best of the Bhṛguṣ, one day while Mārkaṇḍeya was performing his evening worship on the bank of the Puṣpabhadṛā, a great wind suddenly arose.

TEXT 9.11

*tam caṇḍa-śabdāṃ samudīrayantāṃ
balāhakāṃ anv abhavan karālāḥ
akṣa-sthaviṣṭhā mumucus taḍidbhiḥ
svananta uccair abhi varṣa-dhārāḥ*

tam – that wind; *caṇḍa-śabdāṃ* – a terrible sound; *samudīrayantāṃ* – which was creating; *balāhakāḥ* – clouds; *anv* – following it; *abhavan* – appeared; *karālāḥ* – fearful; *akṣa* – like wagon wheels; *sthaviṣṭhāḥ* – solid; *mumucus* – they released; *taḍidbhiḥ* – along with lightning; *svanantaḥ* – resounding; *uccaiḥ* – greatly; *abhi* – in all directions; *varṣa* – of rain; *dhārāḥ* – torrents.

TRANSLATION

That wind created a terrible sound and brought in its wake fearsome clouds that were accompanied by lightning and roaring thunder and that poured down on all sides torrents of rain as heavy as wagon wheels.

TEXT 9.12

*tato vyadrśyanta catuḥ samudrāḥ
samantataḥ kṣmā-talam āgrasantaḥ
samīra-vegormibhir ugra-nakra-
mahā-bhayāvarta-gabhīra-ghoṣāḥ*

tataḥ – then; *vyadrśyanta* – appeared; *catuḥ samudrāḥ* – the four oceans; *samantataḥ* – on all sides; *kṣmā-talam* – the surface of the earth; *āgrasantaḥ* – swallowing up; *samīra* – of the wind; *vega* – impelled by the force; *ūrmibhiḥ* – with their waves; *ugra* – terrible; *nakra* – with sea monsters; *mahā-bhaya* – very fearful; *āvarta* – with whirlpools; *gabhīra* – grave; *ghoṣāḥ* – with sounds.

TRANSLATION

Then the four great oceans appeared on all sides, swallowing up the surface of the earth with their wind-tossed waves. In these oceans were terrible sea monsters, fearful whirlpools and ominous rumblings.

TEXT 9.13

*antar bahiś cādbhir ati-dyubhiḥ kharaiḥ
śatahradābhir upatāpitam jagat
catur-vidham vīkṣya sahātmanā munir
jalāplutām kṣmām vimanāḥ samatrasat*

antaḥ – internally; *bahiḥ* – externally; *ca* – and; *adbhiḥ* – by the water; *ati-dyubhiḥ* – rising higher than the sky; *kharaiḥ* – by the fierce (winds); *śata-hradābhiḥ* – by lightning bolts; *upatāpitam* – greatly distressed; *jagat* – all the inhabitants of the universe; *catur-vidham* – of four varieties (those who have taken birth from embryos, from eggs, from seeds and from perspiration); *vīkṣya* – seeing; *saha* – along with; *ātmanā* – himself; *munīḥ* – the sage; *jala* – by the water; *āplutām* – flooded; *kṣmām* – the earth; *vimanāḥ* – perplexed; *samatrasat* – he became fearful.

TRANSLATION

The sage saw all the inhabitants of the universe, including himself, tormented within and without by the harsh winds, the bolts of lightning, and the great waves rising beyond the sky. As the whole earth flooded, he grew perplexed and fearful.

PURPORT

Here the word *catur-vidham* refers to the four sources of birth for conditioned souls: embryos, eggs, seeds and perspiration.

TEXT 9.14

*tasyaivam udvīkṣata ūrmi-bhīṣaṇaḥ
prabhañjanāghūrṇita-vār mahārṇavaḥ
āpūryamāṇo varaṣadbhir ambudaiḥ
kṣmām apyadhāt dvīpa-varṣādribhiḥ samam*

tasya – while he; *evam* – in this way; *udvīkṣataḥ* – was looking on; *ūrmi* – with its waves; *bhīṣaṇaḥ* – frightening; *prabhañjana* – by hurricane winds; *āghūrṇita* – swirled around; *vāḥ* – its water; *mahā-arnavaḥ* – the great ocean; *āpūryamāṇaḥ* – becoming filled; *varaṣadbhiḥ* – with rain; *ambu-daiḥ* – by the clouds; *kṣmām* – the earth; *apyadhāt* – covered over; *dvīpa* – with its islands; *varṣa* – continents; *adribhiḥ* – and mountains; *samam* – together.

TRANSLATION

Even as Mārkaṇḍeya looked on, the rain pouring down from the clouds filled the ocean more and more until that great sea, its waters violently whipped into terrifying waves by hurricanes, covered up all the earth's islands, mountains and continents.

TEXT 9.15

*sa-kṣmāntarikṣam sa-divam sa-bhā-gaṇam
trai-lokyam āsit saha digbhir āplutam
sa eka evorvarito mahā-munir
babhrāma vikṣipyā jaṭā jaḍāndha-vat*

sa – along with; *kṣmā* – the earth; *antarikṣam* – and outer space; *sa-divam* – along with the heavenly planets; *sa-bhā-gaṇam* – along with all the celestial bodies; *trai-lokyam* – the three worlds; *āsit* – became; *saha* – along with; *digbhiḥ* – all the directions; *āplutam* – flooded; *sah* – he; *ekaḥ* – alone; *eva* – indeed; *urvaritaḥ* – remaining; *mahā-muniḥ* – the great sage; *babhrāma* – wandered about; *vikṣipyā* – scattering; *jaṭāḥ* – his matted locks; *jaḍa* – a dumb person; *andha* – a blind person; *vat* – like.

TRANSLATION

The water inundated the earth, outer space, heaven and the celestial region. Indeed, the entire expanse of the universe was flooded in all directions, and out of all its inhabitants only Mārkaṇḍeya remained. His matted hair scattered, the great sage wandered about alone in the water as if dumb and blind.

TEXT 9.16

*kṣut-ṭṭ-parīto makarais timiṅgilair
upadruto vīci-nabhasvatāhataḥ
tamasy apāre patito bhraman diśo
na veda kham gām ca pariśrameṣitaḥ*

kṣut – by hunger; *ṭṭ* – and thirst; *parītaḥ* – enveloped; *makaraiḥ* – by the *makaras*, a species of monster crocodile; *timiṅgilaiḥ* – and by the *timiṅgila*, a variety of huge fish that eats whales; *upadrutaḥ* – harassed; *vīci* – by the waves; *nabhasvatā* – and the wind; *āhataḥ* – tormented; *tamasi* – in the darkness; *apāre* – which was unlimited; *patitaḥ* – having fallen; *bhraman* – wandering; *diśaḥ* – the directions; *na veda* – did not recognize; *kham* – the sky; *gām* – the earth; *ca* – and; *pariśrama-iṣitaḥ* – overcome by exhaustion.

TRANSLATION

Tormented by hunger and thirst, attacked by monstrous makaras and timingila fish and battered by the wind and waves, he moved aimlessly through the infinite darkness into which he had fallen. As he grew increasingly exhausted, he lost all sense of direction and could not tell the sky from the earth.

TEXTS 9.17–18

*kracin magno mahāvarte
taralais tāḍitaḥ kvacit
yādobhir bhakṣyate kvāpi
svayam anyonya-ghātibhiḥ*

*kvacic chokaṁ kvacin moham
kvacid duḥkham sukham bhayam
kvacin mṛtyum avāpnoti
vyādhy-ādibhir utārditaḥ*

kvacit – sometimes; *magnaḥ* – drowning; *mahā-āvarte* – in a great whirlpool; *taralaiḥ* – by the waves; *tāḍitaḥ* – beaten; *kvacit* – sometimes; *yādobhiḥ* – by the aquatic monsters; *bhakṣyate* – he was threatened with being eaten; *kva api* – sometimes; *svayam* – himself; *anyonya* – each other; *ghātibhiḥ* – attacking; *kvacit* – sometimes; *śokam* – depression; *kvacit* – sometimes; *moham* – bewilderment; *kvacit* – sometimes; *duḥkham* – misery; *sukham* – happiness; *bhayam* – fear; *kvacit* – sometimes; *mṛtyum* – death; *avāpnoti* – he experienced; *vyādhi* – by disease; *ādibhiḥ* – and other pains; *uta* – also; *arditaḥ* – distressed.

TRANSLATION

At times he was engulfed by the great whirlpools, sometimes he was beaten by the mighty waves, and at other times the aquatic monsters threatened to devour him as they attacked one another. Sometimes he felt lamentation, bewilderment, misery, happiness or fear, and at other times he experienced such terrible illness and pain that he felt himself dying.

TEXT 9.19

*ayutāyuta-varṣāṇām
sahasrāṇi śatāni ca
vyatīyur bhramatas tasmin
viṣṇu-māyāvṛtātmanaḥ*

ayuta – tens of thousands; *ayuta* – by tens of thousands; *varṣāṇām* – of years; *sahasrāṇi* – thousands; *śatāni* – hundreds; *ca* – and; *vyatīyuh* – passed by; *bhramataḥ* – as he wandered; *tasmin* – in that; *viṣṇu-māyā* – by the illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu; *āvṛta* – covered; *ātmanaḥ* – his mind.

TRANSLATION

Countless millions of years passed as Mārkaṇḍeya wandered about in that deluge, his mind bewildered by the illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 9.20

*sa kadācid bhramam̐s tasmin
pṛthivyāḥ kakudī dvijaḥ
nyāgrodha-potaṁ dadṛśe
phala-pallava-śobhitam*

saḥ – he; *kadācit* – on one occasion; *bhraman* – while wandering; *tasmin* – in that water; *pṛthivyāḥ* – of earth; *kakudī* – upon a raised place; *dvijaḥ* – the *brāhmaṇa*; *nyāgrodha-potaṁ* – a young banyan tree; *dadṛśe* – saw; *phala* – with fruits; *pallava* – and blossoms; *śobhitam* – decorated.

TRANSLATION

Once, while wandering in the water, the *brāhmaṇa* Mārkaṇḍeya discovered a small island, upon which stood a young banyan tree bearing blossoms and fruits.

TEXT 9.21

*prāg-uttarasyām śākhāyām
tasyāpi dadṛśe śiśum
śayānam̐ parṇa-putake
grasantam̐ prabhayā tamaḥ*

prāk-uttarasyām – toward the northeast; *śākhāyām* – upon a branch; *tasya* – of that tree; *api* – indeed; *dadṛśe* – he saw; *śiśum* – an infant boy; *śayānam* – lying; *parṇa-putake* – within the concavity of a leaf; *grasantam* – swallowing; *prabhayā* – with His effulgence; *tamaḥ* – the darkness.

TRANSLATION

Upon a branch of the northeast portion of that tree he saw an

infant boy lying within a leaf. The child's effulgence was swallowing up the darkness.

TEXTS 9.22–25

mahā-marakata-śyāmaṁ
śrīmad-vadana-pankajam
kambu-grīvaṁ mahoraskam
su-nasaṁ sundara-bhruvam

śvāsaijad-alakābhātam
kambu-śrī-karṇa-dāḍimam
vidrumādhara-bhāśeṣac-
choṇāyita-sudhā-smitam

padma-garbhāruṇāpāṅgam
hṛdya-hāsāvalokanam
śvāsaijad-vali-sarṁvigna-
nimna-nābhi-dalodaram

cārv-aṅgulibhyāṁ pāṇibhyāṁ
unnīya caraṇāmbujam
mukhe nidhāya viprendro
dhayantam vikṣya vismitaḥ

mahā-marakata – like a great emerald; *śyāmam* – dark blue; *śrīmat* – beautiful; *vadana-pankajam* – whose lotus face; *kambu* – like a conchshell; *grīvam* – whose throat; *mahā* – broad; *uraskam* – whose chest; *su-nasam* – having a beautiful nose; *sundara-bhruvam* – having beautiful eyebrows; *śvāsa* – by His breath; *ejat* – trembling; *alaka* – with the hair; *ābhātam* – splendid; *kambu* – like a conchshell; *śrī* – beautiful; *karṇa* – His ears; *dāḍimam* – resembling pomegranate flowers; *vidruma* – like coral; *adhara* – of His lips; *bhāsā* – by the effulgence; *iṣat* – slightly; *śoṇāyita* – reddened; *sudhā* – nectarean; *smitam* – His smile; *padma-garbha* – like the whorl of a lotus; *aruṇa* – reddish; *apāṅgam* – the corners of His eyes; *hṛdya* – charming; *hāsa* – with a smile; *avalokanam* – His countenance; *śvāsa* – by His breath; *ejat* – made to move; *vali* – by the lines; *sarṁvigna* – contorted; *nimna* – deep; *nābhi* – with His navel; *dala* – like a leaf; *udaram* – whose abdomen; *cāru* – attractive; *aṅgulibhyāṁ* – having fingers; *pāṇibhyāṁ* – by His two hands; *unnīya* – picking up; *carāṇa-ambujam* – His lotus foot; *mukhe* – in His mouth; *nidhāya* – placing; *vipra-indraḥ* – the best of *brāhmaṇas*, Mārkaṇḍeya; *dhayantam* – drinking; *vikṣya* – seeing;

vismitaḥ – was amazed.

TRANSLATION

The infant's dark-blue complexion was the color of a flawless emerald, His lotus face shone with a wealth of beauty, and His throat bore marks like the lines on a conchshell. He had a broad chest, a finely shaped nose, beautiful eyebrows, and lovely ears that resembled pomegranate flowers and that had inner folds like a conchshell's spirals. The corners of His eyes were reddish like the whorl of a lotus, and the effulgence of His corallike lips slightly reddened the nectarean, enchanting smile on His face. As He breathed, His splendid hair trembled and His deep navel became distorted by the moving folds of skin on His abdomen, which resembled a banyan leaf. The exalted brāhmaṇa watched with amazement as the infant took hold of one of His lotus feet with His graceful fingers, placed a toe within His mouth and began to suck.

PURPORT

The young child was the Supreme Personality of Godhead. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Lord Kṛṣṇa wondered, "So many devotees are hankering for the nectar of My lotus feet. Therefore let Me personally experience that nectar." Thus the Lord, playing like an ordinary baby, began to suck on His toes.

TEXT 9.26

*tad-darśanād vīta-pariśramo mudā
protphulla-hṛt-padma-vilocanāmbujaḥ
prahr̥ṣṭa-romādbhuta-bhāva-śaṅkitaḥ
praṣṭum puras taṁ prasasāra bālakam*

tad-darśanāt – by seeing the child; *vīta* – dispelled; *pariśramaḥ* – his weariness; *mudā* – out of pleasure; *protphulla* – expanded wide; *hṛt-padma* – the lotus of his heart; *vilocana-ambujaḥ* – and his lotus eyes; *prahr̥ṣṭa* – standing on end; *romā* – the hairs on his body; *adbhuta-bhāva* – about the identity of this wonderful form; *śaṅkitaḥ* – confused; *praṣṭum* – in order to inquire; *puras* – in front; *taṁ* – of Him; *prasasāra* – he approached; *bālakam* – the child.

TRANSLATION

As Mārkaṇḍeya beheld the child, all his weariness vanished.

Indeed, so great was his pleasure that the lotus of his heart, along with his lotus eyes, fully blossomed and the hairs on his body stood on end. Confused as to the identity of the wonderful infant, the sage approached Him.

PURPORT

Mārkaṇḍeya wanted to ask the child about His identity and therefore approached Him.

TEXT 9.27

*tāvac chiśor vai śvasitena bhārgavaḥ
so 'ntaḥ śarīram maśako yathāviśat
tatrāpy ado nyastam acaṣṭa kṛtsnaśo
yathā purāmuhyat atīva vismitaḥ*

tāvat – at that very moment; *śiśoḥ* – of the infant; *vai* – indeed; *śvasitena* – with the breathing; *bhārgavaḥ* – the descendant of Bhṛgu; *saḥ* – he; *antaḥ śarīram* – within the body; *maśakaḥ* – a mosquito; *yathā* – just like; *aviśat* – entered; *tatra* – therein; *api* – indeed; *adaḥ* – this universe; *nyastam* – placed; *acaṣṭa* – he saw; *kṛtsnaśaḥ* – entire; *yathā* – as; *purā* – previously; *amuhyat* – he became bewildered; *atīva* – extremely; *vismitaḥ* – surprised.

TRANSLATION

Just then the child inhaled, drawing Mārkaṇḍeya within His body like a mosquito. There the sage found the entire universe arrayed as it had been before its dissolution. Seeing this, Mārkaṇḍeya was most astonished and perplexed.

TEXTS 9.28–29

*kham rodasī bhā-gaṇān adri-sāgarān
dvīpān sa-varṣān kakubhaḥ surāsurān
vanāni deśān saritaḥ purākarān
khetān vrajān āśrama-varṇa-vṛttayaḥ
mahānti bhūtāny atha bhautikāny asau
kālam ca nānā-yuga-kalpa-kalpanam
yat kiñcid anyad vyavahāra-kāraṇam
dadarśa viśvam sad ivāvabhāsitam*

kham – the sky; *rodasī* – the heavens and earth; *bhā-gaṇān* – all the stars; *adri* – the mountains; *sāgarān* – and oceans; *dvīpān* – the great

islands; *sa-varṣān* – along with the continents; *kakubhaḥ* – the directions; *sura-asurān* – the saintly devotees and the demons; *vanāni* – the forests; *deśān* – the various countries; *saritaḥ* – the rivers; *pura* – the cities; *ākarān* – and the mines; *kheṭān* – the agricultural villages; *vrajān* – the cow pastures; *āśrama-varṇa* – of the various spiritual and occupational divisions of society; *vṛttayaḥ* – the engagements; *mahānti bhūtāni* – the basic elements of nature; *atha* – and; *bhautikāni* – all their gross manifestations; *asau* – he; *kālam* – time; *ca* – also; *nānā-yuga-kalpa* – of the different millennia and the days of Brahmā; *kalpanam* – the regulating agent; *yat kiñcit* – whatever; *anyat* – other; *vyavahāra-kāraṇam* – object intended for use in material life; *dadarśa* – he saw; *viśvam* – the universe; *sat* – real; *iva* – as if; *avabhāsitam* – manifest.

TRANSLATION

The sage saw the entire universe: the sky, heavens and earth, the stars, mountains, oceans, great islands and continents, the expanses in every direction, the saintly and demoniac living beings, the forests, countries, rivers, cities and mines, the agricultural villages and cow pastures, and the occupational and spiritual activities of the various social divisions. He also saw the basic elements of creation along with all their by-products, as well as time itself, which regulates the progression of countless ages within the days of Brahmā. In addition, he saw everything else created for use in material life. All this he saw manifested before him as if it were real.

TEXT 9.30

*himālayam puṣpavahām ca tām nadīm
nijaśramam yatra ṛṣi apaśyata
viśvam vipaśyañ chvasitāc chiśor vai
bahir nirasto nyapatat layābdhau*

himālayam – the Himālaya Mountains; *puṣpa-vahām* – Puṣpabhadrā; *ca* – and; *tām* – that; *nadīm* – river; *nija-āśramam* – his own hermitage; *yatra* – where; *ṛṣi* – the two sages, Nara-Nārāyaṇa; *apaśyata* – he saw; *viśvam* – the universe; *vipaśyan* – while observing; *śvasitāt* – by the breath; *śiśoḥ* – of the infant; *vai* – indeed; *bahiḥ* – outside; *nirastaḥ* – expelled; *nyapatat* – he fell; *laya-abdhau* – into the ocean of dissolution.

TRANSLATION

He saw before him the Himālaya Mountains, the Puṣpabhadra River, and his own hermitage, where he had had the audience of the sages Nara-Nārāyaṇa. Then, as Mārkaṇḍeya beheld the entire universe, the infant exhaled, expelling the sage from His body and casting him back into the ocean of dissolution.

TEXTS 9.31–32

*tasmin pṛthivyāḥ kakudī prarūḍham
vaṭam ca tat-parṇa-puṭe śayānam
tokam ca tat-prema-sudhā-smitena
nirīkṣito 'pāṅga-nirīkṣaṇena
atha tam bālakam vīkṣya
netrābhyām dhiṣṭhitam hr̥di
abhyayāt ati-saṅkīṣṭaḥ
parīsvaktum adhokṣajam*

tasmin – in that water; *pṛthivyāḥ* – of land; *kakudī* – on the raised place; *prarūḍham* – growing up; *vaṭam* – the banyan tree; *ca* – and; *tat* – of it; *parṇa-puṭe* – within the slight depression of the leaf; *śayānam* – lying; *tokam* – the child; *ca* – and; *tat* – for himself; *prema* – of love; *sudhā* – like nectar; *smitena* – with a smile; *nirīkṣitaḥ* – being looked upon; *apāṅga* – of the corner of His eyes; *nirīkṣaṇena* – by the glance; *atha* – then; *tam* – that; *bālakam* – infant; *vīkṣya* – looking upon; *netrābhyām* – by his eyes; *dhiṣṭhitam* – placed; *hr̥di* – within his heart; *abhyayāt* – ran forward; *ati-saṅkīṣṭaḥ* – greatly agitated; *parīsvaktum* – to embrace; *adhokṣajam* – the transcendental Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

In that vast sea he again saw the banyan tree growing on the tiny island and the infant boy lying within the leaf. The child glanced at him from the corner of His eyes with a smile imbued with the nectar of love, and Mārkaṇḍeya took Him into his heart through his eyes. Greatly agitated, the sage ran to embrace the transcendental Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 9.33

*tāvat sa bhagavān sākṣād
yogādhiśo guhā-śayaḥ
antardadha ṛṣeḥ sadyo*

yathehānīśa-nirmitā

tāvat – just then; *saḥ* – He; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *sākṣāt* – directly; *yoga-adhīśaḥ* – the supreme master of *yoga*; *guhāśayaḥ* – who is hidden within the heart of all living beings; *antardadhe* – disappeared; *ṛṣeḥ* – in front of the sage; *sadyaḥ* – suddenly; *yathā* – in the same way as; *ihā* – the object of endeavor; *anīśa* – by an incompetent person; *nirmitā* – created.

TRANSLATION

At that moment the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the original master of all mysticism and who is hidden within everyone’s heart, became invisible to the sage, just as the achievements of an incompetent person can suddenly vanish.

TEXT 9.34

*tam anv atha vaṭo brahman
salilam loka-samplavaḥ
tirodhāyi kṣaṇād asya
svāśrame pūrva-vat sthitaḥ*

tam – Him; *anu* – following; *atha* – then; *vaṭaḥ* – the banyan tree; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*, Śaunaka; *salilam* – the water; *loka-samplavaḥ* – the annihilation of the universe; *tirodhāyi* – they disappeared; *kṣaṇāt* – immediately; *asya* – in front of him; *sva-āśrame* – in his own hermitage; *pūrva-vat* – as previously; *sthitaḥ* – he was present.

TRANSLATION

After the Lord disappeared, O *brāhmaṇa*, the banyan tree, the great water and the dissolution of the universe all vanished as well, and in an instant *Mārkaṇḍeya* found himself back in his own hermitage, just as before.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Ninth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi Sees the Illusory Potency of the Lord.”

CHAPTER TEN

**Lord Śiva and Umā
Glorify Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi**

In this chapter Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī describes how Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi received benedictions from Lord Śiva.

Once, as Lord Śiva was traveling in the sky with his wife, Pārvatī, he came across Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya merged in meditative trance. At the request of Pārvatī, Lord Śiva presented himself before the sage to grant him the result of his austerities. Coming out of his trance, Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya saw Lord Śiva, the spiritual master of the three worlds, together with Pārvatī, and he worshiped them by offering them obeisances, words of greeting and a sitting place.

Then Lord Śiva praised the saintly devotees of the Personality of Godhead and requested Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya to choose whatever benediction he desired. Mārkaṇḍeya begged for unflinching devotion to the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, to the devotees of the Supreme Lord and to Lord Śiva himself. Satisfied with Mārkaṇḍeya's devotion, Lord Śiva awarded him the boons of renown, freedom from old age and death until the time of universal dissolution, knowledge of all three phases of time, renunciation, realized knowledge and the position of a teacher of the *Purāṇas*.

Those who chant and hear the story of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi will attain liberation from material life, which is based on the accumulated desires generated from fruitive work.

TEXT 10.1

sūta uvāca

*sa evam anubhūyedaṁ
nārāyaṇa-vinirmitam
vaibhavam yoga-māyāyāḥ
tam eva śaraṇam yayau*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *saḥ* – he, Mārkaṇḍeya; *evam* – in this way; *anubhūya* – experiencing; *idaṁ* – this; *nārāyaṇa-vinirmitam* – manufactured by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa; *vaibhavam* – the opulent exhibition; *yoga-māyāyāḥ* – of His internal mystic energy; *tam* – to Him; *eva* – indeed; *śaraṇam* – for shelter; *yayau* – he went.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: The Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa had arranged this opulent display of His bewildering potency. Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi,

having experienced it, took shelter of the Lord.

TEXT 10.2

śrī-mārkaṇḍeya uvāca

*prapanno 'smy aṅghri-mūlam te
prapannābhaya-dam hare
yan-māyayāpi vibudhā
muhyanti jñāna-kāśayā*

śrī-mārkaṇḍeyaḥ uvāca – Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said; *prapannaḥ* – surrendered; *asmi* – I am; *aṅghri-mūlam* – to the soles of the lotus feet; *te* – Your; *prapanna* – of those who surrender; *abhaya-dam* – the giver of fearlessness; *hare* – O Lord Hari; *yat-māyayā* – by whose illusory potency; *api* – even; *vibudhāḥ* – intelligent demigods; *muhyanti* – become bewildered; *jñāna-kāśayā* – which falsely appears as knowledge.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said: O Lord Hari, I take shelter of the soles of Your lotus feet, which bestow fearlessness upon all who surrender to them. Even the great demigods are bewildered by Your illusory energy, which appears to them in the guise of knowledge.

PURPORT

Conditioned souls are attracted to material sense gratification, and thus they meticulously study the workings of nature. Although they appear to be advancing in scientific knowledge, they become increasingly entangled in their false identification with the material body and therefore increasingly merge into ignorance.

TEXT 10.3

sūta uvāca

*tam evam nibhṛtātmānam
vṛṣeṇa divi paryātan
rudrānyā bhagavān rudro
dadarśa sva-gaṇair vṛtaḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *tam* – him, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi; *evam* – thus; *nibhṛta-ātmānam* – his mind completely absorbed in trance; *vṛṣeṇa* – on his bull; *divi* – in the sky; *paryātan* – traveling; *rudrānyā* –

accompanied by his consort, Rudrāṇī (Umā); *bhagavān* – the powerful lord; *rudraḥ* – Śiva; *dadarśa* – saw; *sva-gaṇaiḥ* – by his entourage; *vṛtaḥ* – surrounded.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Lord Rudra, traveling in the sky on his bull and accompanied by his consort, Rudrāṇī, as well as his personal associates, observed Mārkaṇḍeya in trance.

TEXT 10.4

*athomā tam ṛṣim vīkṣya
giriśam samabhāṣata
paśyemaṁ bhagavan vipraṁ
nibhṛtātmendriyāśayam*

atha – then; *umā* – Umā; *tam* – that; *ṛṣim* – sage; *vīkṣya* – seeing; *giriśam* – to Lord Śiva; *samabhāṣata* – spoke; *paśya* – just see; *imam* – this; *bhagavan* – my lord; *vipraṁ* – learned *brāhmaṇa*; *nibhṛta* – motionless; *ātma-indriya-āśayam* – his body, senses and mind.

TRANSLATION

Goddess Umā, seeing the sage, addressed Lord Giriśa: My lord, just see this learned brāhmaṇa, his body, mind and senses motionless in trance.

TEXT 10.5

*nibhṛtoda-jhaṣa-vrāto
vātāpāye yathārṇavaḥ
kurv asya tapasaḥ sākṣāt
samsiddhim siddhi-do bhavān*

nibhṛta – stationary; *uda* – water; *jhaṣa-vrātaḥ* – and schools of fish; *vāta* – of the wind; *apāye* – upon the ceasing; *yathā* – just as; *arṇavaḥ* – the ocean; *kuru* – please make; *asya* – his; *tapasaḥ* – of the austerities; *sākṣāt* – manifest; *samsiddhim* – perfection; *siddhi-daḥ* – the bestower of perfection; *bhavān* – you.

TRANSLATION

He is as calm as the waters of the ocean when the wind has ceased and the fish remain still. Therefore, my lord, since you bestow perfection on the performers of austerity, please award this sage the perfection that is obviously due him.

TEXT 10.6

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

*naivecchaty āśiṣaḥ kvāpi
brahmarṣir mokṣam apy uta
bhaktim parām bhagavati
labdhavān puruṣe 'vyaye*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the powerful lord said; *na* – not; *eva* – indeed; *icchati* – desires; *āśiṣaḥ* – benedictions; *kva api* – in any realm; *brahma-ṛṣiḥ* – the saintly *brāhmaṇa*; *mokṣam* – liberation; *apy uta* – even; *bhaktim* – devotional service; *parām* – transcendental; *bhagavati* – for the Supreme Lord; *labdhavān* – he has achieved; *puruṣe* – for the Personality of Godhead; *avyaye* – who is inexhaustible.

TRANSLATION

Lord Śiva replied: Surely this saintly brāhmaṇa does not desire any benediction, not even liberation itself, for he has attained pure devotional service unto the inexhaustible Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

The words *naivecchaty āśiṣaḥ kvāpi* indicate that Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi was uninterested in any reward available on any planet within the universe. Nor did he want liberation, for he had achieved the Supreme Lord Himself.

TEXT 10.7

*athāpi saṁvadiṣyāmo
bhavāny etena sādhunā
ayam hi paramo lābho
nṛṇām sādhu-samāgamaḥ*

atha api – nevertheless; *saṁvadiṣyāmaḥ* – we shall converse; *bhavāni* – my dear Bhavānī; *etena* – with this; *sādhunā* – pure devotee; *ayam* – this; *hi* – indeed; *paramaḥ* – the best; *lābhaḥ* – gain; *nṛṇām* – for men; *sādhu-samāgamaḥ* – the association of saintly devotees.

TRANSLATION

Still, my dear Bhavānī, let us talk with this saintly personality. After all, association with saintly devotees is man's highest achievement.

TEXT 10.8

sūta uvāca

*ity uktvā tam upeyāya
bhagavān sa satām gatiḥ
īśānaḥ sarva-vidyānām
īśvaraḥ sarva-dehinām*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *iti* – thus; *uktvā* – having said; *tam* – to the sage; *upeyāya* – going; *bhagavān* – the exalted demigod; *saḥ* – he; *satām* – of the pure souls; *gatiḥ* – the shelter; *īśānaḥ* – the master; *sarva-vidyānām* – of all branches of knowledge; *īśvaraḥ* – the controller; *sarva-dehinām* – of all embodied living beings.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Having spoken thus, Lord Śaṅkara – the shelter of pure souls, master of all spiritual sciences and controller of all embodied living beings – approached the sage.

TEXT 10.9

*tayor āgamanam sākṣād
īśayor jagad-ātmanoḥ
na veda ruddha-dhī-vṛttir
ātmānam viśvam eva ca*

tayoḥ – of the two of them; *āgamanam* – the arrival; *sākṣāt* – in person; *īśayoḥ* – of the powerful personalities; *jagad-ātmanoḥ* – the controllers of the universe; *na veda* – he did not notice; *ruddha* – checked; *dhī-vṛttiḥ* – the functioning of his mind; *ātmānam* – himself; *viśvam* – the external universe; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also.

TRANSLATION

Because Mārkaṇḍeya’s material mind had stopped functioning, the sage failed to notice that Lord Śiva and his wife, the controllers of the universe, had personally come to see him. Mārkaṇḍeya was so absorbed in meditation that he was unaware of either himself or the external world.

TEXT 10.10

*bhagavāns tad abhijñāya
giriśo yoga-māyayā
āviśat tad-guhākāśam*

vāyuś chidram iveśvaraḥ

bhagavān – the great personality; *tat* – that; *abhijñāya* – understanding; *giriśaḥ* – Lord Giriśa; *yoga-māyayā* – by his mystic power; *āviśat* – entered; *tat* – of Mārkaṇḍeya; *guhā-ākāśam* – the hidden sky of the heart; *vāyuḥ* – the air; *chidram* – a hole; *iva* – as if; *iśvaraḥ* – the lord.

TRANSLATION

Understanding the situation very well, the powerful Lord Śiva employed his mystic power to enter within the sky of Mārkaṇḍeya’s heart, just as the wind passes through an opening.

TEXTS 10.11–13

*ātmany api śivam prāptam
taḍit-piṅga-jatā-dharam
tri-akṣam daśa-bhujam prāṁsum
udyantam iva bhāskaram*

*vyāghra-carmāmbaram śūla-
dhanur-iṣv-asi-carmabhiḥ
akṣa-mālā-ḍamaruka-
kapālam paraśum saha*

*bibhrānam sahasā bhātam
vicakṣya hr̥di vismitaḥ
kim idam kuta eveti
samādher virato muniḥ*

ātmani – within himself; *api* – also; *śivam* – Lord Śiva; *prāptam* – arrived; *taḍit* – like lightning; *piṅga* – yellowish; *jatā* – locks of hair; *dharam* – carrying; *tri-akṣam* – with three eyes; *daśa-bhujam* – and ten arms; *prāṁsum* – very tall; *udyantam* – rising; *iva* – as; *bhāskaram* – the sun; *vyāghra* – of a tiger; *carma* – the fur; *ambaram* – as his garment; *śūla* – with his trident; *dhanuḥ* – bow; *iṣu* – arrows; *asi* – sword; *carmabhiḥ* – and shield; *akṣa-mālā* – his prayer beads; *ḍamaruka* – small drum; *kapālam* – and skull; *paraśum* – ax; *saha* – together with; *bibhrānam* – exhibiting; *sahasā* – suddenly; *bhātam* – manifest; *vicakṣya* – seeing; *hr̥di* – in his heart; *vismitaḥ* – surprised; *kim* – what; *idam* – this; *kutaḥ* – from where; *eva* – indeed; *iti* – thus; *samādheḥ* – from his trance; *virataḥ* – desisted; *muniḥ* – the sage.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya saw Lord Śiva suddenly appear within his heart. Lord Śiva's golden hair resembled lightning, and he had three eyes, ten arms and a tall body that shone like the rising sun. He wore a tiger skin, and he carried a trident, a bow, arrows, a sword and a shield, along with prayer beads, a ḍamaru drum, a skull and an ax. Astonished, the sage came out of his trance and thought, "Who is this, and where has he come from?"

TEXT 10.14

*netre unmiḷya dadṛṣe
sa-gaṇaṁ somayāgatam
rudraṁ tri-lokaika-gurum
nanāma śirasā muniḥ*

netre – his eyes; *unmiḷya* – opening; *dadṛṣe* – he saw; *sa-gaṇam* – with his associates; *sa-umayā* – and with Umā; *āgatam* – having arrived; *rudram* – Lord Rudra; *tri-loka* – of the three worlds; *eka-gurum* – the one spiritual master; *nanāma* – he offered his obeisances; *śirasā* – with his head; *muniḥ* – the sage.

TRANSLATION

Opening his eyes, the sage saw Lord Rudra, the spiritual master of the three worlds, together with Umā and Rudra's followers. Mārkaṇḍeya then offered his respectful obeisances by bowing his head.

PURPORT

When Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi saw Lord Śiva and Umā within his heart, he immediately became aware of them and thus also of his own individual self. During his trance, on the other hand, he had simply been absorbed in awareness of the Supreme Lord and had thus forgotten himself as the conscious perceiver.

TEXT 10.15

*tasmai saparyāṁ vyadadhāt
sa-gaṇāya sahomayā
svāgatāsana-pādyārghya-
gandha-srag-dhūpa-dīpakaiḥ*

tasmai – to him; *saparyāṁ* – worship; *vyadadhāt* – he offered; *sa-gaṇāya* – together with his associates; *saha umayā* – together with

Umā; *su-āgata* – by words of greeting; *āsana* – offering of sitting places; *pādyā* – water for bathing the feet; *arghya* – fragrant drinking water; *gandha* – perfumed oil; *srak* – garlands; *dhūpa* – incense; *dīpakaiḥ* – and lamps.

TRANSLATION

Mārkaṇḍeya worshiped Lord Śiva, along with Umā and Śiva's associates, by offering them words of welcome, sitting places, water for washing their feet, scented drinking water, fragrant oils, flower garlands and ārati lamps.

TEXT 10.16

*āha tv ātmānubhāvena
pūrṇa-kāmasya te vibho
karavāma kim īśāna
yenedaṁ nirvṛtaṁ jagat*

āha – Mārkaṇḍeya said; *tu* – indeed; *ātma-anubhāvena* – by your own experience of ecstasy; *pūrṇa-kāmasya* – who is satisfied in all respects; *te* – for you; *vibho* – O mighty one; *karavāma* – I can do; *kim* – what; *īśāna* – O lord; *yena* – by whom; *idaṁ* – this; *nirvṛtaṁ* – is made peaceful; *jagat* – the entire world.

TRANSLATION

Mārkaṇḍeya said: O mighty lord, what can I possibly do for you, who are fully satisfied by your own ecstasy? Indeed, by your mercy you satisfy this entire world.

TEXT 10.17

*namaḥ śivāya śāntāya
sattvāya pramṛḍāya ca
rajo-juṣe 'tha ghorāya
namas tubhyam tamo-juṣe*

namaḥ – obeisances; *śivāya* – to the all-auspicious; *śāntāya* – peaceful; *sattvāya* – the personification of material goodness; *pramṛḍāya* – the giver of pleasure; *ca* – and; *rajo-juṣe* – to him who is in contact with the mode of passion; *atha* – also; *ghorāya* – terrible; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *tubhyam* – to you; *tamo-juṣe* – who associates with the mode of ignorance.

TRANSLATION

Again and again I offer my obeisances unto you, O all-auspicious transcendental personality. As the lord of goodness you give pleasure, in contact with the mode of passion you appear most fearful, and you also associate with the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 10.18

sūta uvāca

*evam stutaḥ sa bhagavān
ādi-devaḥ satām gatiḥ
parituṣṭaḥ prasannātmā
prahasans tam abhāṣata*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *evam* – in these words; *stutaḥ* – praised; *saḥ* – he; *bhagavān* – the powerful Lord Śiva; *ādi-devaḥ* – the foremost of demigods; *satām* – of the saintly devotees; *gatiḥ* – the shelter; *parituṣṭaḥ* – perfectly satisfied; *prasanna-ātmā* – happy in his mind; *prahasan* – smiling; *tam* – to Mārkaṇḍeya; *abhāṣata* – spoke.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Lord Śiva, the foremost demigod and the shelter of the saintly devotees, was satisfied by Mārkaṇḍeya's praise. Pleased, he smiled and addressed the sage.

TEXT 10.19

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

*varam vṛṇīṣva naḥ kāmam
vara-deśā vayam trayaḥ
amogham darśanam yeṣām
martyo yad vindate 'mṛtam*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – Lord Śiva said; *varam* – a benediction; *vṛṇīṣva* – please choose; *naḥ* – from us; *kāmam* – as desired; *vara-da* – of all givers of benedictions; *īśāḥ* – the controlling lords; *vayam* – we; *trayaḥ* – three (Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara); *amogham* – never in vain; *darśanam* – the seeing; *yeṣām* – of whom; *martyaḥ* – a mortal being; *yad* – by which; *vindate* – achieves; *amṛtam* – immortality.

TRANSLATION

Lord Śiva said: Please ask me for some benediction, since among all givers of benedictions, we three – Brahmā, Viṣṇu and I – are the best. Seeing us never goes in vain, because simply by seeing

us a mortal achieves immortality.

TEXTS 10.20–21

*brāhmaṇāḥ sādavaḥ śāntā
niḥsaṅgā bhūta-vatsalāḥ
ekānta-bhaktā asmāsu
nirvairāḥ sama-darśinaḥ
sa-lokā loka-pālās tān
vandanty arcanty upāsate
aham ca bhagavān brahmā
svayaṁ ca harir īśvaraḥ*

brāhmaṇāḥ – *brāhmaṇas*; *sādavaḥ* – saintly in behavior; *śāntāḥ* – peaceful and free of envy and other bad qualities; *niḥsaṅgāḥ* – free of material association; *bhūta-vatsalāḥ* – compassionate to all living beings; *eka-anta-bhaktāḥ* – unalloyed devotees; *asmāsu* – of ourselves (Brahmā, Lord Śrī Hari and Śiva); *nirvairāḥ* – never hateful; *sama-darśinaḥ* – seeing equally; *sa-lokāḥ* – with the inhabitants of all the worlds; *loka-pālāḥ* – the rulers of the various planets; *tān* – those *brāhmaṇas*; *vandanti* – glorify; *arcanti* – worship; *upāsate* – assist; *aham* – I; *ca* – also; *bhagavān* – the great lord; *brahmā* – Brahmā; *svayam* – Himself; *ca* – also; *hariḥ* – Lord Hari; *īśvaraḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

The inhabitants and ruling demigods of all planets, along with Lord Brahmā, the Supreme Lord Hari and I, glorify, worship and assist those *brāhmaṇas* who are saintly, always peaceful, free of material attachment, compassionate to all living beings, purely devoted to us, devoid of hatred and endowed with equal vision.

TEXT 10.22

*na te mayy acyute 'je ca
bhidām aṇv api cakṣate
nātmanaś ca janasyāpi
tad yuṣmān vayam imahi*

na – do not; *te* – they; *mayi* – in me; *acyute* – in Lord Viṣṇu; *aje* – in Lord Brahmā; *ca* – and; *bhidām* – difference; *aṇu* – slight; *api* – even; *cakṣate* – see; *na* – not; *ātmanaḥ* – of themselves; *ca* – and; *janasya* – of other people; *api* – also; *tad* – therefore; *yuṣmān* – yourselves; *vayam* –

we; *īmahi* – worship.

TRANSLATION

These devotees do not differentiate between Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Brahmā and me, nor do they differentiate between themselves and other living beings. Therefore, because you are this kind of saintly devotee, we worship you.

PURPORT

Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva are, respectively, manifestations of the creating and annihilating potencies of the Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. Thus unity exists among these three ruling deities of the material world. One should not, on the basis of the modes of nature, find material duality within the ruling potency of the Supreme Lord, although that potency is manifested in three divisions as Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

TEXT 10.23

*na hy am-mayāni tīrthāni
na devāś cetanojjhitāḥ
te punanty uru-kālena
yūyaṁ darśana-mātrataḥ*

na – not; *hi* – indeed; *ap-mayāni* – consisting of sacred water; *tīrthāni* – holy places; *na* – not; *devāḥ* – deity forms of demigods; *cetana-ujjhitāḥ* – devoid of life; *te* – they; *punanti* – purify; *uru-kālena* – after a long time; *yūyam* – yourselves; *darśana-mātrataḥ* – simply by being seen.

TRANSLATION

Mere bodies of water do not constitute holy places, nor are lifeless statues of the demigods actual worshipable deities. Because external vision fails to appreciate the higher essence of the holy rivers and the demigods, these purify only after a considerable time. But devotees like you purify immediately, just by being seen.

TEXT 10.24

*brāhmaṇebhyo namasyāmo
ye 'smad-rūpaṁ trayī-mayam
bibhraty ātma-samādhāna-
tapaḥ-svādhyāya-saṁyamaiḥ*

brāhmaṇebhyaḥ – to the *brāhmaṇas*; *namasyāmaḥ* – we offer our respects; *ye* – who; *asmāt-rūpam* – the form of ourselves (Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu); *trayī-mayam* – represented by the three *Vedas*; *bibhrati* – carry; *ātma-samādhāna* – by meditative trance focused on the Self; *tapah* – by austerities; *svādhyāya* – by study; *saṁyamaiḥ* – and by following regulative principles.

TRANSLATION

By meditating upon the Supreme Soul, performing austerities, engaging in Vedic study and following regulative principles, the *brāhmaṇas* sustain within themselves the three Vedas, which are nondifferent from Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Brahmā and me. Therefore I offer my obeisances unto the *brāhmaṇas*.

PURPORT

A pure devotee of the Supreme Lord is considered the most elevated of *brāhmaṇas*, since all spiritual endeavor culminates in the loving service of God.

TEXT 10.25

śravaṇād darśanād vāpi
mahā-pātakino 'pi vaḥ
śudhyerann antya-jās cāpi
kim u sambhāṣaṇādibhiḥ

śravaṇāt – by hearing about; *darśanāt* – by seeing; *vā* – or; *api* – also; *mahā-pātakinaḥ* – those who commit the worst kinds of sins; *api* – even; *vaḥ* – you; *śudhyeran* – they become purified; *antya-jāḥ* – outcastes; *ca* – and; *api* – even; *kim u* – what to speak of; *sambhāṣaṇa-ādibhiḥ* – by directly speaking with, and so on.

TRANSLATION

Even the worst sinners and social outcastes are purified just by hearing about or seeing personalities like you. Imagine, then, how purified they become by directly speaking with you.

TEXT 10.26

sūta uvāca
iti candra-lalāmasya
dharmā-gaḥyopabṛṁhitam
vaco 'mṛtāyanam ṛṣir

nātrpyat karṇayoḥ piban

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *iti* – thus; *candra-lalāmasya* – of Lord Śiva, who is decorated with the moon; *dharma-guhya* – with the secret essence of religion; *upabṛmhitam* – filled; *vacaḥ* – the words; *amṛta-ayanam* – the reservoir of nectar; *ṛṣiḥ* – the sage; *na atrpyat* – did not feel satiated; *karṇayoḥ* – with his ears; *piban* – drinking.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Drinking with his ears Lord Śiva’s nectarean words, full of the confidential essence of religion, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi could not be satiated.

PURPORT

Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi was not eager to hear himself praised by Lord Śiva, but he appreciated Lord Śiva’s deep realization of religious principles and therefore desired to hear more.

TEXT 10.27

*sa ciraṁ māyayā viṣṇor
bhrāmitaḥ karśito bhr̥śam
śiva-vāg-amṛta-dhvasta-
kleśa-puñjas tam abravīt*

saḥ – he; *ciraṁ* – for a long time; *māyayā* – by the illusory energy; *viṣṇoḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu; *bhrāmitaḥ* – made to wander; *karśitaḥ* – exhausted; *bhr̥śam* – extremely; *śiva* – of Lord Śiva; *vāg-amṛta* – by the words of nectar; *dhvasta* – destroyed; *kleśa-puñjaḥ* – his heaps of suffering; *tam* – to him; *abravīt* – spoke.

TRANSLATION

Mārkaṇḍeya, having been forced by Lord Viṣṇu’s illusory energy to wander about for a long time in the water of dissolution, had become extremely exhausted. But Lord Śiva’s words of nectar vanquished his accumulated suffering. Thus he addressed Lord Śiva.

PURPORT

Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi had desired to see Lord Viṣṇu’s illusory energy and had suffered extensive miseries. But now, in the person of Śiva, Lord Viṣṇu again appeared before the sage and relieved all his suffering by imparting blissful spiritual instructions.

TEXT 10.28

śrī-mārkaṇḍeya uvāca

*aho īśvara-līleyaṁ
durvibhāvyā śarīriṇām
yan namantīśitavyāni
stuvanti jagad-īśvarāḥ*

śrī-mārkaṇḍeyaḥ uvāca – Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said; *aho* – ah; *īśvara* – of the great lords; *līlā* – the pastime; *iyam* – this; *durvibhāvyā* – inconceivable; *śarīriṇām* – for embodied souls; *yat* – since; *namanti* – they offer obeisances; *īśitavyāni* – to those who are controlled by them; *stuvanti* – they praise; *jagat-īśvarāḥ* – the rulers of the universe.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Mārkaṇḍeya said: It is indeed most difficult for embodied souls to understand the pastimes of the universal controllers, for such lords bow down to and offer praise to the very living beings they rule.

PURPORT

In the material world, conditioned souls strive to lord it over one another. Therefore they cannot understand the pastimes of the actual lords of the universe. Such bona fide lords have a wonderfully magnanimous mentality and thus sometimes bow down to the most qualified and saintly among their own subjects.

TEXT 10.29

*dharmam grāhayitum prāyaḥ
pravaktāraś ca dehinām
ācaranty anumodante
kriyamāṇam stuvanti ca*

dharmam – religion; *grāhayitum* – to cause the acceptance of; *prāyaḥ* – for the most part; *pravaktāraḥ* – the authorized speakers; *ca* – and; *dehinām* – for ordinary embodied souls; *ācaranti* – they act; *anumodante* – they encourage; *kriyamāṇam* – one who is executing; *stuvanti* – they praise; *ca* – also.

TRANSLATION

Generally it is to induce embodied souls to accept religious principles that the authorized teachers of religion exhibit ideal

behavior while encouraging and praising the proper behavior of others.

TEXT 10.30

*naitāvatā bhagavataḥ
sva-māyā-maya-vṛttibhiḥ
na duṣyetānubhāvas tair
māyinaḥ kuhakam̐ yathā*

na – not; *etāvatā* – by such (a show of humility); *bhagavataḥ* – of the Personality of Godhead; *sva-māyā* – of His own illusory energy; *maya* – consisting of; *vṛttibhiḥ* – by the activities; *na duṣyeta* – is not spoiled; *anubhāvaḥ* – the power; *taiḥ* – by them; *māyinaḥ* – of a magician; *kuhakam* – the tricks; *yathā* – just as.

TRANSLATION

This apparent humility is simply a show of mercy. Such behavior of the Supreme Lord and His personal associates, which the Lord effects by His own bewildering potency, does not spoil His power any more than a magician’s powers are diminished by his exhibition of tricks.

TEXTS 10.31–32

*sṛṣṭvedaṁ manasā viśvam
ātmanānupraviśya yaḥ
guṇaiḥ kurvadbhir ābhāti
karteva svapna-dṛg yathā

tasmai namo bhagavate
tri-guṇāya guṇātmane
kevalāyādvitīyāya
gurave brahma-mūrtaye*

sṛṣṭvā – creating; *idam* – this; *manasā* – by His mind, simply by His desire; *viśvam* – the universe; *ātmanā* – as the Supersoul; *anupraviśya* – subsequently entering; *yaḥ* – who; *guṇaiḥ* – by the modes of nature; *kurvadbhiḥ* – which are acting; *ābhāti* – appears; *kartā iva* – as if the doer; *svapna-dṛk* – a person who is seeing a dream; *yathā* – as; *tasmai* – unto Him; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *bhagavate* – unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tri-guṇāya* – who possesses the three modes of nature; *guṇa-ātmane* – who is the ultimate controller of the modes of nature; *kevalāya* – to the pure; *advitīyāya* – who has no equal; *gurave* –

the supreme spiritual master; *brahma-mūrtaye* – the personal form of the Absolute Truth.

TRANSLATION

I offer my obeisances to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has created this entire universe simply by His desire and then entered into it as the Supersoul. By making the modes of nature act, He seems to be the direct creator of this world, just as a dreamer seems to be acting within his dream. He is the owner and ultimate controller of the three modes of nature, yet He remains alone and pure, without any equal. He is the supreme spiritual master of all, the original personal form of the Absolute Truth.

PURPORT

The Supreme Lord releases His material potencies, and by their interaction creation takes place. The Lord remains aloof, as the supreme transcendental entity. Still, because the entire creation unfolds according to His design and will, His controlling hand is perceived within all things. People thus imagine that God is the direct builder of this world, although He remains aloof, creating through the manipulation of His multifarious potencies.

TEXT 10.33

*kam vṛṇe nu param bhūman
varam tvad vara-darśanāt
yad-darśanāt pūrṇa-kāmaḥ
satya-kāmaḥ pumān bhavet*

kam – what; *vṛṇe* – shall I choose; *nu* – indeed; *param* – other; *bhūman* – O all-pervading lord; *varam* – benediction; *tvad* – from you; *vara-darśanāt* – the sight of whom is itself the highest benediction; *yad* – of whom; *darśanāt* – from the seeing; *pūrṇa-kāmaḥ* – full in all desires; *satya-kāmaḥ* – able to achieve anything desired; *pumān* – a person; *bhavet* – becomes.

TRANSLATION

O all-pervading lord, since I have received the benediction of seeing you, what other benediction can I ask for? Simply by seeing you, a person fulfills all his desires and can achieve anything imaginable.

TEXT 10.34

*varam ekam vṛṇe 'thāpi
pūrṇāt kāmābhivarṣaṇāt
bhagavaty acyutām bhaktim
tat-pareṣu tathā tvayi*

varam – benediction; *ekam* – one; *vṛṇe* – I request; *atha api* – nevertheless; *pūrṇāt* – from him who is completely full; *kāma-abhivarṣaṇāt* – who showers down the fulfillment of desires; *bhagavati* – for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *acyutām* – infallible; *bhaktim* – devotional service; *tat-pareṣu* – for those who are dedicated to Him; *tathā* – and also; *tvayi* – for yourself.

TRANSLATION

But I do request one benediction from you, who are full of all perfection and able to shower down the fulfillment of all desires. I ask to have unfailing devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead and for His dedicated devotees, especially you.

PURPORT

The words *tat-pareṣu tathā tvayi* clearly indicate that Lord Śiva is a devotee of the Supreme Lord, not the Supreme Lord Himself. Because the representative of God is offered the same protocol as God Himself, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi addressed Lord Śiva as “lord” in previous verses. But now it is clearly revealed that, as stated throughout Vedic literature, Lord Śiva is an eternal servant of God and not God Himself.

Desire manifests itself within the mind and heart according to the subtle laws governing consciousness. Pure desire to engage in the loving service of the Lord brings one to the most exalted platform of consciousness, and such a perfect understanding of life is available only by the special mercy of the Lord’s devotees.

TEXT 10.35

*sūta uvāca
ity arcito 'bhiṣtutaś ca
muninā sūktayā girā
tam āha bhagavāñ charvaḥ
śarvayā cābhinanditaḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *iti* – in these words; *arcitaḥ* –

worshiped; *abhiṣṭutaḥ* – glorified; *ca* – and; *muninā* – by the sage; *su-uktayā* – well-spoken; *girā* – with words; *tam* – to him; *āha* – spoke; *bhagavān śarvaḥ* – Lord Śiva; *śarvayā* – by his consort, Śarvā; *ca* – and; *abhinanditaḥ* – encouraged.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Thus worshiped and glorified by the eloquent statements of the sage Mārkaṇḍeya, Lord Śarva [Śiva], encouraged by his consort, replied to him as follows.

TEXT 10.36

*kāmo maharṣe sarvo 'yam
bhaktimāns tvam adhokṣaje
ā-kalpāntād yaśaḥ puṇyam
ajarāmaratā tathā*

kāmaḥ – desire; *mahā-ṛṣe* – O great sage; *sarvaḥ* – all; *ayam* – this; *bhakti-mān* – full of devotion; *tvam* – you; *adhokṣaje* – for the transcendental Personality of Godhead; *ā-kalpa-antāt* – up until the end of the day of Brahmā; *yaśaḥ* – fame; *puṇyam* – pious; *ajara-amaratā* – freedom from old age and death; *tathā* – also.

TRANSLATION

O great sage, because you are devoted to Lord Adhokṣaja, all your desires will be fulfilled. Until the very end of this creation cycle, you will enjoy pious fame and freedom from old age and death.

TEXT 10.37

*jñānam trai-kālikam brahman
vijñānam ca viraktimat
brahma-varcasvino bhūyāt
purāṇācāryatāstu te*

jñānam – knowledge; *trai-kālikam* – of all three phases of time (past, present and future); *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*; *vijñānam* – transcendental realization; *ca* – also; *virakti-mat* – including renunciation; *brahma-varcasvinaḥ* – of him who is endowed with brahminical potency; *bhūyāt* – let there be; *purāṇa-ācāryatā* – the status of being a teacher of the *Purāṇas*; *astu* – may there be; *te* – of you.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇa, may you have perfect knowledge of past, present and future, along with transcendental realization of the Supreme, enriched by renunciation. You have the brilliance of an ideal brāhmaṇa, and thus may you achieve the post of spiritual master of the Purāṇas.

TEXT 10.38

sūta uvāca

*evam varān sa munaye
dattvāgāt try-akṣa īśvaraḥ
devyai tat-karma kathayann
anubhūtam purāmunā*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *evam* – in this way; *varān* – benedictions; *saḥ* – he; *munaye* – to the sage; *dattvā* – giving; *agāt* – went; *tri-akṣaḥ* – he who has three eyes; *īśvaraḥ* – Lord Śiva; *devyai* – to goddess Pārvatī; *tat-karma* – the activities of Mārkaṇḍeya; *kathayan* – recounting; *anubhūtam* – what was experienced; *purā* – before; *amunā* – by him, Mārkaṇḍeya.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Having thus granted Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi benedictions, Lord Śiva went on his way, continuing to describe to goddess Devī the accomplishments of the sage and the direct exhibition of the Lord’s illusory power that he had experienced.

TEXT 10.39

*so ’py avāpta-mahā-yoga-
mahimā bhārgavottamaḥ
vicaraty adhunāpy addhā
harāv ekāntatām gataḥ*

saḥ – he, Mārkaṇḍeya; *api* – indeed; *avāpta* – having achieved; *mahā-yoga* – of the topmost perfection of *yoga*; *mahimā* – the glories; *bhārgava-uttamaḥ* – the best descendant of Bhṛgu; *vicarati* – is traveling about; *adhunā api* – even today; *addhā* – directly; *harau* – for Lord Hari; *eka-antatām* – the platform of exclusive devotion; *gataḥ* – having attained.

TRANSLATION

Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, the best of the descendants of Bhṛgu, is glorious

because of his achievement of perfection in mystic yoga. Even today he travels about this world, fully absorbed in unalloyed devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 10.40

*anuvāṇitam etat te
mārkaṇḍeyasya dhīmataḥ
anubhūtam bhagavato
māyā-vaibhavam adbhutam*

anuvāṇitam – described; *etat* – this; *te* – to you; *mārkaṇḍeyasya* – by Mārkaṇḍeya; *dhī-mataḥ* – the intelligent; *anubhūtam* – experienced; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Personality of Godhead; *māyā-vaibhavam* – the opulence of the illusory energy; *adbhutam* – amazing.

TRANSLATION

I have thus narrated to you the activities of the highly intelligent sage Mārkaṇḍeya, especially how he experienced the amazing power of the Supreme Lord’s illusory energy.

TEXT 10.41

*etat kecid avidvāṁso
māyā-saṁsṛtiḥ ātmanaḥ
anādy-āvartitam nṛṇām
kāḍācitkam pracakṣate*

etat – this; *kecit* – some persons; *avidvāṁsaḥ* – who are not learned; *māyā-saṁsṛtiḥ* – the illusory creation; *ātmanaḥ* – of the Supreme Soul; *anādi* – from time immemorial; *āvartitam* – repeating; *nṛṇām* – of conditioned living beings; *kāḍācitkam* – unprecedented; *pracakṣate* – they say.

TRANSLATION

Although this event was unique and unprecedented, some unintelligent persons compare it to the cycle of illusory material existence the Supreme Lord has created for the conditioned souls – an endless cycle that has been continuing since time immemorial.

PURPORT

Mārkaṇḍeya’s being drawn into the Lord’s body by His inhalation and expelled again by His exhalation should not be considered a symbolic

description of the perennial cycles of material creation and annihilation. This portion of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes a real, historical event experienced by a great devotee of the Lord, and those trying to relegate this story to mere symbolic allegory are here declared to be unintelligent fools.

TEXT 10.42

*ya evam etad bhṛgu-varya varṇitam
rathāṅga-pāṇer anubhāva-bhāvitam
saṁśrāvayet saṁśṛṇuyād u tāv ubhau
tayor na karmāśaya-saṁsṛtir bhavet*

yaḥ – who; *evam* – thus; *etat* – this; *bhṛgu-varya* – O best of the descendants of Bhṛgu (Śaunaka); *varṇitam* – described; *ratha-aṅga-pāṇeḥ* – of Lord Śrī Hari, who carries a chariot wheel in His hand; *anubhāva* – with the potency; *bhāvitam* – infused; *saṁśrāvayet* – causes anyone to hear; *saṁśṛṇuyāt* – himself hears; *u* – or; *tau* – they; *ubhau* – both; *tayoḥ* – of them; *na* – not; *karma-āśaya* – based on the mentality of fruitive work; *saṁsṛtiḥ* – the cycle of material life; *bhavet* – there is.

TRANSLATION

O best of the Bhṛgus, this account concerning Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi conveys the transcendental potency of the Supreme Lord. Anyone who properly narrates or hears it will never again undergo material existence, which is based on the desire to perform fruitive activities.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Tenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Lord Śiva and Umā Glorify Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi.”

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Summary Description of the Mahāpuruṣa

In the context of worship, this chapter describes the Mahāpuruṣa and the various expansions of the sun in each month. Śrī Sūta first tells Śaunaka Ṛṣi about the material objects through which one can understand the major limbs, the secondary limbs, the weapons and the garments of Lord Śrī Hari. Then he outlines the process of practical service by which a mortal soul can attain immortality. When Śaunaka shows further interest in learning about the expansion of Lord Hari in the form of the sun-god, Sūta replies that Lord Śrī Hari – the indwelling controller of the universe and its original creator – manifests Himself in the form of the demigod of the sun. Sages describe this sun-god in many features according to his different material designations. To sustain the world, the Personality of Godhead manifests His potency of time as the sun and travels throughout the twelve months, beginning with Caitra, along with twelve sets of personal associates. One who remembers the opulences of the Personality of Godhead Śrī Hari in His form as the sun will become free of his sinful reactions.

TEXT 11.1

śrī-śaunaka uvāca

*athemam artham pṛcchāmo
bhavantam bahu-vittamam
samasta-tantra-rāddhānte
bhavān bhāgavata tattva-vit*

śrī-śaunakaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śaunaka said; *atha* – now; *imam* – this; *artham* – matter; *pṛcchāmaḥ* – we are inquiring about; *bhavantam* – from you; *bahu-vit-tamam* – the possessor of the broadest knowledge; *samasta* – of all; *tantra* – the scriptures prescribing practical methods of worship; *rāddha-ante* – in the definitive conclusions; *bhavān* – you; *bhāgavata* – O great devotee of the Supreme Lord; *tattva-vit* – the knower of the essential facts.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śaunaka said: O Sūta, you are the best of learned men and a great devotee of the Supreme Lord. Therefore we now inquire from you about the definitive conclusion of all tantra scriptures.

TEXTS 11.2–3

tāntrikāḥ paricaryāyām

*kevalasya śriyaḥ pateḥ
aṅgopāṅgāyudhākalpam
kalpayanti yathā ca yaiḥ
tan no varṇaya bhadrām te
kriyā-yogaṁ bubhutsatām
yena kriyā-naipuṇena
martyo yāyād amartyatām*

tāntrikāḥ – the followers of the methods of the tantric literatures; *paricaryāyām* – in regulated worship; *kevalasya* – who is pure spirit; *śriyaḥ* – of the goddess of fortune; *pateḥ* – of the master; *aṅga* – His limbs, such as His feet; *upāṅga* – His secondary limbs, such as associates like Garuḍa; *āyudha* – His weapons, such as the Sudarśana disc; *ākalpam* – and His ornaments, such as the Kaustubha gem; *kalpayanti* – they conceive of; *yathā* – how; *ca* – and; *yaiḥ* – by which (material representations); *tat* – that; *naḥ* – to us; *varṇaya* – please describe; *bhadrām* – all-auspiciousness; *te* – unto you; *kriyā-yogaṁ* – the practical method of cultivation; *bubhutsatām* – who are eager to learn; *yena* – by which; *kriyā* – in the systematic practice; *naipuṇena* – expertise; *martyaḥ* – a mortal being; *yāyāt* – may attain; *amartyatām* – immortality.

TRANSLATION

All good fortune to you! Please explain to us, who are very eager to learn, the process of kriyā-yoga practiced through regulated worship of the transcendental Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune. Please also explain how the Lord’s devotees conceive of His limbs, associates, weapons and ornaments in terms of particular material representations. By expertly worshiping the Supreme Lord, a mortal can attain immortality.

TEXT 11.4

*sūta uvāca
namaskṛtya gurūn vaksye
vibhūtīr vaiṣṇavīr api
yāḥ proktā veda-tantrābhyām
ācāryaiḥ padmajādibhiḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *namaskṛtya* – offering obeisances; *gurūn* – to the spiritual masters; *vaksye* – I shall speak; *vibhūtīḥ* – the

opulences; *vaiṣṇaviḥ* – belonging to Lord Viṣṇu; *api* – indeed; *yāḥ* – which; *proktāḥ* – are described; *veda-tantrābhyām* – by the *Vedas* and the *tantras*; *ācāryaiḥ* – by standard authorities; *padmaja-ādibhiḥ* – beginning with Lord Brahmā.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Offering obeisances to my spiritual masters, I shall repeat to you the description of the opulences of Lord Viṣṇu given in the Vedas and tantras by great authorities, beginning from lotus-born Brahmā.

TEXT 11.5

*māyādyair navabhis tattvaiḥ
sa vikāra-mayo virāṭ
nirmito dṛśyate yatra
sa-citke bhuvana-trayam*

māyā-ādyaiḥ – beginning with the unmanifest stage of nature; *navabhiḥ* – with the nine; *tattvaiḥ* – elements; *saḥ* – that; *vikāra-mayaḥ* – also comprising the transformations (of the eleven senses and the five gross elements); *virāṭ* – the universal form of the Lord; *nirmitaḥ* – constructed; *dṛśyate* – are seen; *yatra* – in which; *sa-citke* – being conscious; *bhuvana-trayam* – the three planetary systems.

TRANSLATION

The universal form [virāṭ] of the Personality of Godhead includes the nine basic elements of creation, starting with the unmanifest nature, and their subsequent transformations. Once this universal form is instilled with consciousness, the three planetary systems become visible within it.

PURPORT

The nine basic elements of creation are *prakṛti*, *sūtra*, *mahat-tattva*, false ego, and the five subtle perceptions. The transformations are the eleven senses and the five gross material elements.

TEXTS 11.6–8

*etad vai pauruṣaṁ rūpaṁ
bhūḥ pādau dyauḥ śiro nabhaḥ
nābhiḥ sūryo 'kṣiṇī nāse
vāyuḥ karṇau diśaḥ prabhoḥ*

*prajāpatiḥ prajānanam
apāno mṛtyur īsītuḥ
tad-bāhavo loka-pālā
manaś candro bhruvau yamaḥ*

*lajjottaro 'dharo lobho
dantā jyotsnā smayo bhramaḥ
romāṇi bhūruhā bhūmno
meghāḥ puruṣa-mūrdhajāḥ*

etat – this; *vai* – indeed; *pauruṣam* – of the Virāṭ-puruṣa; *rūpam* – the form; *bhūḥ* – the earth; *pādau* – His feet; *dyauḥ* – heaven; *śiraḥ* – His head; *nabhaḥ* – the sky; *nābhiḥ* – His navel; *sūryaḥ* – the sun; *akṣiṇī* – His eyes; *nāse* – His nostrils; *vāyuḥ* – the air; *karṇau* – His ears; *diśaḥ* – the directions; *prabhoḥ* – of the Supreme Lord; *prajā-patiḥ* – the demigod of procreation; *prajānanam* – His genitals; *apānaḥ* – His anus; *mṛtyuḥ* – death; *īsītuḥ* – of the absolute controller; *tad-bāhavaḥ* – His many arms; *loka-pālāḥ* – the presiding demigods of the various planets; *manaḥ* – His mind; *candraḥ* – the moon; *bhruvau* – His eyebrows; *yamaḥ* – the god of death; *lajjā* – shame; *uttaraḥ* – His upper lip; *adharaḥ* – His lower lip; *lobhaḥ* – greed; *dantāḥ* – His teeth; *jyotsnā* – the light of the moon; *smayaḥ* – His smile; *bhramaḥ* – delusion; *romāṇi* – the hairs of the body; *bhū-ruhāḥ* – the trees; *bhūmnaḥ* – of the almighty Lord; *meghāḥ* – the clouds; *puruṣa* – of the Virāṭ-puruṣa; *mūrdha-jāḥ* – the hairs upon the head.

TRANSLATION

This is the representation of the Supreme Lord as the universal person, in which the earth is His feet, the sky His navel, the sun His eyes, the wind His nostrils, the demigod of procreation His genitals, death His anus and the moon His mind. The heavenly planets are His head, the directions His ears, and the demigods protecting the various planets His many arms. The god of death is His eyebrows, shame His lower lip, greed His upper lip, delusion His smile, and moonshine His teeth, while the trees are the almighty Puruṣa's bodily hairs, and the clouds the hair on His head.

PURPORT

Various aspects of material creation, such as the earth, the sun and the trees, are sustained by various limbs of the universal body of the

Lord. Thus they are considered nondifferent from Him, as described in this verse, which is meant for meditation.

TEXT 11.9

*yāvān ayam vai puruṣo
yāvatyā samsthayā mitaḥ
tāvān asāv api mahā-
puruṣo loka-samsthayā*

yāvān – to which extent; *ayam* – this; *vai* – indeed; *puruṣaḥ* – ordinary individual person; *yāvatyā* – extending to which dimensions; *samsthayā* – by the position of his limbs; *mitaḥ* – measured; *tāvān* – to that extent; *asau* – He; *api* – also; *mahā-puruṣaḥ* – the transcendental personality; *loka-samsthayā* – according to the positions of the planetary systems.

TRANSLATION

Just as one can determine the dimensions of an ordinary person of this world by measuring his various limbs, one can determine the dimensions of the Mahāpuruṣa by measuring the arrangement of the planetary systems within His universal form.

TEXT 11.10

*kaustubha-vyapadeśena
svātma-jyotiḥ bibharti ajaḥ
tat-prabhā vyāpinī sākṣāt
śrīvatsam urasā vibhuḥ*

kaustubha-vyapadeśena – represented by the Kaustubha gem; *sva-ātma* – of the pure *jīva* soul; *jyotiḥ* – the spiritual light; *bibharti* – carries; *ajaḥ* – the unborn Lord; *tat-prabhā* – the effulgence of this (Kaustubha); *vyāpinī* – expansive; *sākṣāt* – directly; *śrīvatsam* – of the Śrīvatsa mark; *urasā* – upon His chest; *vibhuḥ* – the almighty.

TRANSLATION

Upon His chest the almighty, unborn Personality of Godhead bears the Kaustubha gem, which represents the pure spirit soul, along with the Śrīvatsa mark, which is the direct manifestation of this gem’s expansive effulgence.

TEXTS 11.11–12

sva-māyām vana-mālākhyām

*nānā-guṇa-mayīm dadhat
vāsaś chando-mayaṁ pītaṁ
brahma-sūtraṁ tri-ṽṛt svaram
bibharti sāṅkhyam yogam ca
devo makara-kunḍale
maulim padam pārameṣṭhyam
sarva-lokābhayaṅ-karam*

sva-māyām – His own material energy; *vana-mālā-ākhyām* – represented as His flower garland; *nānā-guṇa* – various combinations of the modes of nature; *mayīm* – composed of; *dadhat* – wearing; *vāsaḥ* – His garment; *chandaḥ-mayaṁ* – consisting of the Vedic meters; *pītaṁ* – yellow; *brahma-sūtraṁ* – His sacred thread; *tri-ṽṛt* – threefold; *svaram* – the sacred sound *omkāra*; *bibharti* – He carries; *sāṅkhyam* – the process of Sāṅkhya; *yogam* – the process of yoga; *ca* – and; *devaḥ* – the Lord; *makara-kunḍale* – His shark-shaped earrings; *maulim* – His crown; *padam* – the position; *pārameṣṭhyam* – supreme (of Lord Brahmā); *sarva-loka* – to all the worlds; *abhayaṁ* – fearlessness; *karam* – which gives.

TRANSLATION

His flower garland is His material energy, comprising various combinations of the modes of nature. His yellow garment is the Vedic meters, and His sacred thread the syllable om composed of three sounds. In the form of His two shark-shaped earrings, the Lord carries the processes of Sāṅkhya and yoga, and His crown, bestowing fearlessness on the inhabitants of all the worlds, is the supreme position of Brahmāloka.

TEXT 11.13

*avyākṛtam anantākhyam
āsanam yad-adhiṣṭitaḥ
dharma-jñānādibhir yuktam
sattvam padmam ihocyate*

avyākṛtam – the unmanifest phase of material creation; *ananta-ākhyam* – known as Lord Ananta; *āsanam* – His personal seat; *yad-adhiṣṭitaḥ* – upon which He is sitting; *dharma-jñāna-ādibhiḥ* – together with religion, knowledge and so on; *yuktam* – conjoined; *sattvam* – in the mode of goodness; *padmam* – His lotus; *iha* – thereupon; *ucyate* – is said.

TRANSLATION

Ananta, the Lord's sitting place, is the unmanifest phase of material nature, and the Lord's lotus throne is the mode of goodness, endowed with religion and knowledge.

TEXTS 11.14–15

*ojaḥ-saho-bala-yutam
mukhya-tattvam gadām dadhat
apām tattvam dara-varam
tejas-tattvam sudarśanam
nabho-nibham nabhas-tattvam
asim carma tamo-mayam
kāla-rūpam dhanuḥ śārṅgam
tathā karma-mayeṣudhim*

ojaḥ-sahaḥ-bala – with the power of the senses, the power of the mind and the power of the body; *yutam* – conjoined; *mukhya-tattvam* – the principle element, air, which is the vital force within the material body; *gadām* – His club; *dadhat* – carrying; *apām* – of water; *tattvam* – the element; *dara* – His conchshell; *varam* – excellent; *tejaḥ-tattvam* – the element fire; *sudarśanam* – His Sudarśana disc; *nabhaḥ-nibham* – just like the sky; *nabhaḥ-tattvam* – the element ether; *asim* – His sword; *carma* – His shield; *tamaḥ-mayam* – composed of the mode of ignorance; *kāla-rūpam* – appearing as time; *dhanuḥ* – His bow; *śārṅgam* – named Śārṅga; *tathā* – and; *karma-maya* – representing the active senses; *iṣu-dhim* – the quiver holding His arrows.

TRANSLATION

The club the Lord carries is the chief element, *prāṇa*, incorporating the potencies of sensory, mental and physical strength. His excellent conchshell is the element water, His Sudarśana disc the element fire, and His sword, pure as the sky, the element ether. His shield embodies the mode of ignorance, His bow, named Śārṅga, time, and His arrow-filled quiver the working sensory organs.

TEXT 11.16

*indriyāṇi śarān āhur
ākūtir asya syandanam
tan-mātrāṇy asyābhivyaktim*

mudrayārtha-kriyātmātām

indriyāṇi – the senses; *śarāṇ* – His arrows; *āhuḥ* – they say; *ākūṭiḥ* – (the mind with its) active functions; *asya* – of Him; *syandanam* – the chariot; *tat-mātrāṇi* – the objects of perception; *asya* – His; *abhivyaktim* – external appearance; *mudrayā* – by the gestures of His hands (symbolizing the giving of benedictions, the offering of fearlessness, and so on); *artha-kriyā-ātmātām* – the essence of purposeful activity.

TRANSLATION

His arrows are said to be the senses, and His chariot is the active, forceful mind. His external appearance is the subtle objects of perception, and the gestures of His hands are the essence of all purposeful activity.

PURPORT

All activity is ultimately aimed at the supreme perfection of life, and this perfection is awarded by the merciful hands of the Lord. The gestures of the Lord remove all fear from the heart of a devotee and elevate him to the Lord's own association in the spiritual sky.

TEXT 11.17

*maṇḍalam deva-yajanam
dikṣā saṁskāra ātmanaḥ
paricaryā bhagavata
ātmano durita-kṣayaḥ*

maṇḍalam – the sun globe; *deva-yajanam* – the place where the Supreme Lord is worshiped; *dikṣā* – spiritual initiation; *saṁskāraḥ* – the process of purification; *ātmanaḥ* – for the spirit soul; *paricaryā* – devotional service; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Personality of Godhead; *ātmanaḥ* – for the *jīva* soul; *durita* – of sinful reactions; *kṣayaḥ* – the destruction.

TRANSLATION

The sun globe is the place where the Supreme Lord is worshiped, spiritual initiation is the means of purification for the spirit soul, and rendering devotional service to the Personality of Godhead is the process for eradicating all one's sinful reactions.

PURPORT

One should meditate on the fiery sun globe as a place where God is

worshiped. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all effulgence, and thus it is fitting that He be properly worshiped on the glowing sun.

TEXT 11.18

*bhagavān bhaga-śabdārtham
līlā-kamalam udvahan
dharmam yaśaś ca bhagavānś
cāmara-vyajane 'bhajat*

bhagavān – the Personality of Godhead; *bhaga-śabda* – of the word *bhaga*; *artham* – the meaning (namely, “opulence”); *līlā-kamalam* – His pastime lotus; *udvahan* – carrying; *dharmam* – religion; *yaśaḥ* – fame; *ca* – and; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *cāmara-vyajane* – the pair of yak-tail fans; *abhajat* – has accepted.

TRANSLATION

Playfully carrying a lotus, which represents the various opulences designated by the word bhaga, the Supreme Lord accepts service from a pair of cāmara fans, which are religion and fame.

TEXT 11.19

*ātapatram tu vaikunṭham
dvijā dhāmākuto-bhayam
tri-vṛd vedaḥ suparṇākhyo
yajñam vahati pūruṣam*

ātapatram – His umbrella; *tu* – and; *vaikunṭham* – His spiritual abode, Vaikunṭha; *dvijāḥ* – O *brāhmaṇas*; *dhāma* – His personal abode, the spiritual world; *akutaḥ-bhayam* – free from fear; *tri-vṛt* – threefold; *vedaḥ* – the *Veda*; *suparṇa-ākhyāḥ* – named Suparṇa, or Garuḍa; *yajñam* – sacrifice personified; *vahati* – carried; *pūruṣam* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇas, the Lord’s umbrella is His spiritual abode, Vaikunṭha, where there is no fear, and Garuḍa, who carries the Lord of sacrifice, is the threefold Veda.

TEXT 11.20

*anapāyinī bhagavatī
śrīḥ sākṣād ātmano hareḥ*

*viṣvaksenas tantra-mūrtir
viditaḥ pārṣadādhīpaḥ
nandādayo 'ṣtau dvāḥ-sthāś ca
te 'ṇimādyā harer guṇāḥ*

anapāyini – inseparable; *bhagavati* – the goddess of fortune; *śrīḥ* – Śrī; *sākṣāt* – directly; *ātmanaḥ* – of the internal nature; *hareḥ* – of Lord Hari; *viṣvaksenaḥ* – Viṣvaksena; *tantra-mūrtiḥ* – as the personification of the *tantra* scriptures; *viditaḥ* – is known; *pārṣada-adhīpaḥ* – the chief of His personal associates; *nanda-ādayaḥ* – Nanda and the others; *aṣṭau* – the eight; *dvāḥ-sthāḥ* – doorkeepers; *ca* – and; *te* – they; *aṇimā-ādyāḥ* – *aṇimā* and the other mystic perfections; *hareḥ* – of the Supreme Lord; *guṇāḥ* – the qualities.

TRANSLATION

The goddess of fortune, Śrī, who never leaves the Lord's side, appears with Him in this world as the representation of His internal potency. Viṣvaksena, the chief among His personal associates, is known to be the personification of the Pañcarātra and other tantras. And the Lord's eight doorkeepers, headed by Nanda, are His mystic perfections, beginning with aṇimā.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the goddess of fortune is the original source of all material opulence. Material nature is directly controlled by the Lord's inferior energy, Mahā-māyā, whereas the goddess of fortune is His internal, superior energy. Still, the opulence of the Lord's inferior nature has its source in the supreme spiritual opulence of the goddess of fortune. As stated in *Śrī Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*:

*paramātmā harir devas
tac-chaktiḥ śrīr ihoditā
śrīr devī prakṛtiḥ proktā
keśavaḥ puruṣaḥ smṛtaḥ
na viṣṇunā vinā devī
na hariḥ padmajām vinā*

“The Supreme Soul is Lord Hari, and His potency is known in this world as Śrī. Goddess Śrī is known as *prakṛti*, and the Supreme Lord Keśava is known as the *puruṣa*. The divine goddess is never present without Him, nor does He ever appear without her.”

Also, *Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1.8.15) states:

*nityaiva sā jagan-mātā
viṣṇoḥ śrīr anapāyinī
yathā sarva-gato viṣṇus
tathaiveyaṁ dvijottamāḥ*

“She is the eternal mother of the universe, the goddess of fortune of Lord Viṣṇu, and she is never separated from Him. In the same way that Lord Viṣṇu is present everywhere, so is she, O best of *brāhmaṇas*.”

Also in *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1.9.140):

*evaṁ yathā jagat-svāmī
deva-devo janārdanaḥ
avatāraṁ karoty eva
tathā śrīs tat-sahāyinī*

“Thus, in the same way that the Lord of the universe, the God of gods, Janārdana, descends to this world, so His consort, the goddess of fortune, does also.”

The pure spiritual status of the goddess of fortune is described in the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

*aparaṁ tv akṣaraṁ yā sā
prakṛtir jaḍa-rūpikā
śrīḥ parā prakṛtiḥ proktā
cetanā viṣṇu-saṁśrayā
taṁ akṣaraṁ paraṁ prāhuḥ
parataḥ param akṣaram
harir evākhila-guṇo 'py
akṣara-trayam īritam*

“The inferior infallible entity is that nature who manifests as the material world. The goddess of fortune, on the other hand, is known as the superior nature. She is pure consciousness and is under the direct shelter of Lord Viṣṇu. While she is said to be the superior infallible entity, that infallible entity who is greater than the greatest is Lord Hari Himself, the original possessor of all transcendental qualities. In this way, three distinct infallible entities are described.”

Thus, although the inferior energy of the Lord is infallible in her function, her power to manifest temporary illusory opulences exists by

the grace of the internal energy, the goddess of fortune, who is the personal consort of the Supreme Lord.

The *Padma Purāṇa* (256.9–21) lists eighteen doorkeepers of the Lord: Nanda, Sunanda, Jaya, Vijaya, Caṇḍa, Pracaṇḍa, Bhadra, Subhadra, Dhātā, Vidhātā, Kumuda, Kumudākṣa, Pundarikṣa, Vāmana, Śaṅkukarṇa, Sarvanetra, Sumukha and Supratiṣṭhita.

TEXT 11.21

*vāsudevaḥ saṅkarṣaṇaḥ
pradyumnaḥ puruṣaḥ svayam
aniruddha iti brahman
mūrti-vyūho 'bhidhīyate*

vāsudevaḥ saṅkarṣaṇaḥ pradyumnaḥ – Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Pradyumna; *puruṣaḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *svayam* – Himself; *aniruddhaḥ* – Aniruddha; *iti* – thus; *brahman* – O brāhmaṇa, Śaunaka; *mūrti-vyūhaḥ* – the expansion of personal forms; *abhidhīyate* – is designated.

TRANSLATION

Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha are the names of the direct personal expansions of the Supreme Godhead, O brāhmaṇa Śaunaka.

TEXT 11.22

*sa viśvas taijasaḥ prājñas
turīya iti vṛttibhiḥ
arthendriyāśaya-jñānair
bhagavān paribhāvīyate*

saḥ – He; *viśvaḥ taijasaḥ prājñas* – the manifestations of waking consciousness, sleep and deep sleep; *turīyaḥ* – the fourth, transcendental stage; *iti* – thus termed; *vṛttibhiḥ* – by the functions; *artha* – by the external objects of perception; *indriya* – the mind; *āśaya* – covered consciousness; *jñānair* – and spiritual knowledge; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *paribhāvīyate* – is conceived of.

TRANSLATION

One can conceive of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in terms of awakened consciousness, sleep and deep sleep – which function respectively through external objects, the mind and

material intelligence – and also in terms of the fourth, transcendental level of consciousness, which is characterized by pure knowledge.

TEXT 11.23

*aṅgopāṅgāyudhākālpair
bhagavāṁs tac catuṣṭayam
bibharti sma catur-mūrtir
bhagavān hariḥ īśvaraḥ*

aṅga – with His major limbs; *upāṅga* – minor limbs; *āyudha* – weapons; *ākālpaiḥ* – and ornaments; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *tac catuṣṭayam* – these four manifestations (of *viśva*, *taijasa*, *prājña* and *turīya*); *bibharti* – maintains; *sma* – indeed; *catuḥ-mūrtiḥ* – in His four personal features (Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha); *bhagavān* – the Lord; *hariḥ* – Hari; *īśvaraḥ* – the supreme controller.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, thus appears in four personal expansions, each exhibiting major limbs, minor limbs, weapons and ornaments. Through these distinct features, the Lord maintains the four phases of existence.

PURPORT

The Lord’s spiritual body, weapons, ornaments and associates are all pure transcendental existence, identical with Him.

TEXT 11.24

*dvija-ṛṣabha sa eṣa brahma-yoniḥ svayam-dṛk
sva-mahima-paripūrṇo māyayā ca svayaitat
srjati harati pātīty ākhyayānāvṛtākṣo
vivṛta iva niruktas tat-parair ātma-labhyaḥ*

dvija-ṛṣabha – O best of the *brāhmaṇas*; *saḥ eṣaḥ* – He alone; *brahma-yoniḥ* – the source of the *Vedas*; *svayam-dṛk* – who is self-illuminating; *sva-mahima* – in His own glory; *paripūrṇaḥ* – perfectly complete; *māyayā* – by the material energy; *ca* – and; *svayā* – His own; *etat* – this universe; *srjati* – He creates; *harati* – He withdraws; *pātī* – He maintains; *iti ākhyayā* – conceived of as such; *anāvṛta* – uncovered; *akṣaḥ* – His transcendental awareness; *vivṛtaḥ* – materially divided; *iva* – as if; *niruktaḥ* – described; *tat-paraiḥ* – by those who are devoted to

Him; *ātma* – as their very Soul; *labhyaḥ* – realizable.

TRANSLATION

O best of brāhmaṇas, He alone is the self-luminous, original source of the Vedas, perfect and complete in His own glory. By His material energy He creates, destroys and maintains this entire universe. Because He is the performer of various material functions, He is sometimes described as materially divided, yet He always remains transcendently situated in pure knowledge. Those who are dedicated to Him in devotion can realize Him to be their true Soul.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura recommends that we become humble by practicing the following meditation: “The earth, which is always visible to me, is the expansion of the lotus feet of my Lord, who is always to be meditated upon. All moving and nonmoving living beings have taken shelter of the earth and are thus sheltered at the lotus feet of my Lord. For this reason I should respect every living being and not envy anyone. In fact, all living entities constitute the Kaustubha gem on My Lord’s chest. Therefore I should never envy or deride any living entity.” By practicing this meditation one can achieve success in life.

TEXT 11.25

*śrī-kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa-sakha vṛṣṇy-ṛṣabhāvani-dhruk-
rājanya-varṁśa-dahanānapavarga-vīrya
govinda gopa-vanitā-vraja-bhṛtya-gīta
tīrtha-śravaḥ śravaṇa-maṅgala pāhi bhṛtyān*

śrī-kṛṣṇa – O Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *kṛṣṇa-sakha* – O friend of Arjuna; *vṛṣṇi* – of the descendants of Vṛṣṇi; *ṛṣabha* – O chief; *avani* – on the earth; *dhruk* – rebellious; *rājanya-varṁśa* – of the dynasties of kings; *dahana* – O annihilator; *anapavarga* – without deterioration; *vīrya* – whose prowess; *govinda* – O proprietor of Goloka-dhāma; *gopa* – of the cowherd men; *vanitā* – and the cowherd women; *vraja* – by the multitude; *bhṛtya* – and by their servants; *gīta* – sung; *tīrtha* – pious, as the most holy place of pilgrimage; *śravaḥ* – whose glories; *śravaṇa* – just to hear about whom; *maṅgala* – auspicious; *pāhi* – please protect; *bhṛtyān* – Your servants.

TRANSLATION

O Kṛṣṇa, O friend of Arjuna, O chief among the descendants of Vṛṣṇi, You are the destroyer of those political parties that are disturbing elements on this earth. Your prowess never deteriorates. You are the proprietor of the transcendental abode, and Your most sacred glories, which are sung by Vṛndāvana's cowherd men and women and their servants, bestow all auspiciousness just by being heard. O Lord, please protect Your devotees.

TEXT 11.26

*ya idam kalya utthāya
mahā-puruṣa-lakṣaṇam
tac-cittaḥ prayato japtvā
brahma veda guhāśayam*

yaḥ – anyone who; *idam* – this; *kalye* – at dawn; *utthāya* – rising; *mahā-puruṣa-lakṣaṇam* – the characteristics of the Supreme Personality in His universal form; *tac-cittaḥ* – with mind absorbed in Him; *prayataḥ* – purified; *japtvā* – chanting to oneself; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *veda* – he comes to know; *guhāśayam* – situated within the heart.

TRANSLATION

Anyone who rises early in the morning and, with a purified mind fixed upon the Mahāpuruṣa, quietly chants this description of His characteristics will realize Him as the Supreme Absolute Truth residing within the heart.

TEXTS 11.27–28

*śrī-śaunaka uvāca
śuko yad āha bhagavān
viṣṇu-rātāya śṛṇvate
sauro gaṇo māsī māsī
nānā vasati saptakaḥ
teṣāṃ nāmāni karmāṇi
niyuktānām adhiśvaraiḥ
brūhi naḥ śraddadhānānām
vyūhaṃ sūryātmano hareḥ*

śrī-śaunakaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śaunaka said; *śukaḥ* – Śukadeva Gosvāmī; *yat*

– which; *āha* – described; *bhagavān* – the great sage; *viṣṇu-rātāya* – to King Parīkṣit; *śṛṅvate* – who was listening; *sauraḥ* – of the sun-god; *gaṇaḥ* – the associates; *māsi māsi* – in each month; *nānā* – various; *vasati* – who reside; *saptakaḥ* – the group of seven; *teṣām* – of them; *nāmāni* – the names; *karmāṇi* – the activities; *niyuktānām* – who are engaged; *adhīśvaraiḥ* – by the various features of the sun-god, who are their controllers; *brūhi* – please speak; *naḥ* – to us; *śraddadhānānām* – who are faithful; *vyūham* – the personal expansions; *sūrya-ātmanaḥ* – in His personal expansion as the sun-god; *hareḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śaunaka said: Please describe to us, who have great faith in your words, the different sets of seven personal features and associates the sun-god exhibits during each month, along with their names and activities. The associates of the sun-god, who serve their lord, are personal expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari in His feature as the presiding deity of the sun.

PURPORT

After hearing an account of the exalted conversation between Śukadeva Gosvāmī and Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Śaunaka now inquires about the sun as the expansion of the Supreme Lord. Although the sun is the king of all planets, Śrī Śaunaka is specifically interested in this effulgent globe as the expansion of Śrī Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The personalities related with the sun are of seven categories. In the course of the sun’s orbit there are twelve months, and in each month a different sun-god and a different set of his six associates preside. In each of the twelve months beginning from Vaiśākha there are different names for the sun-god himself, the sage, the Yakṣa, the Gandharva, the Apsarā, the Rākṣasa and the Nāga, making a total of seven categories.

TEXT 11.29

sūta uvāca

*anādy-avidyayā viṣṇor
ātmanaḥ sarva-dehinām*

*nirmīto loka-tantro 'yaṁ
lokeṣu parivartate*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *anādi* – beginningless; *avidyayā* – by the illusory energy; *viṣṇoḥ* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *ātmanaḥ* – who is the Supreme Soul; *sarva-dehinām* – of all embodied living beings; *nirmītaḥ* – produced; *loka-tantraḥ* – the regulator of the planets; *ayaṁ* – this; *lokeṣu* – among the planets; *parivartate* – travels.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: The sun travels among all the planets and thus regulates their movements. It has been created by Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Soul of all embodied beings, through His beginningless material energy.

TEXT 11.30

*eka eva hi lokānām
sūrya ātmādi-kṛd hariḥ
sarva-veda-kriyā-mūlam
ṛṣibhir bahudhōditaḥ*

ekaḥ – one; *eva* – only; *hi* – indeed; *lokānām* – of the worlds; *sūryaḥ* – the sun; *ātmā* – their soul; *ādi-kṛt* – the original creator; *hariḥ* – the Personality of Godhead, Hari; *sarva-veda* – in all the Vedas; *kriyā* – of the ritualistic activities; *mūlam* – the basis; *ṛṣibhiḥ* – by the sages; *bahudhā* – variously; *uditaḥ* – designated.

TRANSLATION

The sun-god, being nondifferent from Lord Hari, is the one soul of all the worlds and their original creator. He is the source of all the ritualistic activities prescribed in the Vedas and has been given many names by the Vedic sages.

TEXT 11.31

*kālo deśaḥ kriyā kartā
karaṇam kāryam āgamaḥ
dravyam phalam iti brahman
navadhokto 'jayā hariḥ*

kālaḥ – time; *deśaḥ* – place; *kriyā* – endeavor; *kartā* – performer; *karaṇam* – instrument; *kāryam* – specific ritual; *āgamaḥ* – scripture; *dravyam* – paraphernalia; *phalam* – result; *iti* – thus; *brahman* – O

brāhmaṇa, Śaunaka; *navadhā* – in nine phases; *uktaḥ* – described; *ajayā* – in terms of the material energy; *hariḥ* – Lord Hari.

TRANSLATION

Being the source of the material energy, the Personality of Godhead Lord Hari in His expansion as the sun-god is described in nine aspects, O Śaunaka: the time, the place, the endeavor, the performer, the instrument, the specific ritual, the scripture, the paraphernalia of worship and the result to be achieved.

TEXT 11.32

*madhv-ādiṣu dvādaśasu
bhagavān kāla-rūpa-dhṛk
loka-tantrāya carati
pṛthag dvādaśabhir gaṇaiḥ*

madhu-ādiṣu – beginning with Madhu; *dvādaśasu* – in the twelve (months); *bhagavān* – the Supreme Lord; *kāla-rūpa* – the form of time; *dhṛk* – assuming; *loka-tantrāya* – to regulate planetary motion; *carati* – travels; *pṛthag* – separately; *dvādaśabhiḥ* – with twelve; *gaṇaiḥ* – sets of associates.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, manifesting His potency of time as the sun-god, travels about in each of the twelve months, beginning with Madhu, to regulate planetary motion within the universe. Traveling with the sun-god in each of the twelve months is a different set of six associates.

TEXT 11.33

*dhātā kṛtasthalī hetir
vāsukī rathakṛt mune
pulastyas tumburur iti
madhu-māsam nayanty amī*

dhātā kṛtasthalī hetih – Dhātā, Kṛtasthalī and Heti; *vāsukih rathakṛt* – Vāsuki and Rathakṛt; *mune* – O sage; *pulastyah tumburuh* – Pulastya and Tumburu; *iti* – thus; *madhu-māsam* – the month of Madhu (Caitra, at the time of the spring equinox); *nayanti* – lead forth; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

My dear sage, Dhātā as the sun-god, Kṛtasthalī as the Apsarā,

Heti as the Rākṣasa, Vāsuki as the Nāga, Rathakṛt as the Yakṣa, Pulastya as the sage and Tumburu as the Gandharva rule the month of Madhu.

TEXT 11.34

*aryamā pulaho 'thaujāḥ
prahetiḥ puñjikasthalī
nāradaḥ kacchanīraś ca
nayanty ete sma mādham*

aryamā pulahaḥ athaujāḥ – Aryamā, Pulaha and Athaujā; *prahetiḥ puñjikasthalī* – Praheti and Puñjikasthalī; *nāradaḥ kacchanīraḥ* – Nārada and Kacchanīra; *ca* – also; *nayanti* – rule; *ete* – these; *sma* – indeed; *mādham* – the month of Mādham (Vaiśākhā).

TRANSLATION

Aryamā as the sun-god, Pulaha as the sage, Athaujā as the Yakṣa, Praheti as the Rākṣasa, Puñjikasthalī as the Apsarā, Nārada as the Gandharva and Kacchanīra as the Nāga rule the month of Mādham.

TEXT 11.35

*mitro 'triḥ pauruṣeyo 'tha
takṣako menakā hahāḥ
rathasvana iti hy ete
śukra-māsam nayanty amī*

mitraḥ atriḥ pauruṣeyaḥ – Mitra, Atri and Pauruṣeya; *atha* – as well; *takṣakaḥ menakā hahāḥ* – Takṣaka, Menakā and Hāhā; *rathasvanaḥ* – Rathasvana; *iti* – thus; *hi* – indeed; *ete* – these; *śukra-māsam* – the month of Śukra (Jyaiṣṭhā); *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Mitra as the sun-god, Atri as the sage, Pauruṣeya as the Rākṣasa, Takṣaka as the Nāga, Menakā as the Apsarā, Hāhā as the Gandharva and Rathasvana as the Yakṣa rule the month of Śukra.

TEXT 11.36

*vasiṣṭho varuṇo rambhā
sahajanyas tathā huhūḥ
śukraś citrasvanaś caiva*

śuci-māsam nayanty amī

vasiṣṭhaḥ varuṇaḥ rambhā – Vasiṣṭha, Varuṇa and Rambhā; *sahajanyaḥ* – Sahajanya; *tathā* – also; *huhūḥ* – Hūhū; *śukraḥ citrasvanaḥ* – Śukra and Citrasvana; *ca eva* – as well; *śuci-māsam* – the month of Śuci (Āṣāḍha); *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Vasiṣṭha as the sage, Varuṇa as the sun-god, Rambhā as the Apsarā, Sahajanya as the Rākṣasa, Hūhū as the Gandharva, Śukra as the Nāga and Citrasvana as the Yakṣa rule the month of Śuci.

TEXT 11.37

indro viśvāvasuḥ śrotā
elāpatras tathāṅgirāḥ
pramlocā rākṣaso varyo
nabho-māsam nayanty amī

indraḥ viśvāvasuḥ śrotāḥ – Indra, Viśvāvasu and Śrotā; *elāpatraḥ* – Elāpatra; *tathā* – and; *āṅgirāḥ* – Aṅgirā; *pramlocā* – Pramlocā; *rākṣasaḥ varyaḥ* – the Rākṣasa named Varya; *nabhaḥ-māsam* – the month of Nabhas (Śrāvaṇa); *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Indra as the sun-god, Viśvāvasu as the Gandharva, Śrotā as the Yakṣa, Elāpatra as the Nāga, Aṅgirā as the sage, Pramlocā as the Apsarā and Varya as the Rākṣasa rule the month of Nabhas.

TEXT 11.38

vivasvān ugrasenaś ca
vyāghra āsāraṇo bhṛguḥ
anumlocā śaṅkhapālo
nabhasyākhyam nayanty amī

vivasvān ugrasenaḥ – Vivasvān and Ugrasena; *ca* – also; *vyāghraḥ āsāraṇaḥ bhṛguḥ* – Vyāghra, Āsāraṇa and Bhṛgu; *anumlocā śaṅkhapālaḥ* – Anumlocā and Śaṅkhapāla; *nabhasya-ākhyam* – the month named Nabhasya (Bhādra); *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Vivasvān as the sun-god, Ugrasena as the Gandharva, Vyāghra as the Rākṣasa, Āsāraṇa as the Yakṣa, Bhṛgu as the sage, Anumlocā

as the Apsarā and Śaṅkhapāla as the Nāga rule the month of Nabhasya.

TEXT 11.39

*pūṣā dhanañjayo vātaḥ
suṣeṇaḥ surucis tathā
ghṛtācī gautamaś ceti
tapo-māsaṁ nayanty amī*

pūṣā dhanañjayaḥ vātaḥ – Pūṣā, Dhanañjaya and Vāta; *suṣeṇaḥ suruciḥ* – Suṣeṇa and Suruci; *tathā* – also; *ghṛtācī gautamaḥ* – Ghṛtācī and Gautama; *ca* – as well; *iti* – thus; *tapo-māsam* – the month of Tapas (Māgha); *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Pūṣā as the sun-god, Dhanañjaya as the Nāga, Vāta as the Rākṣasa, Suṣeṇa as the Gandharva, Suruci as the Yakṣa, Ghṛtācī as the Apsarā and Gautama as the sage rule the month of Tapas.

TEXT 11.40

*ṛtur varcā bharadvājaḥ
parjanyaḥ senajit tathā
viśva airāvataś caiva
tapasyākhyam nayanty amī*

ṛtuḥ varcā bharadvājaḥ – Ṛtu, Varcā and Bharadvāja; *parjanyaḥ senajit* – Parjanya and Senajit; *tathā* – also; *viśvaḥ airāvataḥ* – Viśva and Airāvata; *ca eva* – also; *tapasya-ākhyam* – the month known as Tapasya (Phālguna); *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Ṛtu as the Yakṣa, Varcā as the Rākṣasa, Bharadvāja as the sage, Parjanya as the sun-god, Senajit as the Apsarā, Viśva as the Gandharva and Airāvata as the Nāga rule the month known as Tapasya.

TEXT 11.41

*athāṁśuḥ kaśyapas tārksya
ṛtasenas tathorvaśī
vidyucchatrur mahāśaṅkhaḥ
saho-māsaṁ nayanty amī*

atha – then; *aṁśuḥ kaśyapaḥ tārksyaḥ* – Aṁśu, Kaśyapa and Tārksya; *ṛtasenaḥ* – Ṛtasena; *tathā* – and; *urvaśī* – Urvaśī; *vidyucchatruḥ mahāśaṅkhaḥ* – Vidyucchatru and Mahāśaṅkha; *sahaḥ-māsam* – the month of Sahas (Mārgaśīrṣa); *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Aṁśu as the sun-god, Kaśyapa as the sage, Tārksya as the Yakṣa, Ṛtasena as the Gandharva, Urvaśī as the Apsarā, Vidyucchatru as the Rākṣasa and Mahāśaṅkha as the Nāga rule the month of Sahas.

TEXT 11.42

bhagaḥ sphūrjaḥ ariṣṭanemir
ūrṇa āyus ca pañcamaḥ
karkoṭakaḥ pūrvacittiḥ
puṣya-māsam nayanti amī

bhagaḥ sphūrjaḥ ariṣṭanemiḥ – Bhaga, Sphūrja and Ariṣṭanemi; *ūrṇaḥ* – Ūrṇa; *āyuh* – Āyur; *ca* – and; *pañcamaḥ* – the fifth associate; *karkoṭakaḥ pūrvacittiḥ* – Karkoṭaka and Pūrvacitti; *puṣya-māsam* – the month of Puṣya; *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Bhaga as the sun-god, Sphūrja as the Rākṣasa, Ariṣṭanemi as the Gandharva, Ūrṇa as the Yakṣa, Āyur as the sage, Karkoṭaka as the Nāga and Pūrvacitti as the Apsarā rule the month of Puṣya.

TEXT 11.43

tvaṣṭā ṛcika-tanayaḥ
kambalaś ca tilottamā
brahmāpeto 'tha satajid
dhṛtarāṣṭra iṣam-bharāḥ

tvaṣṭā – Tvaṣṭā; *ṛcika-tanayaḥ* – the son of Ṛcika (Jamadagni); *kambalaḥ* – Kambala; *ca* – and; *tilottamā* – Tilottamā; *brahmāpetah* – Brahmāpeta; *atha* – and; *śatajit* – Śatajit; *dhṛtarāṣṭraḥ* – Dhṛtarāṣṭra; *iṣam-bharāḥ* – the maintainers of the month Iṣa (Āśvina).

TRANSLATION

Tvaṣṭā as the sun-god; Jamadagni, the son of Ṛcika, as the sage; Kambalāśva as the Nāga; Tilottamā as the Apsarā; Brahmāpeta as the Rākṣasa; Śatajit as the Yakṣa; and Dhṛtarāṣṭra as the

Gandharva maintain the month of Iṣa.

TEXT 11.44

*viṣṇur aśvataro rambhā
sūryavarcāś ca satyajit
viśvāmitro makhāpeta
ūrja-māsam nayanty amī*

viṣṇuḥ aśvatareḥ rambhā – Viṣṇu, Aśvatara and Rambhā; *sūryavarcāḥ* – Sūryavarcā; *ca* – and; *satyajit* – Satyajit; *viśvāmitraḥ makhāpetaḥ* – Viśvāmitra and Makhāpeta; *ūrja-māsam* – the month of Ūrja (Kārttika); *nayanti* – rule; *amī* – these.

TRANSLATION

Viṣṇu as the sun-god, Aśvatara as the Nāga, Rambhā as the Apsarā, Sūryavarcā as the Gandharva, Satyajit as the Yakṣa, Viśvāmitra as the sage and Makhāpeta as the Rākṣasa rule the month of Ūrja.

PURPORT

All these sun-gods and their associates are mentioned in divisions in the *Kūrma Purāṇa*, as follows:

*dhātāryamā ca mitraś ca
varuṇaś cendra eva ca
vivasvān atha pūṣā ca
parjanyaś cāmśur eva ca*

*bhagas tvaṣṭā ca viṣṇuś ca
ādityā dvādaśa smṛtāḥ
pulastyah pulahaś cātrir
vasiṣṭo 'thāṅgirā bhṛguḥ*

*gautamo 'tha bharadvājaḥ
kaśyapaḥ kratuḥ eva ca
jamadagniḥ kauśikaś ca
munayo brahma-vādināḥ*

*rathakṛc cāpy athojāś ca
grāmaṇiḥ surucis tathā
ratha-citrasvanaḥ śrotā
aruṇaḥ senajit tathā*

tārksya ariṣṭanemiś ca
ṛtajit satyajit tathā
atha hetih prahetiś ca
pauruṣeyo vadhas tathā
varyo vyāghras tathāpaś ca
vāyur vidyud divākaraḥ
brahmāpetaś ca vipendrā
yajñāpetaś ca rākṣakāḥ
vāsukiḥ kacchanīraś ca
takṣakaḥ śukra eva ca
elāpatraḥ śaṅkhapālas
tathairāvata-saṁjñitaḥ
dhanañjayo mahāpadmas
tathā karkoṭako dvijāḥ
kambalo 'śvatarāś caiva
vahanty enaṁ yathā-kramam
tumburur nārado hāhā
hūhūr viśvāvasus tathā
ugraseno vasurucir
viśvavasur athāparaḥ
citrāsenas tathorṇāyur
dhṛtarāṣṭro dvijottamāḥ
sūryavarcā dvādaśaite
gandharvā gāyatām varāḥ
kṛtasthaly apsaro-varyā
tathānyā puñjikasthalī
menakā sahajanyā ca
pramlocā ca dvijottamāḥ
anumlocā ghṛtācī ca
viśvācī corvaśī tathā
anyā ca pūrvacittiḥ syād
anyā caiva tilottamā
rambhā ceti dvija-śreṣṭhās
tathāivāpsarasaḥ smṛtāḥ

TEXT 11.45

*etā bhagavato viṣṇor
ādityasya vibhūtayah
smaratām sandhyayor nṛṇām
haranty amho dine dine*

etāḥ – these; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Personality of Godhead; *viṣṇoḥ* – Lord Viṣṇu; *ādityasya* – of the sun-god; *vibhūtayah* – the opulences; *smaratām* – for those who remember; *sandhyayoḥ* – at the junctures of the day; *nṛṇām* – for such men; *haranti* – they take away; *amhaḥ* – sinful reactions; *dine dine* – day after day.

TRANSLATION

All these personalities are the opulent expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, in the form of the sun-god. These deities take away all the sinful reactions of those who remember them each day at dawn and sunset.

TEXT 11.46

*dvādaśasv api māseṣu
devo 'sau ṣaḍbhir asya vai
caran samantāt tanute
paratreha ca san-matim*

dvādaśasu – in each of the twelve; *api* – indeed; *māseṣu* – months; *devaḥ* – the lord; *asau* – this; *ṣaḍbhiḥ* – with his six types of associates; *asya* – for the population of this universe; *vai* – certainly; *caran* – traveling; *samantāt* – in all directions; *tanute* – spreads; *paratra* – in the next life; *iha* – in this life; *ca* – and; *sat-matim* – pure consciousness.

TRANSLATION

Thus, throughout the twelve months, the lord of the sun travels in all directions with his six types of associates, disseminating among the inhabitants of this universe purity of consciousness for both this life and the next.

TEXTS 11.47–48

*sāmarg-yajurbhis tal-liṅgair
ṛṣayah saṁstuvanty amum
gandharvās taṁ pragāyanti
nṛtyanty apsaraso 'grataḥ
unnahyanti ratham nāgā*

*grāmaṇyo ratha-yojakāḥ
codayanti ratham pṛṣṭhe
nairṛtā bala-śālināḥ*

sāma-ṛk-yajurbhiḥ – with the hymns of the *Sāma*, *Ṛg* and *Yajur Vedas*; *tat-liṅgaiḥ* – which reveal the sun; *ṛṣayaḥ* – the sages; *saṁstuvanti* – glorify; *amum* – him; *gandharvāḥ* – the Gandharvas; *tam* – about him; *pragāyanti* – sing loudly; *nṛtyanti* – dance; *apsarasaḥ* – the Apsarās; *agrataḥ* – in front; *unnahyanti* – bind up; *ratham* – the chariot; *nāgāḥ* – the Nāgas; *grāmaṇyaḥ* – the Yakṣas; *ratha-yojakāḥ* – those who harness the horses to the chariot; *codayanti* – drive; *ratham* – the chariot; *pṛṣṭhe* – from the rear; *nairṛtāḥ* – the Rākṣasas; *bala-śālināḥ* – strong.

TRANSLATION

While the sages glorify the sun-god with the hymns of the *Sāma*, *Ṛg* and *Yajur Vedas*, which reveal his identity, the Gandharvas also sing his praises and the Apsarās dance before his chariot. The Nāgas arrange the chariot ropes and the Yakṣas harness the horses to the chariot, while the powerful Rākṣasas push from behind.

TEXT 11.49

*vā lakhilyāḥ sahasrāṇi
ṣaṣṭir brahmaṛṣayaḥ 'malāḥ
purato 'bhimukhaṁ yānti
stuvanti stutibhir vibhum*

vā lakhilyāḥ – the Vā lakhilyas; *sahasrāṇi* – thousands; *ṣaṣṭiḥ* – sixty; *brahma-ṛṣayaḥ* – great sages among the *brāhmaṇas*; *amalāḥ* – pure; *purataḥ* – in front; *abhimukham* – facing the chariot; *yānti* – they go; *stuvanti* – they offer praise; *stutibhiḥ* – with Vedic prayers; *vibhum* – to the almighty lord.

TRANSLATION

Facing the chariot, the sixty thousand brāhmaṇa sages known as Vā lakhilyas travel in front and offer prayers to the almighty sun-god with Vedic mantras.

TEXT 11.50

*evam hy anādi-nidhano
bhagavān harir īśvaraḥ*

*kalpe kalpe svam ātmānam
vyūhya lokān avaty ajaḥ*

evam – thus; *hi* – indeed; *anādi* – without beginning; *nidhanaḥ* – or end; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *hariḥ* – Lord Hari; *īśvaraḥ* – the supreme controller; *kalpe kalpe* – in each day of Brahmā; *svam ātmānam* – Himself; *vyūhya* – expanding into various forms; *lokān* – the worlds; *avati* – protects; *ajaḥ* – the unborn Lord.

TRANSLATION

For the protection of all the worlds, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari, who is unborn and without beginning or end, thus expands Himself during each day of Brahmā into these specific categories of His personal representations.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Eleventh Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Summary Description of the Mahāpuruṣa.”

CHAPTER TWELVE

**The Topics of Śrīmad-
Bhāgavatam
Summarized**

In this chapter, Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī summarizes the subjects discussed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

The Supreme Lord, Śrī Hari, personally removes all the distress of a person who hears about His glories. Whatever words glorify the innumerable transcendental qualities of the Personality of Godhead are truthful, auspicious and conducive to piety, whereas all other words are impure. Discussions of topics concerning the Supreme Lord bestow ecstasy, which remains constantly new, but persons who are like crows become absorbed in unessential topics, those unrelated to the Personality of Godhead.

By chanting and hearing the countless names of Lord Śrī Hari, which describe His glorious qualities, all human beings can be relieved of their sins. Neither knowledge devoid of devotion for Lord Viṣṇu nor fruitive work not offered to Him have any real beauty. By constant remembrance of Lord Kṛṣṇa, on the other hand, all one's inauspicious desires are destroyed, one's mind is purified, and one attains devotion for Lord Śrī Hari along with knowledge filled with realization and detachment.

Sūta Gosvāmī then states that previously, in the assembly of Mahārāja Parīkṣit, he heard from the mouth of Śrī Śukadeva the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which annihilate all sinful reactions, and that now he has related these glories to the sages at Naimiṣāraṇya. By hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the spirit soul is purified and obtains salvation from all sins and all kinds of fear. Through the study of this scripture, one achieves the same result as that achieved by one who studies all the *Vedas*, and one also achieves the fulfillment of all desires. By studying with a controlled mind this essential compilation of all the *Purāṇas*, one will reach the supreme abode of the Personality of Godhead. Every verse of this scripture, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, contains the narrations of Lord Śrī Hari, who has innumerable personal forms.

Finally, Śrī Sūta offers obeisances to the unborn and unlimited Supreme Soul, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as well as to Śrī Śukadeva, the son of Vyāsa, who is capable of destroying the sins of all living beings.

TEXT 12.1

sūta uvāca

namo dharmāya mahate

*namaḥ kṛṣṇāya vedhase
brahmaṇebhyaḥ namaskṛtya
dharmān vakṣye sanātanān*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *dharmāya* – to the principle of religion; *mahate* – greatest; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *kṛṣṇāya* – to Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vedhase* – the creator; *brahmaṇebhyaḥ* – to the *brāhmaṇas*; *namaskṛtya* – offering my obeisances; *dharmān* – the principles of religion; *vakṣye* – I shall speak; *sanātanān* – eternal.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Offering my obeisances to the supreme religious principle, devotional service; to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme creator; and to all the brāhmaṇas, I shall now describe the eternal principles of religion.

PURPORT

In this Twelfth Chapter of the Twelfth Canto, Sūta Gosvāmī will summarize all the topics of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, beginning from the First Canto.

TEXT 12.2

*etad vaḥ kathitam viprā
viṣṇoś caritam adbhutam
bhavadbhir yad aham pṛṣṭo
narāṇām puruṣocitam*

etat – these; *vaḥ* – to you; *kathitam* – narrated; *viprāḥ* – O sages; *viṣṇoḥ* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *caritam* – the pastimes; *adbhutam* – wonderful; *bhavadbhiḥ* – by your good selves; *yad* – which; *aham* – I; *pṛṣṭaḥ* – was asked about; *narāṇām* – among men; *puruṣa* – for an actual human being; *ucitam* – suitable.

TRANSLATION

O great sages, I have narrated to you the wonderful pastimes of Lord Viṣṇu, as you inquired about them from me. Hearing such narrations is the suitable engagement for a person who is actually a human being.

PURPORT

The words *narāṇām puruṣocitam* indicate that men and women who actually come to the standard of human life hear and chant the glories

of the Supreme Lord, whereas uncivilized persons may not be interested in the science of God.

TEXT 12.3

*atra saṅkīrtitaḥ sākṣāt
sarva-pāpa-haro hariḥ
nārāyaṇo hṛṣīkeśo
bhagavān sātvatām paṭiḥ*

atra – here, in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *saṅkīrtitaḥ* – is fully glorified; *sākṣāt* – directly; *sarva-pāpa* – of all sins; *haraḥ* – the remover; *hariḥ* – the Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari; *nārāyaṇaḥ* – Nārāyaṇa; *hṛṣīkeśaḥ* – Hṛṣīkeśa, the Lord of the senses; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality; *sātvatām* – of the Yadus; *paṭiḥ* – the master.

TRANSLATION

This literature fully glorifies the Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari, who removes all His devotees' sinful reactions. The Lord is glorified as Nārāyaṇa, Hṛṣīkeśa and the Lord of the Sātvatas.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa's many holy names indicate His extraordinary transcendental qualities. The name *Hari* indicates that the Lord removes all sins from the heart of His devotee. *Nārāyaṇa* indicates that the Lord sustains the existence of all other beings. *Hṛṣīkeśa* indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate controller of the senses of all living beings. The word *bhagavān* indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the all-attractive Supreme Being. And the words *sātvatām paṭiḥ* indicate that the Lord is naturally the master of saintly and religious people, especially the members of the exalted Yadu family.

TEXT 12.4

*atra brahma param guhyam
jagataḥ prabhavāpyayam
jñānam ca tad-upākhyānam
proktaṁ vijñāna-saṁyutam*

atra – here; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *param* – supreme; *guhyam* – confidential; *jagataḥ* – of this universe; *prabhava* – the creation; *apyayam* – and annihilation; *jñānam* – knowledge; *ca* – and; *tad-upākhyānam* – the means of cultivating it; *proktaṁ* – are spoken;

vijñāna – transcendental realization; *saṁyutam* – including.

TRANSLATION

This literature describes the mystery of the Supreme Absolute Truth, the source of the creation and annihilation of this universe. Also presented are divine knowledge of Him together with the process of its cultivation, and the transcendental realization one achieves.

TEXT 12.5

*bhakti-yogaḥ samākhyāto
vairāgyam ca tad-āśrayam
pārikṣitam upākhyānam
nāradaḥkhyānam eva ca*

bhakti-yogaḥ – the process of devotional service; *samākhyātaḥ* – is thoroughly enunciated; *vairāgyam* – renunciation; *ca* – and; *tad-āśrayam* – which is subsidiary to it; *pārikṣitam* – of Mahārāja Parīkṣit; *upākhyānam* – the history; *nārada* – of Nārada; *ākhyānam* – the history; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also.

TRANSLATION

The following topics are also narrated: the process of devotional service together with its subsidiary feature of renunciation, and the histories of Mahārāja Parīkṣit and the sage Nārada.

TEXT 12.6

*prāyopaveśo rājarṣer
vipra-śāpāt parikṣitaḥ
śukasya brahmaṛṣabhasya
saṁvādaś ca parikṣitaḥ*

prāya-upaveśaḥ – the fast until death; *rāja-ṛṣeḥ* – of the sage among kings; *vipra-śāpāt* – because of the curse of the *brāhmaṇa*'s son; *parikṣitaḥ* – of King Parīkṣit; *śukasya* – of Śukadeva; *brahma-ṛṣabhasya* – the best of *brāhmaṇas*; *saṁvādaḥ* – the conversation; *ca* – and; *parikṣitaḥ* – with Parīkṣit.

TRANSLATION

Also described are saintly King Parīkṣit's sitting down to fast until death in response to the curse of a *brāhmaṇa*'s son, and the conversations between Parīkṣit and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who is

the best of all brāhmaṇas.

TEXT 12.7

*yoga-dhāraṇayotkrāntiḥ
saṁvādo nāradaḥ
avatārānugītā ca
sargaḥ prādhāniko 'grataḥ*

yoga-dhāraṇayā – by fixed meditation in *yoga*; *utkrāntiḥ* – the attainment of liberation at the time of passing away; *saṁvādaḥ* – the conversation; *nārada-ajayoḥ* – between Nārada and Brahmā; *avatāra-anugītā* – the listing of the incarnations of the Supreme Lord; *ca* – and; *sargaḥ* – the process of creation; *prādhānikaḥ* – from the unmanifest material nature; *agrataḥ* – in progressive order.

TRANSLATION

The Bhāgavatam explains how one can attain liberation at the time of death by practicing fixed meditation in yoga. It also contains a discussion between Nārada and Brahmā, an enumeration of the incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and a description of how the universe was created in progressive sequence, beginning from the unmanifest stage of material nature.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that it would be difficult to give a complete list of the numerous accounts and topics contained in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Therefore it is understood that Sūta Gosvāmī is merely summarizing the topics. We should not consider the topics he fails to mention here less important or superfluous, since every letter and word of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is absolute, Kṛṣṇa conscious sound vibration.

TEXT 12.8

*viduroddhava-saṁvādaḥ
kṣattr-maitreyayoḥ tataḥ
purāṇa-saṁhitā-praśno
mahā-puruṣa-saṁsthitḥ*

vidura-uddhava – between Vidura and Uddhava; *saṁvādaḥ* – the discussion; *kṣattr-maitreyayoḥ* – between Vidura and Maitreya; *tataḥ* –

then; *purāṇa-saṁhitā* – concerning this Purāṇic compilation; *praśnaḥ* – inquiries; *mahā-puruṣa* – within the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *saṁsthitīḥ* – the winding up of creation.

TRANSLATION

This scripture also relates the discussions Vidura had with Uddhava and with Maitreya, inquiries about the subject matter of this Purāṇa, and the winding up of creation within the body of the Supreme Lord at the time of annihilation.

TEXT 12.9

*tataḥ prākṛtikaḥ sargaḥ
sapta vaikṛtikāś ca ye
tato brahmāṇḍa-sambhūtir
vairājaḥ puruṣo yataḥ*

tataḥ – then; *prākṛtikaḥ* – from material nature; *sargaḥ* – the creation; *sapta* – the seven; *vaikṛtikāḥ* – stages of creation derived by transformation; *ca* – and; *ye* – which; *tataḥ* – then; *brahma-aṇḍa* – of the universal egg; *sambhūtiḥ* – the construction; *vairājaḥ puruṣaḥ* – the universal form of the Lord; *yataḥ* – from which.

TRANSLATION

The creation effected by the agitation of the modes of material nature, the seven stages of evolution by elemental transformation, and the construction of the universal egg, from which arises the universal form of the Supreme Lord – all these are thoroughly described.

TEXT 12.10

*kālasya sthūla-sūkṣmasya
gatiḥ padma-samudbhavaḥ
bhuvā uddharāṇe ’mbhodher
hiraṇyākṣa-vadho yathā*

kālasya – of time; *sthūla-sūkṣmasya* – gross and subtle; *gatiḥ* – the movement; *padma* – of the lotus; *samudbhavaḥ* – the generation; *bhuvāḥ* – of the earth; *uddharāṇe* – in connection with the deliverance; *ambhodheḥ* – from the ocean; *hiraṇyākṣa-vadhaḥ* – the killing of the demon Hiraṇyākṣa; *yathā* – as it occurred.

TRANSLATION

Other topics include the subtle and gross movements of time, the generation of the lotus from the navel of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and the killing of the demon Hiraṇyākṣa when the earth was delivered from the Garbhodaka Ocean.

TEXT 12.11

*ūrdhva-tiryag-avāk-sargo
rudra-sargas tathaiva ca
ardha-nāriśvarasyātha
yataḥ svāyambhuvo manuḥ*

ūrdhva – of the higher species, the demigods; *tiryak* – of the animals; *avāk* – and of lower species; *sargaḥ* – the creation; *rudra* – of Lord Śiva; *sargaḥ* – the creation; *tathā* – and; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *ardha-nāri* – as a half man, half woman; *īśvarasya* – of the lord; *atha* – then; *yataḥ* – from whom; *svāyambhuvaḥ manuḥ* – Svāyambhuva Manu.

TRANSLATION

The Bhāgavatam also describes the creation of demigods, animals and demoniac species of life; the birth of Lord Rudra; and the appearance of Svāyambhuva Manu from the half-man, half-woman Īśvara.

TEXT 12.12

*śatarūpā ca yā strīṇām
ādyā prakṛtir uttamā
santāno dharmā-patnīnām
kardamasya prajāpateḥ*

śatarūpā – Śatarūpā; *ca* – and; *yā* – who; *strīṇām* – of women; *ādyā* – the first; *prakṛtiḥ* – the consort; *uttamā* – best; *santānaḥ* – the progeny; *dharmā-patnīnām* – of the pious wives; *kardamasya* – of the sage Kardama; *prajāpateḥ* – the progenitor.

TRANSLATION

Also related are the appearance of the first woman, Śatarūpā, who was the excellent consort of Manu, and the offspring of the pious wives of Prajāpati Kardama.

TEXT 12.13

*avatāro bhagavataḥ
kapilasya mahātmanaḥ*

*devahūtyāś ca saṁvādaḥ
kapilena ca dhīmatā*

avatāraḥ – the descent; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *kapilasya* – Lord Kapila; *mahā-ātmanaḥ* – the Supreme Soul; *devahūtyāḥ* – of Devahūti; *ca* – and; *saṁvādaḥ* – the conversation; *kapilena* – with Lord Kapila; *ca* – and; *dhi-matā* – the intelligent.

TRANSLATION

The Bhāgavatam describes the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the exalted sage Kapila and records the conversation between that greatly learned soul and His mother, Devahūti.

TEXTS 12.14–15

*nava-brahma-samutpattir
dakṣa-yajña-vināśanam
dhruvasya caritaṁ paścāt
pṛthoḥ prācīnabarhiṣaḥ
nāradasya ca saṁvādas
tataḥ praiyavratam dvijāḥ
nābhes tato ’nucaritam
ṛṣabhasya bharatasya ca*

nava-brahma – of the nine *brāhmaṇas* (the sons of Lord Brahmā, headed by Marīci); *samutpattir* – the descendants; *dakṣa-yajña* – of the sacrifice performed by Dakṣa; *vināśanam* – the destruction; *dhruvasya* – of Dhruva Mahārāja; *caritam* – the history; *paścāt* – then; *pṛthoḥ* – of King Pṛthu; *prācīnabarhiṣaḥ* – of Prācīnabarhi; *nāradasya* – with Nārada Muni; *ca* – and; *saṁvādaḥ* – his conversation; *tataḥ* – then; *praiyavratam* – the story of Mahārāja Priyavrata; *dvijāḥ* – O *brāhmaṇas*; *nābheḥ* – of Nābhi; *tataḥ* – then; *anucaritam* – the life story; *ṛṣabhasya* – of Lord Ṛṣabha; *bharatasya* – of Bharata Mahārāja; *ca* – and.

TRANSLATION

Also described are the progeny of the nine great brāhmaṇas, the destruction of Dakṣa’s sacrifice, and the history of Dhruva Mahārāja, followed by the histories of King Pṛthu and King Prācīnabarhi, the discussion between Prācīnabarhi and Nārada, and the life of Mahārāja Priyavrata. Then, O brāhmaṇas, the Bhāgavatam tells of the character and activities of King Nābhi,

Lord R̥ṣabha and King Bharata.

TEXT 12.16

*dvīpa-varṣa-samudrāṇām
giri-nady-upavarṇanam
jyotiś-cakrasya samsthānam
pātāla-naraka-sthiṭḥ*

dvīpa-varṣa-samudrāṇām – of the continents, great islands and oceans; *giri-nadī* – of the mountains and rivers; *upavarṇanam* – the detailed description; *jyotiḥ-cakrasya* – of the celestial sphere; *samsthānam* – the arrangement; *pātāla* – of the subterranean regions; *naraka* – and of hell; *sthiṭḥ* – the situation.

TRANSLATION

The Bhāgavatam gives an elaborate description of the earth's continents, regions, oceans, mountains and rivers. Also described are the arrangement of the celestial sphere and the conditions found in the subterranean regions and in hell.

TEXT 12.17

*dakṣa-janma pracetobhyas
tat-putrīṇām ca santatiḥ
yato devāsura-narās
tiryak-naga-khagādayaḥ*

dakṣa-janma – the birth of Dakṣa; *pracetobhyaḥ* – from the Pracetās; *tat-putrīṇām* – of his daughters; *ca* – and; *santatiḥ* – the progeny; *yataḥ* – from which; *deva-asura-narāḥ* – the demigods, demons and human beings; *tiryak-naga-khaga-ādayaḥ* – the animals, serpents, birds and other species.

TRANSLATION

The rebirth of Prajāpati Dakṣa as the son of the Pracetās, and the progeny of Dakṣa's daughters, who initiated the races of demigods, demons, human beings, animals, serpents, birds and so on – all this is described.

TEXT 12.18

*tvāṣṭrasya janma-nidhanam
putrayoś ca diter dvijāḥ
daityeśvarasya caritam*

prahrādasya mahātmanaḥ

tvāṣṭrasya – of the son of Tvaṣṭā (Vṛtra); *janma-nidhanam* – the birth and death; *putrayoḥ* – of the two sons, Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu; *ca* – and; *diteḥ* – of Diti; *dvijāḥ* – O brāhmaṇas; *daitya-īśvarasya* – of the greatest of the Daityas; *caritam* – the history; *prahrādasya* – of Prahlāda; *mahā-ātmanaḥ* – the great soul.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇas, also recounted are the births and deaths of Vṛtrāsura and of Diti's sons Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu, as well as the history of the greatest of Diti's descendants, the exalted soul Prahlāda.

TEXT 12.19

manv-antarānukathanam
gajendrasya vimokṣaṇam
manvantarāvatārāś ca
viṣṇor hayaśīrādayaḥ

manu-antara – of reigns of the various Manus; *anukathanam* – the detailed description; *gaja-indrasya* – of the king of the elephants; *vimokṣaṇam* – the liberation; *manu-antara-avatārāḥ* – the particular incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in each *manvantara*; *ca* – and; *viṣṇoḥ* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *hayaśīrā-ādayaḥ* – such as Lord Hayaśīrṣā.

TRANSLATION

The reign of each Manu, the liberation of Gajendra, and the special incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu in each manvantara, such as Lord Hayaśīrṣā, are described as well.

TEXT 12.20

kaurmam mātṣyam nārasimham
vāmanam ca jagat-pateḥ
kṣīroda-mathanam tadvad
amṛtārthe divaukasām

kaurmam – the incarnation as a tortoise; *mātṣyam* – as a fish; *nārasimham* – as a man-lion; *vāmanam* – as a dwarf; *ca* – and; *jagat-pateḥ* – of the Lord of the universe; *kṣīra-uda* – of the Ocean of Milk; *mathanam* – the churning; *tadvad* – thus; *amṛta-arte* – for the sake of

nectar; *diva-okasām* – on the part of the inhabitants of heaven.

TRANSLATION

The Bhāgavatam also tells of the appearances of the Lord of the universe as Kūrma, Matsya, Narasimha and Vāmana, and of the demigods' churning of the Milk Ocean to obtain nectar.

TEXT 12.21

devāsura-mahā-yuddham
rāja-varṣānukīrtanam
ikṣvāku-janma tad-varṣaḥ
sudyumnasya mahātmanaḥ

deva-asura – of the demigods and demons; *mahā-yuddham* – the great war; *rāja-varṣā* – of the dynasties of kings; *anukīrtanam* – the reciting in sequence; *ikṣvāku-janma* – the birth of Ikṣvāku; *tad-varṣaḥ* – his dynasty; *sudyamnasya* – (and the dynasty) of Sudyumna; *mahā-ātmanaḥ* – the great soul.

TRANSLATION

An account of the great battle fought between the demigods and the demons, a systematic description of the dynasties of various kings, and narrations concerning Ikṣvāku's birth, his dynasty and the dynasty of the pious Sudyumna – all are presented within this literature.

TEXT 12.22

ilopākhyānam atroktam
tāropākhyānam eva ca
sūrya-varṣānukathanam
śaśādādyā nṛgādayaḥ

ilā-upākhyānam – the history of Ilā; *atra* – herein; *uktam* – is spoken; *tārā-upākhyānam* – the history of Tārā; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *sūrya-varṣā* – of the dynasty of the sun-god; *anukathanam* – the narration; *śaśāda-ādyāḥ* – Śaśāda and others; *nṛga-ādayaḥ* – Nṛga and others.

TRANSLATION

Also related are the histories of Ilā and Tārā, and the description of the descendants of the sun-god, including such kings as Śaśāda and Nṛga.

TEXT 12.23

*saukanyam cātha śaryāteḥ
kakutsthasya ca dhimataḥ
khaṭvāṅgasya ca māndhātuḥ
saubhareḥ sagarasya ca*

saukanyam – the story of Sukanyā; *ca* – and; *atha* – then; *śaryāteḥ* – that of Śaryāti; *kakutsthasya* – of Kakutstha; *ca* – and; *dhi-mataḥ* – who was an intelligent king; *khaṭvāṅgasya* – of Khaṭvāṅga; *ca* – and; *māndhātuḥ* – of Māndhātā; *saubhareḥ* – of Saubhari; *sagarasya* – of Sagara; *ca* – and.

TRANSLATION

The histories of Sukanyā, Śaryāti, the intelligent Kakutstha, Khaṭvāṅga, Māndhātā, Saubhari and Sagara are narrated.

TEXT 12.24

*rāmasya kośalendrasya
caritam kilbiṣāpaham
nimer aṅga-parityāgo
janakānām ca sambhavaḥ*

rāmasya – of Lord Rāmacandra; *kośala-indrasya* – the King of Kośala; *caritam* – the pastimes; *kilbiṣa-apaham* – which drive away all sins; *nimeḥ* – of King Nimi; *aṅga-parityāgaḥ* – the giving up of his body; *janakānām* – of the descendants of Janaka; *ca* – and; *sambhavaḥ* – the appearance.

TRANSLATION

The Bhāgavatam narrates the sanctifying pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra, the King of Kośala, and also explains how King Nimi abandoned his material body. The appearance of the descendants of King Janaka is also mentioned.

TEXTS 12.25–26

*rāmasya bhārgavendrasya
niḥkṣatri-karaṇam bhuvaḥ
ailasya soma-varṁśasya
yayāter nahuṣasya ca
dauṣmanter bharatasyāpi
śāntanos tat-sutasya ca*

*yayāter jyeṣṭha-putrasya
yador vaṁśo ’nukīrtitaḥ*

rāmasya – by Lord Paraśurāma; *bhārgava-indrasya* – the greatest of the descendants of Bhṛgu Muni; *niḥkṣatri-karaṇam* – the elimination of all the *kṣatriyas*; *bhuvah* – of the earth; *ailasya* – of Mahārāja Aila; *soma-vaṁśasya* – of the dynasty of the moon-god; *yayāteḥ* – of Yayāti; *nahuṣasya* – of Nahuṣa; *ca* – and; *daṣmanteḥ* – of the son of Duṣmanta; *bharatasya* – Bharata; *api* – also; *śāntanoḥ* – of King Śāntanu; *tat* – his; *sutasya* – of the son, Bhīṣma; *ca* – and; *yayāteḥ* – of Yayāti; *jyeṣṭha-putrasya* – of the eldest son; *yadoḥ* – Yadu; *vaṁśaḥ* – the dynasty; *anu-kīrtitaḥ* – is glorified.

TRANSLATION

The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describes how Lord Paraśurāma, the greatest descendant of Bhṛgu, annihilated all the *kṣatriyas* on the face of the earth. It further recounts the lives of glorious kings who appeared in the dynasty of the moon-god – kings such as Aila, Yayāti, Nahuṣa, Duṣmanta’s son Bharata, Śāntanu and Śāntanu’s son Bhīṣma. Also described is the great dynasty founded by King Yadu, the eldest son of Yayāti.

TEXT 12.27

*yatrāvātīrṇo bhagavān
kṛṣṇākhyo jagad-īśvaraḥ
vasudeva-grhe janma
tato vṛddhiḥ ca gokule*

yatra – in which dynasty; *avatīrṇaḥ* – descended; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *kṛṣṇa-ākhyāḥ* – known as Kṛṣṇa; *jagad-īśvaraḥ* – the Lord of the universe; *vasudeva-grhe* – in the home of Vasudeva; *janma* – His birth; *tataḥ* – subsequently; *vṛddhiḥ* – His growing up; *ca* – and; *gokule* – in Gokula.

TRANSLATION

How Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and Lord of the universe, descended into this Yadu dynasty, how He took birth in the home of Vasudeva, and how He then grew up in Gokula – all this is described in detail.

TEXTS 12.28–29

*tasya karmāṇy apārāṇi
kīrtitāny asura-dviṣaḥ
pūtanāsu-payahaḥ-pānam
śakatauccātanam śiśoḥ*

*ṛṇāvartasya niṣpeṣas
tathaiva baka-vatsayoḥ
aghāsura-vadho dhātrā
vatsa-pālāvagūhanam*

tasya – His; *karmāṇi* – activities; *apārāṇi* – innumerable; *kīrtitāni* – are glorified; *asura-dviṣaḥ* – of the enemy of the demons; *pūtanā* – of the witch Pūtanā; *asu* – along with her life air; *payahaḥ* – of the milk; *pānam* – the drinking; *śakata* – of the cart; *uccātanam* – the breaking; *śiśoḥ* – by the child; *ṛṇāvartasya* – of Ṛṇāvarta; *niṣpeṣaḥ* – the trampling; *tathā* – and; *eva* – indeed; *baka-vatsayoḥ* – of the demons named Baka and Vatsa; *agha-asura* – of the demon Agha; *vadhaḥ* – the killing; *dhātrā* – by Lord Brahmā; *vatsa-pāla* – of the calves and cowherd boys; *avagūhanam* – the hiding away.

TRANSLATION

Also glorified are the innumerable pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of the demons, including His childhood pastimes of sucking out Pūtanā's life air along with her breast milk, breaking the cart, trampling down Ṛṇāvarta, killing Bakāsura, Vatsāsura and Aghāsura, and the pastimes He enacted when Lord Brahmā hid His calves and cowherd boyfriends in a cave.

TEXT 12.30

*dhenukasya saha-bhrātuḥ
pralambasya ca saṅkṣayaḥ
gopānām ca paritrāṇam
dāvāgneḥ parisarpataḥ*

dhenukasya – of Dhenuka; *saha-bhrātuḥ* – along with his companions; *pralambasya* – of Pralamba; *ca* – and; *saṅkṣayaḥ* – the destruction; *gopānām* – of the cowherd boys; *ca* – and; *paritrāṇam* – the saving; *dāvāgneḥ* – from the forest fire; *parisarpataḥ* – which was encircling.

TRANSLATION

The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam tells how Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Balarāma killed the demon Dhenukāsura and his companions, how Lord

Balarāma destroyed Pralambāsura, and also how Kṛṣṇa saved the cowherd boys from a raging forest fire that had encircled them.

TEXTS 12.31–33

*damanam kāliyasyāher
mahāher nanda-mokṣaṇam
vrata-caryā tu kanyānām
yatra tuṣṭo 'cyuto vrataiḥ*

*prasādo yajña-patnībhyo
viprāṇām cānutāpanam
govardhanoddhāraṇam ca
śakrasya surabher atha*

*yajñabhiṣekaḥ kṛṣṇasya
strībhiḥ krīḍā ca rātriṣu
śaṅkhacūḍasya durbuddher
vadho 'riṣṭasya keśinaḥ*

damanam – the subduing; *kāliyasya* – of Kāliya; *aheḥ* – the snake; *mahā-aheḥ* – from the great serpent; *nanda-mokṣaṇam* – the rescue of Mahārāja Nanda; *vrata-caryā* – the execution of austere vows; *tu* – and; *kanyānām* – of the *gopīs*; *yatra* – by which; *tuṣṭaḥ* – became satisfied; *acyutaḥ* – Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vrataiḥ* – with their vows; *prasādaḥ* – the mercy; *yajña-patnībhyaḥ* – to the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* performing Vedic sacrifices; *viprāṇām* – of the *brāhmaṇa* husbands; *ca* – and; *anutāpanam* – the experience of remorse; *govardhana-uddhāraṇam* – the lifting of Govardhana Hill; *ca* – and; *śakrasya* – by Indra; *surabheḥ* – along with the Surabhi cow; *atha* – then; *yajña-abhiṣekaḥ* – the worship and ritual bathing; *kṛṣṇasya* – of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *strībhiḥ* – together with the women; *krīḍā* – the sporting; *ca* – and; *rātriṣu* – in the nights; *śaṅkhacūḍasya* – of the demon Śaṅkhacūḍa; *durbuddheḥ* – who was foolish; *vadhaḥ* – the killing; *ariṣṭasya* – of Ariṣṭa; *keśinaḥ* – of Keśī.

TRANSLATION

The chastisement of the serpent Kāliya; the rescue of Nanda Mahārāja from a great snake; the severe vows performed by the young *gopīs*, who thus satisfied Lord Kṛṣṇa; the mercy He showed the wives of the Vedic *brāhmaṇas*, who felt remorse; the lifting of Govardhana Hill followed by the worship and bathing ceremony performed by Indra and the Surabhi cow; Lord Kṛṣṇa's

nocturnal pastimes with the cowherd girls; and the killing of the foolish demons Śaṅkhacūḍa, Ariṣṭa and Keśī – all these pastimes are elaborately recounted.

TEXT 12.34

*akrūrāgamanam paścāt
prasthānam rāma-kṛṣṇayoḥ
vraja-strīṇām vilāpaś ca
mathurālokanam tataḥ*

akrūra – of Akrūra; *āgamanam* – the coming; *paścāt* – after that; *prasthānam* – the departure; *rāma-kṛṣṇayoḥ* – of Lord Balarāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vraja-strīṇām* – of the women of Vṛndāvana; *vilāpaḥ* – the lamentation; *ca* – and; *mathurā-ālokanam* – the seeing of Mathurā; *tataḥ* – then.

TRANSLATION

The Bhāgavatam describes the arrival of Akrūra, the subsequent departure of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the lamentation of the gopīs and the touring of Mathurā.

TEXT 12.35

*gaja-muṣṭika-cāṇūra-
kaṁsādinām tathā vadhaḥ
mṛtasyānayanam sūnoḥ
punaḥ sāndīpaner guroḥ*

gaja – of the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa; *muṣṭika-cāṇūra* – of the wrestlers Muṣṭika and Cāṇūra; *kaṁsa* – of Kaṁsa; *ādinām* – and of others; *tathā* – also; *vadhaḥ* – the killing; *mṛtasya* – who had died; *ānayanam* – the bringing back; *sūnoḥ* – of the son; *punaḥ* – again; *sāndīpaneḥ* – of Sāndīpani; *guroḥ* – their spiritual master.

TRANSLATION

Also narrated are how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa, the wrestlers Muṣṭika and Cāṇūra, and Kaṁsa and other demons, as well as how Kṛṣṇa brought back the dead son of His spiritual master, Sāndīpani Muni.

TEXT 12.36

*mathurāyām nivasatā
yadu-cakrasya yat priyam*

*kṛtam uddhava-rāmābhyām
yutena hariṇā dvijāḥ*

mathurāyām – in Mathurā; *nivasatā* – by Him who was residing; *yadu-cakrasya* – for the circle of Yadus; *yat* – which; *priyam* – gratifying; *kṛtam* – was done; *uddhava-rāmābhyām* – with Uddhava and Balarāma; *yutena* – joined; *hariṇā* – by Lord Hari; *dvijāḥ* – O *brāhmaṇas*.

TRANSLATION

Then, O brāhmaṇas, this scripture recounts how Lord Hari, while residing in Mathurā in the company of Uddhava and Balarāma, performed pastimes for the satisfaction of the Yadu dynasty.

TEXT 12.37

*jarāsandha-samānīta-
sainyasya bahuśo vadhaḥ
ghātanam yavanendrasya
kuśasthalyā niveśanam*

jarāsandha – by King Jarāsandha; *samānīta* – assembled; *sainyasya* – of the army; *bahuśaḥ* – many times; *vadhaḥ* – the annihilation; *ghātanam* – the killing; *yavana-indrasya* – of the king of the barbarians; *kuśasthalyāḥ* – of Dvārakā; *niveśanam* – the founding.

TRANSLATION

Also described are the annihilation of each of the many armies brought by Jarāsandha, the killing of the barbarian king Kālayavana and the establishment of Dvārakā City.

TEXT 12.38

*ādānam pārijātasya
sudharmāyāḥ surālayāt
rukmiṇyā haraṇam yuddhe
pramathya dviṣato hareḥ*

ādānam – the receiving; *pārijātasya* – of the *pārijāta* tree; *sudharmāyāḥ* – of the Sudharmā assembly hall; *sura-ālayāt* – from the abode of the demigods; *rukmiṇyāḥ* – of Rukmiṇī; *haraṇam* – the kidnapping; *yuddhe* – in battle; *pramathya* – defeating; *dviṣataḥ* – His rivals; *hareḥ* – by Lord Hari.

TRANSLATION

This work also describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa brought from heaven the pārijāta tree and the Sudharmā assembly hall, and how He kidnapped Rukmiṇī by defeating all His rivals in battle.

TEXT 12.39

*harasya jṛmbhaṇam yuddhe
bāṇasya bhujā-kṛntanam
prāgjyotiṣa-patim hatvā
kanyānām haraṇam ca yat*

harasya – of Lord Śiva; *jṛmbhaṇam* – the forced yawning; *yuddhe* – in battle; *bāṇasya* – of Bāṇa; *bhujā* – of the arms; *kṛntanam* – the cutting;; *prāgjyotiṣa-patim* – the master of the city Prāgjyotiṣa; *hatvā* – killing; *kanyānām* – of the unmarried virgins; *haraṇam* – the removal; *ca* – and; *yat* – which.

TRANSLATION

Also narrated are how Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the battle with Bāṇāsura, defeated Lord Śiva by making him yawn, how the Lord cut off Bāṇāsura’s arms, and how He killed the master of Prāgjyotiṣapura and then rescued the young princesses held captive in that city.

TEXTS 12.40–41

*caidyā-pauṇḍraka-śālvānām
dantavakrasya durmateḥ
śambaro dvividaḥ pīṭho
muraḥ pañcajanādayaḥ
māhātmyam ca vadhas teṣām
vārāṇasyāś ca dāhanam
bhārāvatarāṇam bhūmer
nimitti-kṛtya pāṇḍavān*

caidyā – of the King of Cedi, Śiśupāla; *pauṇḍraka* – of Pauṇḍraka; *śālvānām* – and of Śālva; *dantavakrasya* – of Dantavakra; *durmateḥ* – the foolish; *śambaro dvividaḥ pīṭhaḥ* – the demons Śambara, Dvivida and Pīṭha; *muraḥ pañcajana-ādayaḥ* – Mura, Pañcajana and others; *māhātmyam* – the prowess; *ca* – and; *vadhaḥ* – the death; *teṣām* – of these; *vārāṇasyāḥ* – of the holy city of Benares; *ca* – and; *dāhanam* – the burning; *bhāra* – of the burden; *avatarāṇam* – the reduction; *bhūmeḥ* – of the earth; *nimitti-kṛtya* – making the apparent cause;

pāṇḍavān – the sons of Pāṇḍu.

TRANSLATION

There are descriptions of the powers and the deaths of the King of Cedi, Paṇḍraka, Śālva, the foolish Dantavakra, Śambara, Dvividā, Pīṭha, Mura, Pañcajana and other demons, along with a description of how Vārāṇasī was burned to the ground. The Bhāgavatam also recounts how Lord Kṛṣṇa relieved the earth's burden by engaging the Pāṇḍavas in the Battle of Kurukṣetra.

TEXTS 12.42–43

*vipra-śāpāpadeśena
saṁhāraḥ sva-kulasya ca
uddhavasya ca saṁvādo
vasudevasya cādbhutaḥ
yatrātma-vidyā hy akhilā
proktā dharma-vinirṇayaḥ
tato martya-parityāga
ātma-yogānubhāvataḥ*

vipra-śāpa – of the curse by the *brāhmaṇas*; *apadeśena* – on the pretext; *saṁhāraḥ* – the withdrawal; *sva-kulasya* – of His own family; *ca* – and; *uddhavasya* – with Uddhava; *ca* – and; *saṁvādaḥ* – the discussion; *vasudevasya* – of Vasudeva (with Nārada); *ca* – and; *adbhutaḥ* – wonderful; *yatra* – in which; *ātma-vidyā* – the science of the self; *hi* – indeed; *akhilā* – completely; *proktā* – was spoken; *dharma-vinirṇayaḥ* – the ascertainment of the principles of religion; *tataḥ* – then; *martya* – of the mortal world; *parityāgaḥ* – the giving up; *ātma-yoga* – of His personal mystic power; *anubhāvataḥ* – on the strength.

TRANSLATION

How the Lord withdrew His own dynasty on the pretext of the *brāhmaṇas*' curse; Vasudeva's conversation with Nārada; the extraordinary conversation between Uddhava and Kṛṣṇa, which reveals the science of the self in complete detail and elucidates the religious principles of human society; and then how Lord Kṛṣṇa gave up this mortal world by His own mystic power – the Bhāgavatam narrates all these events.

TEXT 12.44

*yuga-lakṣaṇa-vṛttiś ca
kalau nṛṇām upaplavaḥ
catur-vidhaś ca pralaya
utpattis tri-vidhā tathā*

yuga – of the different ages; *lakṣaṇa* – the characteristics; *vṛttiḥ* – and the corresponding activities; *ca* – also; *kalau* – in the present Age of Kali; *nṛṇām* – of men; *upaplavaḥ* – the total disturbance; *catur-vidhaḥ* – fourfold; *ca* – and; *pralayaḥ* – the process of annihilation; *utpattiḥ* – creation; *tri-vidhā* – of three kinds; *tathā* – and.

TRANSLATION

This work also describes people’s characteristics and behavior in the different ages, the chaos men experience in the Age of Kali, the four kinds of annihilation and the three kinds of creation.

TEXT 12.45

*deha-tyāgaś ca rājarṣer
viṣṇu-rātasya dhīmataḥ
śākhā-praṇayanam ṛṣer
mārkaṇḍeyasya sat-kathā
mahā-puruṣa-vinyāsaḥ
sūryasya jagad-ātmanaḥ*

deha-tyāgaḥ – the relinquishing of his body; *ca* – and; *rāja-ṛṣeḥ* – by the saintly king; *viṣṇu-rātasya* – Parīkṣit; *dhī-mataḥ* – the intelligent; *śākhā* – of the branches of the *Vedas*; *praṇayanam* – the dissemination; *ṛṣeḥ* – from the great sage Vyāsadeva; *mārkaṇḍeyasya* – of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi; *sat-kathā* – the pious narration; *mahā-puruṣa* – of the universal form of the Lord; *vinyāsaḥ* – the detailed arrangement; *sūryasya* – of the sun; *jagat-ātmanaḥ* – who is the soul of the universe.

TRANSLATION

There are also an account of the passing away of the wise and saintly King Viṣṇurāta [Parīkṣit], an explanation of how Śrīla Vyāsadeva disseminated the branches of the Vedas, a pious narration concerning Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, and a description of the detailed arrangement of the Lord’s universal form and His form as the sun, the soul of the universe.

TEXT 12.46

*iti coktam dvija-śreṣṭhā
yat pṛṣṭo 'ham ihāsmi vaḥ
līlavatāra-karmāṇi
kīrtitāniha sarvaśaḥ*

iti – thus; *ca* – and; *uktam* – spoken; *dvija-śreṣṭhāḥ* – O best of the *brāhmaṇas*; *yat* – what; *pṛṣṭaḥ* – inquired; *aham* – I; *iha* – here; *asmi* – have been; *vaḥ* – by you; *līlavatāra* – of the divine descents of the Supreme Lord for His own enjoyment; *karmāṇi* – the activities; *kīrtitāni* – have been glorified; *iha* – in this scripture; *sarvaśaḥ* – completely.

TRANSLATION

Thus, O best of the brāhmaṇas, I have explained herein what you have inquired from me. This literature has glorified in full detail the activities of the Lord's pastime incarnations.

TEXT 12.47

*patitaḥ skhalitaś cārtaḥ
kṣuttvā vā vivaśo gṛṇan
haraye nama ity uccair
mucyate sarva-pātakāt*

patitaḥ – falling; *skhalitaḥ* – tripping; *ca* – and; *ārtaḥ* – feeling pain; *kṣuttvā* – sneezing; *vā* – or; *vivaśaḥ* – involuntarily; *gṛṇan* – chanting; *haraye namaḥ* – “obeisances to Lord Hari”; *iti* – thus; *uccaiḥ* – loudly; *mucyate* – one is freed; *sarva-pātakāt* – from all sinful reactions.

TRANSLATION

If when falling, slipping, feeling pain or sneezing one involuntarily cries out in a loud voice, “Obeisances to Lord Hari!” one will be automatically freed from all his sinful reactions.

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that Lord Śrī Caitanya is always loudly chanting the song *haraye namaḥ kṛṣṇa* in the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura and that this same Lord Caitanya will free us from our materialistic enjoying propensity if we also loudly chant the glories of the Supreme Lord Hari.

TEXT 12.48

*saṅkīrtiyamāno bhagavān anantaḥ
śrutānubhāvo vyasanam hi puṁsām
praviśya cittaṁ vidhunoty aśeṣam
yathā tamo 'rko 'bhram ivāti-vātaḥ*

saṅkīrtiyamānaḥ – being properly chanted about; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *anantaḥ* – the unlimited; *śruta* – being heard about; *anubhāvaḥ* – His potency; *vyasanam* – the misery; *hi* – indeed; *puṁsām* – of persons; *praviśya* – enter; *cittaṁ* – the heart; *vidhunoti* – cleans away; *aśeṣam* – entirely; *yathā* – just as; *tamaḥ* – darkness; *arkaḥ* – the sun; *abhram* – clouds; *iva* – as; *ati-vātaḥ* – a strong wind.

TRANSLATION

When people properly glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead or simply hear about His power, the Lord personally enters their hearts and cleanses away every trace of misfortune, just as the sun removes the darkness or as a powerful wind drives away the clouds.

PURPORT

One may not be satisfied by the example of the sun removing the darkness, since sometimes the darkness in a cave is not removed by the sun. Therefore the example is given of a strong wind that drives away a cover of clouds. It is thus emphatically stated here that the Supreme Lord will remove from the heart of His devotee the darkness of material illusion.

TEXT 12.49

*mṛṣā giras tā hy asatīr asat-kathā
na kathyate yad bhagavān adhokṣajaḥ
tad eva satyaṁ tad u haiva maṅgalaṁ
tad eva puṇyaṁ bhagavad-guṇodayam*

mṛṣāḥ – false; *giraḥ* – words; *tāḥ* – they; *hi* – indeed; *asatīḥ* – untrue; *asat-kathāḥ* – useless discussions of that which is not eternal; *na kathyate* – is not discussed; *yad* – wherein; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *adhokṣajaḥ* – the transcendental Lord; *tad* – that; *eva* – alone; *satyaṁ* – true; *tad* – that; *u ha* – indeed; *eva* – alone; *maṅgalaṁ* – auspicious; *tad* – that; *eva* – alone; *puṇyam* – pious; *bhagavat-guṇa* – the qualities of the Supreme Personality; *udayam* – which manifests.

TRANSLATION

Words that do not describe the transcendental Personality of Godhead but instead deal with temporary matters are simply false and useless. Only those words that manifest the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord are actually truthful, auspicious and pious.

PURPORT

Sooner or later, all material literature and discussion must fail the test of time. On the other hand, the transcendental descriptions of the Supreme Lord can free us from the bondage of illusion and restore us to our eternal status as loving servants of the Lord. Although men who are like animals may criticize the glorification of the Absolute Truth, those who are civilized should go on vigorously propagating the transcendental glories of the Lord.

TEXT 12.50

*tad eva ramyaṁ ruciraṁ navam navam
tad eva śaśvan manaso mahotsavam
tad eva śokārṇava-śoṣaṇam nṛṇām
yad uttamaḥśloka-yaśo ’nugīyate*

tat – that; *eva* – indeed; *ramyam* – attractive; *ruciram* – palatable; *navam navam* – newer and newer; *tat* – that; *eva* – indeed; *śaśvat* – constantly; *manasaḥ* – for the mind; *mahā-utsavam* – a great festival; *tat* – that; *eva* – indeed; *śoka-arṇava* – the ocean of misery; *śoṣaṇam* – that which dries; *nṛṇām* – for all persons; *yad* – in which; *uttamaḥśloka* – of the all-famous Supreme Personality of Godhead; *yaśaḥ* – the glories; *anugīyate* – are sung.

TRANSLATION

Those words describing the glories of the all-famous Personality of Godhead are attractive, relishable and ever fresh. Indeed, such words are a perpetual festival for the mind, and they dry up the ocean of misery.

TEXT 12.51

*na yad vacaś citra-padam harer yaśo
jagat-pavitraṁ pragṛṇīta karhicit
tad dhvāṅkṣa-tīrtham na tu hamsa-sevitam*

yatrācyutas tatra hi sādhave 'malāḥ

na – not; *yat* – which; *vacaḥ* – vocabulary; *citra-padam* – decorative words; *hareḥ* – of the Lord; *yaśaḥ* – the glories; *jagat* – the universe; *pavitram* – sanctifying; *pragrṇīta* – describe; *karhicit* – ever; *tat* – that; *dhvāṅkṣa* – of the crows; *tīrtham* – a place of pilgrimage; *na* – not; *tu* – on the other hand; *hamṣa* – by saintly persons situated in knowledge; *sevitam* – served; *yatra* – in which; *acyutaḥ* – Lord Acyuta (is described); *tatra* – there; *hi* – alone; *sādhavaḥ* – the saints; *amalāḥ* – who are pure.

TRANSLATION

Those words that do not describe the glories of the Lord, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe, are considered to be like unto a place of pilgrimage for crows, and are never resorted to by those situated in transcendental knowledge. The pure and saintly devotees take interest only in topics glorifying the infallible Supreme Lord.

TEXT 12.52

*tad vāg-visargo janatāgha-samplavo
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavaty api
nāmāny anantasya yaśo 'ṅkitāni yat
śṛṅvanti gāyanti grṇanti sādhaveḥ*

tat – that; *vāk* – vocabulary; *visargaḥ* – creation; *janatā* – of the people in general; *agha* – of the sins; *samplavaḥ* – a revolution; *yasmin* – in which; *prati-ślokaṁ* – each and every stanza; *abaddhavaty* – is irregularly composed; *api* – although; *nāmāni* – the transcendental names, etc; *anantasya* – of the unlimited Lord; *yaśaḥ* – the glories; *āṅkitāni* – depicted; *yat* – which; *śṛṅvanti* – do hear; *gāyanti* – do sing; *grṇanti* – do accept; *sādhavaḥ* – the purified men who are honest.

TRANSLATION

On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes and so on of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung and accepted by purified

men who are thoroughly honest.

TEXT 12.53

*naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitaṁ
na śobhate jñānam alaṁ nirañjanam
kutaḥ punaḥ śaśvad abhadram īsvare
na hy arpitaṁ karma yad apy anuttamam*

naiṣkarmyam – self-realization, being freed from the reactions of fruitive work; *api* – although; *acyuta* – of the infallible Lord; *bhāva* – conception; *varjitaṁ* – devoid of; *na* – does not; *śobhate* – look well; *jñānam* – transcendental knowledge; *alam* – actually; *nirañjanam* – free from designations; *kutaḥ* – where is; *punaḥ* – again; *śaśvat* – always; *abhadram* – uncongenial; *īsvare* – unto the Lord; *na* – not; *hi* – indeed; *arpitaṁ* – offered; *karma* – fruitive work; *yad* – which is; *api* – even; *anuttamam* – unsurpassed.

TRANSLATION

Knowledge of self-realization, even though free from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Infallible [God]. What, then, is the use of even the most properly performed fruitive activities, which are naturally painful from the very beginning and transient by nature, if they are not utilized for the devotional service of the Lord?

PURPORT

This and the previous two verses are found in a slightly different form in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.10–12). The translations are based on Śrīla Prabhupāda's.

TEXT 12.54

*yaśaḥ-śriyām eva pariśramaḥ paro
varṇāśramācāra-tapaḥ-śrutādiṣu
avismṛtiḥ śrīdhara-pāda-padmayaḥ
guṇānuvāda-śravaṇadarādibhiḥ*

yaśaḥ – in fame; *śriyām* – and opulence; *eva* – only; *pariśramaḥ* – the labor; *paraḥ* – great; *varṇa-āśrama-ācāra* – by one's execution of duties in the *varṇāśrama* system; *tapaḥ* – austerities; *śruta* – hearing of sacred scripture; *ādiṣu* – and so on; *avismṛtiḥ* – remembrance; *śrīdhara* – of the maintainer of the goddess of fortune; *pāda-padmayaḥ* – of the lotus

feet; *guṇa-anuvāda* – of the chanting of the qualities; *śravaṇa* – by hearing; *ādara* – respecting; *ādibhiḥ* – and so on.

TRANSLATION

The great endeavor one undergoes in executing the ordinary social and religious duties of the varṇāśrama system, in performing austerities, and in hearing from the Vedas culminates only in the achievement of mundane fame and opulence. But by respecting and attentively hearing the recitation of the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord, the husband of the goddess of fortune, one can remember His lotus feet.

TEXT 12.55

*avismṛtiḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoḥ
kṣiṇoty abhadrāṇi ca śam tanoti
sattvasya śuddhiṁ paramātmā-bhaktiṁ
jñānam ca vijñāna-virāga-yuktam*

avismṛtiḥ – remembrance; *kṛṣṇa-pada-aravindayoḥ* – of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet; *kṣiṇoti* – destroys; *abhadrāṇi* – everything inauspicious; *ca* – and; *śam* – good fortune; *tanoti* – expands; *sattvasya* – of the heart; *śuddhiṁ* – the purification; *paramātmā* – for the Supreme Soul; *bhaktiṁ* – devotion; *jñānam* – knowledge; *ca* – and; *vijñāna* – with direct realization; *virāga* – and detachment; *yuktam* – endowed.

TRANSLATION

Remembrance of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet destroys everything inauspicious and awards the greatest good fortune. It purifies the heart and bestows devotion for the Supreme Soul, along with knowledge enriched with realization and renunciation.

TEXT 12.56

*yūyam dvijāgryā bata bhūri-bhāgā
yac chaśvad ātmany akhilātmā-bhūtam
nārāyaṇam devam adevam īsam
ajasra-bhāvā bhajatāviveśya*

yūyam – all of you; *dvija-agryāḥ* – O most eminent of *brāhmaṇas*; *bata* – indeed; *bhūri-bhāgāḥ* – extremely fortunate; *yac* – because; *śaśvat* – constantly; *ātmani* – in your hearts; *akhila* – of all; *ātma-bhūtam* – who is the ultimate Soul; *nārāyaṇam* – Lord Nārāyaṇa; *devam* – the

Personality of Godhead; *adevam* – beyond whom there is no other god; *īsam* – the supreme controller; *ajasra* – without interruption; *bhāvāḥ* – having love; *bhajata* – you should worship; *āviveśya* – placing Him.

TRANSLATION

O most eminent of brāhmaṇas, you are all indeed extremely fortunate, since you have already placed within your hearts Lord Śrī Nārāyaṇa – the Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller and the ultimate Soul of all existence – beyond whom there is no other god. You have undeviating love for Him, and thus I request you to worship Him.

TEXT 12.57

*aham ca saṁsmārīta ātma-tattvaṁ
śrutam purā me paramarṣi-vaktrāt
prāyopaveśe nṛpateḥ parīkṣitaḥ
sadasy ṛṣiṇām mahatām ca śṛṇvatām*

aham – I; *ca* – also; *saṁsmārītaḥ* – have been made to remember; *ātma-tattvam* – the science of the Supersoul; *śrutam* – heard; *purā* – previously; *me* – by me; *parama-ṛṣi* – of the greatest of sages, Śukadeva; *vaktrāt* – from the mouth; *prāya-upaveśe* – during the fast to death; *nṛpateḥ* – of the king; *parīkṣitaḥ* – Parīkṣit; *sadasi* – in the assembly; *ṛṣiṇām* – of sages; *mahatām* – great; *ca* – and; *śṛṇvatām* – while they were listening.

TRANSLATION

I also have now been fully reminded of the science of God, which I previously heard from the mouth of the great sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī. I was present in the assembly of great sages who heard him speak to King Parīkṣit as the monarch sat fasting until death.

TEXT 12.58

*etat vaḥ kathitam viprāḥ
kathaniyuru-karmaṇaḥ
māhātmyam vāsudevasya
sarvāśubha-vināśanam*

etat – this; *vaḥ* – to you; *kathitam* – narrated; *viprāḥ* – O brāhmaṇas; *kathaniya* – of Him who is most worthy of being described; *uru-karmaṇaḥ* – and whose activities are very great; *māhātmyam* – the

glories; *vāsudevasya* – of Lord Vāsudeva; *sarva-aśubha* – all inauspiciousness; *vināśanam* – which completely destroys.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇas, I have thus described to you the glories of the Supreme Lord Vāsudeva, whose extraordinary activities are most worthy of glorification. This narration destroys all that is inauspicious.

TEXT 12.59

*ya etat śrāvayen nityam
yāma-kṣaṇam ananya-dhīḥ
ślokaṁ ekaṁ tad-ardhaṁ vā
pādaṁ pādārdham eva vā
śraddhāvān yo ’nuśṛṇuyāt
punāty ātmānam eva saḥ*

yaḥ – who; *etat* – this; *śrāvayet* – makes others hear; *nityam* – always; *yāma-kṣaṇam* – every hour and every minute; *ananya-dhīḥ* – with undeviated attention; *ślokaṁ* – verse; *ekaṁ* – one; *tad-ardham* – half of that; *vā* – or; *pādam* – a single line; *pāda-ardham* – half a line; *eva* – indeed; *vā* – or; *śraddhā-vān* – with faith; *yaḥ* – who; *anuśṛṇuyāt* – hears from the proper source; *punāti* – purifies; *ātmānam* – his very self; *eva* – indeed; *saḥ* – he.

TRANSLATION

One who with undeviating attention constantly recites this literature at every moment of every hour, as well as one who faithfully hears even one verse or half a verse or a single line or even half a line, certainly purifies his very self.

TEXT 12.60

*dvādaśyām ekādaśyām vā
śṛṇvann āyuṣyavān bhavet
paṭhaty anaśnan prayataḥ
pūto bhavati pātakāt*

dvādaśyām – on the twelfth day of either fortnight of the month; *ekādaśyām* – on the auspicious eleventh day; *vā* – or; *śṛṇvan* – hearing; *āyuṣya-vān* – possessed of long life; *bhavet* – one becomes; *paṭhati* – if one recites; *anaśnan* – while refraining from eating; *prayataḥ* – with

careful attention; *pūtaḥ* – purified; *bhavati* – one becomes; *pātakāt* – from sinful reactions.

TRANSLATION

One who hears this Bhāgavatam on the Ekādaśī or Dvādaśī day is assured of long life, and one who recites it with careful attention while fasting is purified of all sinful reactions.

TEXT 12.61

*puṣkare mathurāyām ca
dvāravatyām yatātmavān
upoṣya saṁhitām etām
paṭhitvā mucyate bhayāt*

puṣkare – at the holy place Puṣkara; *mathurāyām* – at Mathurā; *ca* – and; *dvāravatyām* – at Dvārakā; *yata-ātma-vān* – self-controlled; *upoṣya* – fasting; *saṁhitām* – literature; *etām* – this; *paṭhitvā* – reciting; *mucyate* – one becomes freed; *bhayāt* – from fear.

TRANSLATION

One who controls his mind, fasts at the holy places Puṣkara, Mathurā or Dvārakā, and studies this scripture will be freed from all fear.

TEXT 12.62

*devatā munayaḥ siddhāḥ
pitaro manavo nṛpāḥ
yacchanti kāmān gr̥nataḥ
śṛṇvato yasya kīrtanāt*

devatāḥ – the demigods; *munayaḥ* – the sages; *siddhāḥ* – the perfected yogis; *pitarāḥ* – the forefathers; *manavaḥ* – the progenitors of mankind; *nṛpāḥ* – the kings of the earth; *yacchanti* – bestow; *kāmān* – desires; *gr̥nataḥ* – to one who is chanting; *śṛṇvataḥ* – or who is hearing; *yasya* – of which; *kīrtanāt* – because of the glorification.

TRANSLATION

Upon the person who glorifies this Purāṇa by chanting or hearing it, the demigods, sages, Siddhas, Pitās, Manus and kings of the earth bestow all desirable things.

TEXT 12.63

*ṛco yajūṁṣi sāmāni
dvijo 'dhītyānuvindate
madhu-kulyā ghr̥ta-kulyāḥ
payah-kulyāś ca tat phalam*

ṛcaḥ – the mantras of the Ṛg Veda; *yajūṁṣi* – those of the Yajur Veda; *sāmāni* – and those of the Sāma Veda; *dvijaḥ* – a brāhmaṇa; *adhītya* – studying; *anuvindate* – obtains; *madhu-kulyāḥ* – rivers of honey; *ghr̥ta-kulyāḥ* – rivers of ghee; *payah-kulyāḥ* – rivers of milk; *ca* – and; *tat* – that; *phalam* – fruit.

TRANSLATION

By studying this Bhāgavatam, a brāhmaṇa can enjoy the same rivers of honey, ghee and milk he enjoys by studying the hymns of the Ṛg, Yajur and Sāma Vedas.

TEXT 12.64

*purāṇa-saṁhitām etām
adhītya prayato dvijaḥ
proktaṁ bhagavatā yat tu
tat padam paramam vrajet*

purāṇa-saṁhitām – essential compilation of all the *Purāṇas*; *etām* – this; *adhītya* – studying; *prayataḥ* – carefully; *dvijaḥ* – a brāhmaṇa; *proktaṁ* – described; *bhagavatā* – by the Personality of Godhead; *yat* – which; *tu* – indeed; *tat* – that; *padam* – position; *paramam* – supreme; *vrajet* – he attains.

TRANSLATION

A brāhmaṇa who diligently reads this essential compilation of all the Purāṇas will go to the supreme destination, which the Supreme Lord Himself has herein described.

TEXT 12.65

*vipro 'dhītyāpnuyāt prajñām
rājanyodadhi-mekhalām
vaiśyo nidhi-patitvaṁ ca
śūdraḥ śudhyeta pātakāt*

vipraḥ – a brāhmaṇa; *adhītya* – studying; *āpnuyāt* – achieves; *prajñām* – intelligence in devotional service; *rājanya* – a king; *udadhi-mekhalām* – (the earth) bounded by the seas; *vaiśyaḥ* – a businessman; *nidhi* – of

treasures; *pativam* – lordship; *ca* – and; *śūdraḥ* – a worker; *śudhyeta* – becomes purified; *pātakāt* – from sinful reactions.

TRANSLATION

A brāhmaṇa who studies the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam achieves firm intelligence in devotional service, a king who studies it gains sovereignty over the earth, a vaiśya acquires great treasure and a śūdra is freed from sinful reactions.

TEXT 12.66

*kali-mala-saṁhati-kālano 'khileśo
harir itaratra na gīyate hy abhikṣṇam
iha tu punar bhagavān aśeṣa-mūrtiḥ
paripaṭhito 'nu-padam kathā-prasaṅgaiḥ*

kali – of the age of quarrel; *mala-saṁhati* – of all the contamination; *kālanaḥ* – the annihilator; *akhila-īśaḥ* – the supreme controller of all beings; *hariḥ* – Lord Hari; *itaratra* – elsewhere; *na gīyate* – is not described; *hi* – indeed; *abhikṣṇam* – constantly; *iha* – here; *tu* – however; *punaḥ* – on the other hand; *bhagavān* – the Personality of Godhead; *aśeṣa-mūrtiḥ* – who expands in unlimited personal forms; *paripaṭhitaḥ* – is openly described in narration; *anu-padam* – in each and every verse; *kathā-prasaṅgaiḥ* – on the pretext of stories.

TRANSLATION

Lord Hari, the supreme controller of all beings, annihilates the accumulated sins of the Kali age, yet other literatures do not constantly glorify Him. But that Supreme Personality of Godhead, appearing in His innumerable personal expansions, is abundantly and constantly described throughout the various narrations of this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

TEXT 12.67

*tam aham ajam anantam ātma-tattvaṁ
jagad-udaya-sthiti-saṁyamātma-śaktim
dyu-patibhir aja-śakra-śaṅkarādyair
duravasita-stavam acyutaṁ nato 'smi*

tam – to Him; *aham* – I; *ajam* – to the unborn; *anantam* – the unlimited; *ātma-tattvam* – the original Supersoul; *jagat* – of the material universe; *udaya* – the creation; *sthiti* – maintenance; *saṁyama*

– and destruction; *ātma-śaktim* – by whose personal energies; *dyu-patibhiḥ* – by the masters of heaven; *aja-śakra-śaṅkara-ādyaiḥ* – headed by Brahmā, Indra and Śiva; *duravasita* – incomprehensible; *stavam* – whose praises; *acyutam* – to the infallible Supreme Lord; *nataḥ* – bowed down; *asmi* – I am.

TRANSLATION

I bow down to that unborn and infinite Supreme Soul, whose personal energies effect the creation, maintenance and destruction of the material universe. Even Brahmā, Indra, Śaṅkara and the other lords of the heavenly planets cannot fathom the glories of that infallible Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 12.68

*upacita-nava-śaktibhiḥ sva ātmany
uparacita-sthira-jaṅgamālayāya
bhagavata upalabdhi-mātra-dhamne
sura-ṛṣabhāya namaḥ sanātanāya*

upacita – fully developed; *nava-śaktibhiḥ* – by His nine energies (*prakṛti*, *puruṣa*, *maḥat*, false ego and the five subtle forms of perception); *sve ātmani* – within Himself; *uparacita* – arranged in proximity; *sthira jaṅgama* – of both the nonmoving and the moving living beings; *ālayāya* – the abode; *bhagavate* – to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *upalabdhi-mātra* – pure consciousness; *dhāmne* – whose manifestation; *sura* – of deities; *ṛṣabhāya* – the chief; *namaḥ* – my obeisances; *sanātanāya* – to the eternal Lord.

TRANSLATION

I offer my obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the eternal Lord and the leader of all other deities, who by evolving His nine material energies has arranged within Himself the abode of all moving and nonmoving creatures, and who is always situated in pure, transcendental consciousness.

TEXT 12.69

*sva-sukha-nibhrta-cetās tad-vyudastānya-bhāvo
'py ajita-rucira-lilākṛṣṭa-sāras tadiyam
vyatanuta kṛpayā yas tattva-dīpaṁ purāṇaṁ
tam akhila-vṛjina-ghnaṁ vyāsa-sūnuṁ nato 'smi*

sva-sukha – in the happiness of the self; *nibhr̥ta* – solitary; *cetāḥ* – whose consciousness; *tat* – because of that; *vyudasta* – given up; *anya-bhāvaḥ* – any other type of consciousness; *api* – although; *ajita* – of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the unconquerable Lord; *rucira* – pleasing; *līlā* – by the pastimes; *ākṛṣṭa* – attracted; *sāraḥ* – whose heart; *tadīyam* – consisting of the activities of the Lord; *vyatanuta* – spread, manifested; *kṛpayā* – mercifully; *yaḥ* – who; *tattva-dīpam* – the bright light of the Absolute Truth; *purāṇam* – the *Purāṇa* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*); *tam* – unto Him; *akhila-vṛjina-ghnam* – defeating everything inauspicious; *vyāsa-sūnum* – son of Vyāsadeva; *nataḥ asmi* – I offer my obeisances.

TRANSLATION

Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the son of Vyāsadeva, Śukadeva Gosvāmī. It is he who defeats all inauspicious things within this universe. Although in the beginning he was absorbed in the happiness of Brahman realization and was living in a secluded place, giving up all other types of consciousness, he became attracted by the pleasing, most melodious pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He therefore mercifully spoke this supreme Purāṇa, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is the bright light of the Absolute Truth and which describes the activities of the Lord.

PURPORT

Without offering respectful obeisances to Śukadeva Gosvāmī and other great *ācāryas* in his line, one cannot possibly gain the privilege of entering into the deep transcendental meaning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Twelfth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Summarized.”

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Glories of Śrīmad- Bhāgavatam

In this final chapter Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī describes the length of each of the *Purāṇas*, along with the subject matter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, its purpose, how to give it as a gift, the glories of such gift-giving and the glories of chanting and hearing it.

The total corpus of the *Purāṇas* includes four hundred thousand verses, eighteen thousand of which constitute *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, instructed Brahmā in this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, whose narrations produce detachment from matter and which contains the essence of all the Vedānta. One who gives the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata Purāṇa* as a gift will attain the highest destination. Among all the *Purāṇas*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the best, and it is the most dear thing to the Vaiṣṇavas. It reveals that spotless, supreme knowledge accessible to the *paramahāṁsas*, and it also reveals the process by which one can become free from the reactions of material work – a process enriched with knowledge, renunciation and devotion.

Having thus glorified the *Bhāgavatam*, Sūta Gosvāmī meditates upon Lord Śrī Nārāyaṇa as the original Absolute Truth, who is perfectly pure, free from all contamination, devoid of sorrow and immortal. Then he offers obeisances to the greatest *yogī*, Śrī Śukadeva, who is nondifferent from the Absolute Truth. Finally, praying with true devotion, Sūta Gosvāmī offers respects to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Hari, who takes away all misery.

TEXT 13.1

sūta uvāca

*yam brahmā varuṇendra-rudra-marutaḥ stuvanti divyaiḥ stavaiḥ
vedaiḥ sāṅga-pada-kramopaniṣadair gāyanti yaṁ sāma-gāḥ
dhyānāvasthita-tat-gatena manasā paśyanti yaṁ yogino
yasyāntaṁ na viduḥ surāsura-gaṇā devāya tasmai namaḥ*

sūtaḥ uvāca – Sūta Gosvāmī said; *yam* – whom; *brahmā* – Lord Brahmā; *varuṇa-indra-rudra-marutaḥ* – as well as Varuṇa, Indra, Rudra and the Maruts; *stuvanti* – praise; *divyaiḥ* – with transcendental; *stavaiḥ* – prayers; *vedaiḥ* – with the *Vedas*; *sa* – along with; *aṅga* – the corollary branches; *pada-krama* – the special sequential arrangement of *mantras*; *upaniṣadaiḥ* – and the *Upaniṣads*; *gāyanti* – they sing about; *yam* – whom; *sāma-gāḥ* – the singers of the *Sāma Veda*; *dhyāna* – in meditative trance; *avasthita* – situated; *tat-gatena* – which is fixed upon

Him; *manasā* – within the mind; *paśyanti* – they see; *yam* – whom; *yoginaḥ* – the mystic *yogīs*; *yasya* – whose; *antam* – end; *na viduḥ* – they do not know; *sura-asura-gaṇāḥ* – all the demigods and demons; *devāya* – to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tasmai* – to Him; *namaḥ* – obeisances.

TRANSLATION

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Unto that personality whom Brahmā, Varuṇa, Indra, Rudra and the Maruts praise by chanting transcendental hymns and reciting the Vedas with all their corollaries, pada-kramas and Upaniṣads, to whom the chanters of the Sāma Veda always sing, whom the perfected yogīs see within their minds after fixing themselves in trance and absorbing themselves within Him, and whose limit can never be found by any demigod or demon – unto that Supreme Personality of Godhead I offer my humble obeisances.

TEXT 13.2

*prṣṭhe bhrāmyad amanda-mandara-giri-grāvāgra-kaṇḍūyanān
nidrāloḥ kamaṭhākṛter bhagavataḥ śvāsānilāḥ pāntu vaḥ
yat-saṁskāra-kalānuvartana-vaśād velā-nibhenāmbhasām
yātāyātam atandritam jala-nidher nādyāpi viśrāmyati*

prṣṭhe – upon His back; *bhrāmyat* – rotating; *amanda* – most heavy; *mandara-giri* – of Mandara Mountain; *grāva-agra* – by the edges of the stones; *kaṇḍūyanāt* – by the scratching; *nidrāloḥ* – who became sleepy; *kamaṭha-ākṛteḥ* – in the form of a tortoise; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *śvāsa* – coming from the breathing; *anilāḥ* – the winds; *pāntu* – may they protect; *vaḥ* – all of you; *yat* – of which; *saṁskāra* – of the remnants; *kalā* – the traces; *anuvartana-vaśāt* – as the effect of following; *velā-nibhena* – by that which resembles the flow; *ambhasām* – of the water; *yāta-āyātam* – the coming and going; *atandritam* – ceaseless; *jala-nidheḥ* – of the ocean; *na* – does not; *adya api* – even today; *viśrāmyati* – stop.

TRANSLATION

When the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared as Lord Kūrma, a tortoise, His back was scratched by the sharp-edged stones lying on massive, whirling Mount Mandara, and this scratching made the Lord sleepy. May you all be protected by the winds caused by the Lord’s breathing in this sleepy condition.

Ever since that time, even up to the present day, the ocean tides have imitated the Lord's inhalation and exhalation by piously coming in and going out.

PURPORT

At times we alleviate an itching sensation by blowing upon it. Similarly, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains, the breathing of the Supreme Personality of Godhead can alleviate the itching sensation within the minds of mental speculators, as well as the itching of the material senses of conditioned souls engaged in sense gratification. Thus by meditating on the windy breath of Lord Kūrma – the tortoise incarnation – all categories of conditioned souls can be relieved of the deficiencies of material existence and come to the liberated, spiritual platform. One must simply allow the pastimes of Lord Kūrma to blow within one's heart like a favorable breeze; then one will surely find spiritual peace.

TEXT 13.3

*purāṇa-saṅkhyā-sambhūtim
asya vācya-prayojane
dānam dānasya māhātmyam
pāṭhādeś ca nibodhata*

purāṇa – of the *Purāṇas*; *saṅkhyā* – of the counting (of verses); *sambhūtim* – the summation; *asya* – of this *Bhāgavatam*; *vācya* – the subject matter; *prayojane* – and the purpose; *dānam* – the method of giving as a gift; *dānasya* – of such gift-giving; *māhātmyam* – the glories; *pāṭha-ādeḥ* – of teaching and so on; *ca* – and; *nibodhata* – please hear.

TRANSLATION

Now please hear a summation of the verse length of each of the *Purāṇas*. Then hear of the prime subject and purpose of this *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the proper method of giving it as a gift, the glories of such gift-giving, and finally the glories of hearing and chanting this literature.

PURPORT

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the best of all *Purāṇas*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the other *Purāṇas* will now be mentioned just as the assistants of a king are mentioned in connection

with his glorification.

TEXTS 13.4–9

*brāhmaṃ daśa sahasrāṇi
pādmaṃ pañcāna-ṣaṣṭi ca
śrī-vaiṣṇavam trayo-vimśac
catur-vimśati śaivakam*

*daśāṣṭau śrī-bhāgavatam
nāradam pañca-vimśati
mārkaṇḍam nava vāhnam ca
daśa-pañca catuḥ-śatam*

*catur-daśa bhaviṣyam syāt
tathā pañca-śatāni ca
daśāṣṭau brahma-vaivartam
laiṅgam ekādaśaiva tu*

*catur-vimśati vārāham
ekāśīti-sahasrakam
skādam śatam tathā caikam
vāmanam daśa kīrtitam*

*kaurmam sapta-daśākhyātam
mātsyam tat tu catur-daśa
ekona-vimśat sauparnam
brahmāṇḍam dvādaśaiva tu*

*evam purāṇa-sandohaś
catur-lakṣa udāhṛtaḥ
tatrāṣṭadaśa-sāhasram
śrī-bhāgavatam iṣyate*

brāhmaṃ – the *Brahma Purāṇa*; *daśa* – ten; *sahasrāṇi* – thousands; *pādmaṃ* – the *Padma Purāṇa*; *pañca-ūna-ṣaṣṭi* – five less than sixty; *ca* – and; *śrī-vaiṣṇavam* – the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*; *trayo-vimśat* – twenty-three; *catur-vimśati* – twenty-four; *śaivakam* – the *Śiva Purāṇa*; *daśa-aṣṭau* – eighteen; *śrī-bhāgavatam* – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *nāradam* – the *Nārada Purāṇa*; *pañca-vimśati* – twenty-five; *mārkaṇḍam* – the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*; *nava* – nine; *vāhnam* – the *Agni Purāṇa*; *ca* – and; *daśa-pañca-catuḥ-śatam* – fifteen thousand four hundred; *catur-daśa* – fourteen; *bhaviṣyam* – the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*; *syāt* – consists of; *tathā* – plus; *pañca-śatāni* – five hundred (verses); *ca* – and; *daśa-aṣṭau* – eighteen; *brahma-*

vaivartam – the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*; *laiṅgam* – the *Liṅga Purāṇa*; *ekādaśa* – eleven; *eva* – indeed; *tu* – and; *catuḥ-vimśati* – twenty-four; *vārāham* – the *Varāha Purāṇa*; *ekāśīti-sahasrakam* – eighty-one thousand; *skāndam* – the *Skanda Purāṇa*; *śatam* – hundred; *tathā* – plus; *ca* – and; *ekam* – one; *vāmanam* – the *Vāmana Purāṇa*; *daśa* – ten; *kīrtitam* – is described; *kaurmam* – the *Kūrma Purāṇa*; *sapta-daśa* – seventeen; *ākhyātam* – is said; *mātsyam* – the *Matsya Purāṇa*; *tat* – that; *tu* – and; *catuḥ-daśa* – fourteen; *eka-ūna-vimśat* – nineteen; *sauparṇam* – the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*; *brahmāṇḍam* – the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*; *dvādaśa* – twelve; *eva* – indeed; *tu* – and; *evam* – in this way; *Purāṇa* – of the *Purāṇas*; *sandohaḥ* – the sum; *catuḥ-lakṣaḥ* – four hundred thousand; *udāhṛtaḥ* – is described; *tatra* – therein; *aṣṭa-daśa-sāhasram* – eighteen thousand; *śrī-bhāgavatam* – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *iṣyate* – is said.

TRANSLATION

The *Brahma Purāṇa* consists of ten thousand verses, the *Padma Purāṇa* of fifty-five thousand, *Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa* of twenty-three thousand, the *Śiva Purāṇa* of twenty-four thousand and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* of eighteen thousand. The *Nārada Purāṇa* has twenty-five thousand verses, the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* nine thousand, the *Agni Purāṇa* fifteen thousand four hundred, the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* fourteen thousand five hundred, the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* eighteen thousand and the *Liṅga Purāṇa* eleven thousand. The *Varāha Purāṇa* contains twenty-four thousand verses, the *Skanda Purāṇa* eighty-one thousand one hundred, the *Vāmana Purāṇa* ten thousand, the *Kūrma Purāṇa* seventeen thousand, the *Matsya Purāṇa* fourteen thousand, the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* nineteen thousand and the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* twelve thousand. Thus the total number of verses in all the *Purāṇas* is four hundred thousand. Eighteen thousand of these, once again, belong to the beautiful *Bhāgavatam*.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted from the *Matsya Purāṇa* as follows:

*aṣṭādaśa purāṇāni
kṛtvā satyavatī-sutaḥ
bhāratākhyānam akhilaṁ
cakre tad-upabṛmhitam*

*lakṣaṇaikenā tat proktaṁ
vedārtha-paribr̥ṁhitam
vālmikināpi yat proktaṁ
rāmopakhyānam uttamam*

*brahmaṇābhīhitam tac ca
śata-koṭi-pravistarāt
āhṛtya nāradenaiva
vālmikāya punaḥ punaḥ*

*vālmikinā ca lokeṣu
dharma-kāmārtha-sādhanam
evaṁ sa-pādāḥ pañcaite
lakṣās teṣu prakīrtitāḥ*

“After compiling the eighteen *Purāṇas*, Vyāsadeva, the son of Satyavatī, composed the entire *Mahābhārata*, which contains the essence of all the *Purāṇas*. It consists of over one hundred thousand verses and is filled with all the ideas of the *Vedas*. There is also the account of the pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra, spoken by Vālmīki – an account originally related by Lord Brahmā in one billion verses. That *Rāmāyaṇa* was later summarized by Nārada and related to Vālmīki, who further presented it to mankind so that human beings could attain the goals of religiosity, sense gratification and economic development. The total number of verses in all the *Purāṇas* and *itihāsas* (histories) is thus known in human society to amount to 525,000.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura points out that in the First Canto, Third Chapter, of this work, after Sūta Gosvāmī lists the incarnations of Godhead, he adds the special phrase *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*: “But Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead.” Similarly, after mentioning all of the *Purāṇas*, Śrī Suta Gosvāmī again mentions the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to emphasize that it is the chief of all Purāṇic literatures.

TEXT 13.10

*idam bhagavatā pūrvam
brahmaṇe nābhi-pankaje
sthitāya bhava-bhītāya
kāruṇyāt samprakāśitam*

idam – this; *bhagavatā* – by the Supreme Personality of Godhead;

pūrvam – first; *brahmaṇe* – to Brahmā; *nābhi-pankaje* – upon the lotus growing from the navel; *sthitāya* – who was situated; *bhava* – of material existence; *bhītāya* – who was fearful; *kāruṇyāt* – out of mercy; *samprakāśitam* – was fully revealed.

TRANSLATION

It was to Lord Brahmā that the Supreme Personality of Godhead first revealed the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in full. At the time, Brahmā, frightened by material existence, was sitting on the lotus flower that had grown from the Lord’s navel.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa enlightened Brahmā with the knowledge of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* before the creation of this universe, as indicated here by the word *pūrvam*. Also, the first verse of the *Bhāgavatam* states, *tene brahma hrdā ya ādi-kavaye*: “Lord Kṛṣṇa expanded perfect knowledge into the heart of Lord Brahmā.” Because conditioned souls can experience only temporary objects, which are created, maintained and destroyed, they cannot readily understand that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is an eternal, transcendental literature nondifferent from the Absolute Truth.

As stated in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (1.1.1):

*brahmā devānām prathamah sambabhūva
viśvasya kartā bhuvanasya goptā
sa brahma-vidyām sarva-vidyā-pratiṣṭhām
atharvāya jyeṣṭha-putrāya prāha*

“Among all the demigods, Brahmā was the first to take birth. He is the creator of this universe and also its protector. To his eldest son, Atharvā, He instructed the spiritual science of the self, which is the basis of all other branches of knowledge.” Despite his exalted position, however, Brahmā still fears the influence of the Lord’s illusory potency. Thus this energy seems virtually insurmountable. But Lord Caitanya is so kind that during His missionary activities in eastern and southern India, He freely distributed Kṛṣṇa consciousness to everyone, urging them to become teachers of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Lord Caitanya, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself, encouraged the people by saying, “By My order just become a teacher of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s message and save this country. I assure you that the waves of *māyā* will never stop your progress.” (Cc. *Madhya* 7.128)

If we give up all sinful activities and engage constantly in the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, victory is assured in our personal lives and also in our missionary efforts.

TEXTS 13.11–12

*ādi-madhyāvasāneṣu
vairāgyākhyāna-saṁyutam
hari-līlā-kathā-vrātā-
mṛtānandita-sat-suram*

*sarva-vedānta-sāraṁ yat
brahmātmaikatva-lakṣaṇam
vastu advitīyaṁ tat-niṣṭham
kaivalyaika-prayojanam*

ādi – in the beginning; *madhya* – the middle; *avasāneṣu* – and the end; *vairāgya* – concerning renunciation of material things; *ākhyāna* – with narrations; *saṁyutam* – full; *hari-līlā* – of the pastimes of Lord Hari; *kathā-vrāta* – of the many discussions; *amṛta* – by the nectar; *ānandita* – in which are made ecstatic; *sat-suram* – the saintly devotees and demigods; *sarva-vedānta* – of all the Vedānta; *sāraṁ* – the essence; *yat* – which; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *ātma-ekatva* – in terms of nondifference from the spirit soul; *lakṣaṇam* – characterized; *vastu* – the reality; *advitīyam* – one without a second; *tat-niṣṭham* – having that as its prime subject matter; *kaivalya* – exclusive devotional service; *eka* – the only; *prayojanam* – ultimate goal.

TRANSLATION

From beginning to end, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is full of narrations that encourage renunciation of material life, as well as nectarean accounts of Lord Hari’s transcendental pastimes, which give ecstasy to the saintly devotees and demigods. This Bhāgavatam is the essence of all Vedānta philosophy because its subject matter is the Absolute Truth, which, while nondifferent from the spirit soul, is the ultimate reality, one without a second. The goal of this literature is exclusive devotional service unto that Supreme Truth.

PURPORT

Vairāgya, renunciation, means giving up everything that has no relation with the Absolute Truth. Saintly devotees and demigods are

enthused by the nectar of the Lord's spiritual pastimes, which are the essence of all Vedic knowledge. Vedic knowledge elaborately negates the ultimate reality of material things by emphasizing their temporary, fleeting existence. The ultimate goal is *vastu*, the factual substance, which is *advitīyam*, one without a second. That unique Absolute Truth is a transcendental person far beyond the mundane categories and characteristics of personality found in our pale material world. Thus the ultimate goal of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is to train the sincere reader in love of Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa is supremely lovable because of His eternal, transcendental qualities. The beauty of this world is a dim reflection of the unlimited beauty of the Lord. Without compromise, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* persistently declares the glories of the Absolute Truth and is therefore the supreme spiritual literature, awarding a full taste of the nectar of love of Kṛṣṇa in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 13.13

*prauṣṭhapadyām paurṇamāsyām
hema-simha-samanvitam
dadāti yo bhāgavatam
sa yāti paramām gatim*

prauṣṭhapadyām – in the month of Bhādra; *paurṇamāsyām* – on the full-moon day; *hema-simha* – upon a golden throne; *samanvitam* – seated; *dadāti* – gives as a gift; *yaḥ* – who; *bhāgavatam* – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *saḥ* – he; *yāti* – goes; *paramām* – to the supreme; *gatim* – destination.

TRANSLATION

If on the full moon day of the month of Bhādra one places Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam on a golden throne and gives it as a gift, he will attain the supreme transcendental destination.

PURPORT

One should place *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* on a golden throne because it is the king of all literature. On the full-moon day of the month of Bhādra, the sun, which is compared to this king of literatures, is present in the constellation Leo and looks as if raised up on a royal throne. (According to astrology, the sun is said to be exalted in the sign of Leo). Thus one may unreservedly worship *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the supreme divine scripture.

TEXT 13.14

*rājante tāvad anyāni
purāṇāni satām gaṇe
yāvad bhāgavatam naiva
śrūyate 'mṛta-sāgaram*

rājante – they shine forth; *tāvat* – that long; *anyāni* – the other; *purāṇāni* – Purāṇas; *satām* – of saintly persons; *gaṇe* – in the assembly; *yāvat* – as long as; *bhāgavatam* – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *na* – not; *eva* – indeed; *śrūyate* – is heard; *amṛta-sāgaram* – the great ocean of nectar.

TRANSLATION

All other Purāṇic scriptures shine forth in the assembly of saintly devotees only as long as that great ocean of nectar, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, is not heard.

PURPORT

Other Vedic literatures and other scriptures of the world remain prominent until the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is duly heard and understood. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the ocean of nectar and the supreme literature. By faithful hearing, recitation and distribution of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the world will be sanctified and other, inferior literatures will fade to minor status.

TEXT 13.15

*sarva-vedānta-sāram hi
śrī-bhāgavatam iṣyate
tad-rasāmṛta-ṭṛptasya
nānyatra syād ratiḥ kvacit*

sarva-vedānta – of all Vedānta philosophy; *sāram* – the essence; *hi* – indeed; *śrī-bhāgavatam* – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *iṣyate* – is said to be; *tat* – of it; *rasa-amṛta* – by the nectarean taste; *ṭṛptasya* – for one who is satisfied; *na* – not; *anyatra* – elsewhere; *syāt* – there is; *ratiḥ* – attraction; *kvacit* – ever.

TRANSLATION

***Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is declared to be the essence of all Vedānta philosophy. One who has felt satisfaction from its nectarean mellow will never be attracted to any other literature.**

TEXT 13.16

*nimna-gānām yathā gaṅgā
devānām acyuto yathā
vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ
purāṇānām idam tathā*

nimna-gānām – of rivers flowing down to the sea; *yathā* – as; *gaṅgā* – the Ganges; *devānām* – of all deities; *acyutaḥ* – the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead; *yathā* – as; *vaiṣṇavānām* – of devotees of Lord Viṣṇu; *yathā* – as; *śambhuḥ* – Śiva; *purāṇānām* – of *Purāṇas*; *idam* – this; *tathā* – similarly.

TRANSLATION

Just as the Gaṅgā is the greatest of all rivers, Lord Acyuta the supreme among deities and Lord Śambhu [Śiva] the greatest of Vaiṣṇavas, so Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the greatest of all Purāṇas.

TEXT 13.17

*kṣetrāṇām caiva sarveṣām
yathā kāśī hy anuttamā
tathā purāṇa-vrātānām
śrīmad-bhāgavatam dvijāḥ*

kṣetrāṇām – of holy places; *ca* – and; *eva* – indeed; *sarveṣām* – of all; *yathā* – as; *kāśī* – Benares; *hi* – indeed; *anuttamā* – unexcelled; *tathā* – thus; *purāṇa-vrātānām* – of all the *Purāṇas*; *śrīmat-bhāgavatam* – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *dvijāḥ* – O *brāhmaṇas*.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇas, in the same way that the city of Kāśī is unexcelled among holy places, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is supreme among all the Purāṇas.

TEXT 13.18

*śrīmad-bhāgavatam purāṇam amalam yad vaiṣṇavānām priyam
yasmīn pāramahaṁsyam ekam amalam jñānam param gīyate
tatra jñāna-virāga-bhakti-sahitam naiṣkarmyam āviskṛtam
tac chr̥ṇvan su-paṭhan vicāraṇa-paro bhaktyā vimucyen naraḥ*

śrīmat-bhāgavatam – *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *purāṇam* – the *Purāṇa*; *amalam* – perfectly pure; *yad* – which; *vaiṣṇavānām* – to the Vaiṣṇavas; *priyam* – most dear; *yasmīn* – in which; *pāramahaṁsyam* – attainable by the topmost devotees; *ekam* – exclusive; *amalam* – perfectly pure;

jñānam – knowledge; *param* – supreme; *gīyate* – is sung; *tatra* – there; *jñāna-virāga-bhakti-sahitam* – together with knowledge, renunciation and devotion; *naiṣkarmyam* – freedom from all material work; *āviṣkṛtam* – is revealed; *tat* – that; *śṛṇvan* – hearing; *su-paṭhan* – properly chanting; *vicāraṇa-paraḥ* – who is serious about understanding; *bhaktyā* – with devotion; *vimucyeta* – becomes totally liberated; *naraḥ* – a person.

TRANSLATION

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the spotless Purāṇa. It is most dear to the Vaiṣṇavas because it describes the pure and supreme knowledge of the paramahamsas. This Bhāgavatam reveals the means for becoming free from all material work, together with the processes of transcendental knowledge, renunciation and devotion. Anyone who seriously tries to understand Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, who properly hears and chants it with devotion, becomes completely liberated.

PURPORT

Because *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is completely free of contamination by the modes of nature, it is endowed with extraordinary spiritual beauty and is therefore dear to the pure devotees of the Lord. The word *pāramahamsyam* indicates that even completely liberated souls are eager to hear and narrate *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Those who are trying to be liberated should faithfully serve this literature by hearing and reciting it with faith and devotion.

TEXT 13.19

*kasmai yena vibhāsito 'yam atulo jñāna-pradīpaḥ purā
tad-rūpeṇa ca nārādāya munaye kṛṣṇāya tad-rūpiṇā
yogīndrāya tad-ātmanātha bhagavad-rātāya kārūnyatas
tac chuddham vimalam viśokam amṛtam satyam param dhīmahī*

kasmai – unto Brahmā; *yena* – by whom; *vibhāsitaḥ* – thoroughly revealed; *ayam* – this; *atulaḥ* – incomparable; *jñāna* – of transcendental knowledge; *pradīpaḥ* – the torchlight; *purā* – long ago; *tad-rūpeṇa* – in the form of Brahmā; *ca* – and; *nārādāya* – to Nārada; *munaye* – the great sage; *kṛṣṇāya* – to Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa; *tad-rūpiṇā* – in the form of Nārada; *yogīndrāya* – to the best of yogīs, Śukadeva; *tad-ātmanā* – as Nārada; *atha* – then; *bhagavat-rātāya* – to Parīkṣit Mahārāja; *kārūnyataḥ* – out of mercy; *tat* – that; *śuddham* –

pure; *vimalam* – uncontaminated; *viśokam* – free from misery; *amṛtam* – immortal; *satyam* – upon the truth; *param* – supreme; *dhīmahī* – I meditate.

TRANSLATION

I meditate upon that pure and spotless Supreme Absolute Truth, who is free from suffering and death and who in the beginning personally revealed this incomparable torchlight of knowledge to Brahmā. Brahmā then spoke it to the sage Nārada, who narrated it to Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa. Śrīla Vyāsa revealed this Bhāgavatam to the greatest of sages, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and Śukadeva mercifully spoke it to Mahārāja Parikṣit.

PURPORT

The first verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states, *satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmahī* – “I meditate upon the Supreme Truth” – and now at the conclusion of this magnificent transcendental literature, the same auspicious sounds are vibrated. The words *tad-rūpeṇa*, *tad-rūpiṇā* and *tad-ātmanā* in this verse clearly indicate that Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself originally spoke *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to Brahmā and then continued to speak this literature through the agency of Nārada Muni, Dvaipāyana Vyāsa, Śukadeva Gosvāmī and other great sages. In other words, whenever saintly devotees vibrate *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it is to be understood that Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself is speaking the Absolute Truth through the agency of His pure representatives. Anyone who submissively hears this literature from the Lord’s bona fide devotees transcends his conditioned state and becomes qualified to meditate upon the Absolute Truth and serve Him.

TEXT 13.20

*namas tasmai bhagavate
vāsudevāya sākṣiṇe
ya idam kṛpayā kasmai
vyācacakṣe mumukṣave*

namaḥ – obeisances; *tasmai* – to Him; *bhagavate* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *vāsudevāya* – Lord Vāsudeva; *sākṣiṇe* – the supreme witness; *yaḥ* – who; *idam* – this; *kṛpayā* – out of mercy; *kasmai* – to Brahmā; *vyācacakṣe* – explained; *mumukṣave* – who was desiring liberation.

TRANSLATION

We offer our obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Vāsudeva, the all-pervading witness, who mercifully explained this science to Brahmā when he anxiously desired salvation.

TEXT 13.21

*yogīndrāya namas tasmai
śukāya brahma-rūpiṇe
saṁsāra-sarpa-daṣṭam yo
viṣṇu-rātam amūmucat*

yogi-indrāya – to the king of mystics; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *tasmai* – to him; *śukaya* – Śukadeva Gosvāmī; *brahma-rūpiṇe* – who is a personal manifestation of the Absolute Truth; *saṁsāra-sarpa* – by the snake of material existence; *daṣṭam* – bitten; *yaḥ* – who; *viṣṇu-rātam* – Parīkṣit Mahārāja; *amūmucat* – freed.

TRANSLATION

I offer my humble obeisances to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the best of mystic sages and a personal manifestation of the Absolute Truth. He saved Mahārāja Parīkṣit, who was bitten by the snake of material existence.

PURPORT

Sūta Gosvāmī now offers obeisances to his own spiritual master, Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura clarifies that just as Arjuna was placed into material confusion so that *Bhagavad-gītā* might be spoken, so King Parīkṣit, a pure, liberated devotee of the Lord, was cursed to die so that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* might be spoken. Actually, King Parīkṣit is *viṣṇu-rāta*, eternally under the protection of the Lord. Śukadeva Gosvāmī liberated the king from his so-called illusion to exhibit the merciful nature of a pure devotee and the enlightening effect of his association.

TEXT 13.22

*bhave bhave yathā bhaktiḥ
pādayos tava jāyate
tathā kuruṣva deveśa
nāthas tvam no yataḥ prabho*

bhave bhava – in life after life; *yathā* – so that; *bhaktiḥ* – devotional service; *pādayoḥ* – at the lotus feet; *tava* – of You; *jāyate* – arises; *tathā* – so; *kuruṣva* – please do; *deva-īśa* – O Lord of lords; *nāthah* – the master; *tvam* – You; *naḥ* – our; *yataḥ* – because; *prabho* – O Lord.

TRANSLATION

O Lord of lords, O master, please grant us pure devotional service at Your lotus feet, life after life.

TEXT 13.23

*nāma-saṅkīrtanam yasya
sarva-pāpa praṇāśanam
praṇāmo duḥkha-śamanas
taṁ namāmi hariṁ param*

nāma-saṅkīrtanam – the congregational chanting of the holy name; *yasya* – of whom; *sarva-pāpa* – all sins; *praṇāśanam* – which destroys; *praṇāmaḥ* – the bowing down; *duḥkha* – misery; *śamaṇaḥ* – which subdues; *taṁ* – to Him; *namāmi* – I offer my obeisances; *hariṁ* – to Lord Hari; *param* – the Supreme.

TRANSLATION

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Lord, Hari, the congregational chanting of whose holy names destroys all sinful reactions, and the offering of obeisances unto whom relieves all material suffering.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Twelfth Canto, Thirteenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Glories of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.”

The Twelfth Canto was completed at Gainesville, Florida, on Sunday, July 18, 1982.

END OF THE TWELFTH CANTO

Conclusion

We offer our most respectful obeisances at the lotus feet of His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda and, by his mercy, to the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, to Lord Caitanya and His eternal associates, to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and to the supreme transcendental literature, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. By the causeless mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda we have been able to approach the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, and other great Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, and by carefully studying their liberated commentaries we have humbly tried to complete the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We are the insignificant servants of our spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and by his mercy we have been allowed to serve him through the presentation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Appendixes

The Author

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda appeared in this world in 1896 in Calcutta, India. He first met his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, in Calcutta in 1922.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, a prominent religious scholar and the founder of sixty-four Gauḍīya Maṭhas (Vedic institutes), liked this educated young man and convinced him to dedicate his life to teaching Vedic knowledge. Śrīla Prabhupāda became his student and, in 1933, his formally initiated disciple.

At their first meeting, in 1922, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī requested Śrīla Prabhupāda to broadcast Vedic knowledge in English. In the years that followed, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote a commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, assisted the Gauḍīya Maṭha in its work and, in 1944, started *Back to Godhead*, an English fortnightly magazine. Singlehandedly, Śrīla Prabhupāda edited it, typed the manuscripts, checked the galley proofs, and even distributed the individual copies. The magazine is now being continued by his disciples.

In 1950 Śrīla Prabhupāda retired from married life, adopting the *vānaprastha* (retired) order to devote more time to his studies and writing. He traveled to the holy city of Vṛndāvana, where he lived in humble circumstances in the historic temple of Rādhā-Dāmodara. There he engaged for several years in deep study and writing. He accepted the renounced order of life (*sannyāsa*) in 1959. At Rādhā-Dāmodara, Śrīla Prabhupāda began work on his life's masterpiece: a multivolume commentated translation of the eighteen-thousand-verse *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*). He also wrote *Easy Journey to Other Planets*.

After publishing three volumes of the *Bhāgavatam*, Śrīla Prabhupāda came to the United States, in September 1965, to fulfill the mission of his spiritual master. Subsequently, His Divine Grace wrote more than fifty volumes of authoritative commentated translations and summary studies of the philosophical and religious classics of India.

When he first arrived by freighter in New York City, Śrīla Prabhupāda was practically penniless. Only after almost a year of

great difficulty did he establish the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, in July of 1966. Before he passed away on November 14, 1977, he had guided the Society and seen it grow to a worldwide confederation of more than one hundred *āśramas*, schools, temples, institutes, and farm communities.

In 1972 His Divine Grace introduced the Vedic system of primary and secondary education in the West by founding the *gurukula* school in Dallas, Texas. Since then his disciples have established similar schools throughout the United States and the rest of the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda also inspired the construction of several large international cultural centers in India. At Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, in West Bengal, devotees are building a spiritual city centered on a magnificent temple – an ambitious project for which construction will extend over many years to come. In Vṛndāvana are the Krishna-Balaram Temple and International Guesthouse, *gurukula* school, and Śrīla Prabhupāda Memorial and Museum. There are also major temples and cultural centers in Mumbai, New Delhi, Ahmedabad, Siliguri, and Ujjain. Other centers are planned in many important locations on the Indian subcontinent.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's most significant contribution, however, is his books. Highly respected by scholars for their authority, depth, and clarity, they are used as textbooks in numerous college courses. His writings have been translated into over fifty languages. The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, established in 1972 to publish the works of His Divine Grace, has thus become the world's largest publisher of books in the field of Indian religion and philosophy.

In just twelve years, despite his advanced age, Śrīla Prabhupāda circled the globe fourteen times on lecture tours that took him to six continents. In spite of such a vigorous schedule, Śrīla Prabhupāda continued to write prolifically. His writings constitute a veritable library of Vedic philosophy, religion, literature, and culture.

References

The purports of Srimad-Bhagavatam are all confirmed by standard Vedic authorities. The following authentic scriptures are cited in this volume.

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Matsya Purāṇa

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad

Padma Purāṇa

Ṛg Veda

Sāma Veda

Skanda Purāṇa

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Vedānta-sūtra

Viṣṇu Purāṇa

Yajur Veda

Glossary

Ācārya – a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Acyuta – the Supreme Lord, who can never fall down from His perception.

Apsarās – the dancing girls of heaven.

Ārati – a ceremony for greeting the Lord with chanting and offerings of food, lamps, fans, flowers and incense.

Arghya – a ceremonious offering, in a conchshell, of water and other auspicious items.

Āśrama – one of the four spiritual orders of life. *See also: Brahmacharya, Grhastha, Vānaprastha, Sannyāsa.*

Atharva Veda – one of the four *Vedas*, the original revealed scriptures spoken by the Lord Himself.

Avatāra – a descent, or incarnation, of the Supreme Lord.

Balarāma (Baladeva) – a plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead appearing as the son of Rohiṇī and as the elder brother of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Bhagavad-gītā – the discourse between the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, and His devotee Arjuna, expounding devotional service as both the principal means and the ultimate end of spiritual perfection.

Bhīṣma – the most powerful and oldest warrior in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. He is recognized as one of the chief authorities on devotional service to the Lord.

Bhūr – the lower material planets.

Bhuvar – the middle material planets.

Brahmā – the first created living being and secondary creator of the material universe.

Brahmacarya – celibate student life; the first order of Vedic spiritual life.

Brāhmaṇa – a member of the intellectual, priestly class; the first Vedic social order.

Br̥han-nārādiya Purāṇa – one of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, or Vedic historical scriptures.

Br̥haspati – the spiritual master of King Indra and chief priest for the demigods.

Cāṇakya Paṇḍita – the *brāhmaṇa* advisor to King Candragupta responsible for checking Alexander the Great's invasion of India. He is a famous author of books on politics and morality.

Candragupta – a king of the Maurya dynasty in India. His armies repelled Alexander the Great's advance into India.

Cedirāja – the king of Cedi; also known as Śísupāla. Lord Kṛṣṇa killed him because of his blasphemy.

Daityas – demons; a race of demons descending from Diti.

Dharma – religion; duty, especially everyone's eternal service nature.

Dhenukāsura – a mystic demon who took the form of a donkey and was killed by Kṛṣṇa.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra – the uncle of the Pāṇḍavas whose attempt to usurp their kingdom for the sake of his own sons resulted in the Kurukṣetra war.

Dhruva Mahārāja – a great devotee who at the age of five performed severe austerities and realized the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He received an entire planet, the polestar.

Diti – a wife of Kaśyapa Muni, and the mother of the demons Hiranyākṣa and Hiranyakaśipu.

Droṇācārya – the military teacher of the Pāṇḍavas. He was obliged to fight against them in the Battle of Kurukṣetra.

Dvāpara-yuga – the third in the cycle of four ages. It lasts 864,000 years.

Dvārakā – the island kingdom of Lord Kṛṣṇa, lying off India's west coast, where He performed pastimes five thousands years ago.

Gajendra – the king of the elephants. He was saved from a crocodile by Lord Viṣṇu and awarded liberation.

Gandharvas – demigod singers and musicians.

Gaṅgā – the Ganges River.

Garbhodaka Ocean – the body of water that fills the bottom part of each material universe.

Garuḍa – Lord Viṣṇu’s eternal carrier, a great devotee in a birdlike form.

Gopīs – Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s cowherd girlfriends, who are His most surrendered and confidential devotees.

Govardhana – a large hill dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. Kṛṣṇa held it up for seven days to protect His devotees in Vṛndāvana from a devastating storm sent by Indra.

Guru – a spiritual master.

Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra – *See: Mahā-mantra*

Hari – the Supreme Lord, who removes all obstacles to spiritual progress.

Hari-kīrtana – the chanting of the names of Lord Hari (Kṛṣṇa).

Hayaśīrṣā – the horse-headed incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He spoke the *Vedas* to Lord Brahmā.

Hiraṇyakaśipu – the demoniac king killed by Lord Nṛsiṃha.

Hiraṇyākṣa – the demoniac son of Kaśyapa who was killed by Lord Varāha.

Ikṣvāku – the son of Manu who was king of the earth in ancient times and to whom Manu spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Indra – the chief demigod of heaven and presiding deity of rain, and the father of Arjuna. He is the son of Aditi.

Janamejaya – the son of King Parīkṣit.

Jīva Gosvāmī – one of the six Vaiṣṇava spiritual masters who directly followed Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and systematically presented His teachings.

Kāliya – the many-headed serpent chastised by Lord Kṛṣṇa for poisoning a section of the Yamunā River.

Kali-yuga (Age of Kali) – the present age, characterized by quarrel. It is last in the cycle of four ages and began five thousand years ago.

Kalki, Lord – the incarnation of the Supreme Lord who, at the end of

the last of the four ages, annihilates all the remaining atheists.

Kapila – the incarnation of the Supreme Lord who appeared as the son of Kardama Muni and Devahūti and taught the Kṛṣṇa conscious Sāṅkhya philosophy.

Karma – material, fruitive activity and its reactions.

Keśava – the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, who has fine black hair.

Keśī – a demon who attacked the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana in the form of a wild horse. He was killed by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Khaṭvāṅga – a saintly king who is famous for attaining unalloyed Kṛṣṇa consciousness just moments before his death.

Kṛṣṇa – the Supreme Personality of Godhead appearing in His original, two-armed form.

Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa – *See: Vyāsadeva*

Kṣatriya – a warrior or administrator; the second Vedic social order.

Kūrma – the Supreme Lord’s incarnation as a tortoise.

Kurus – the family of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who were enemies of the Pāṇḍavas.

Magadha – a province of ancient India.

Mahābhārata – Vyāsadeva’s epic history of greater India, which includes the events of the Kurukṣetra war and the narration of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Mahā-mantra – the great chant for deliverance: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Mahat-tattva – the original, undifferentiated form of the total material energy, from which the material world is manifest.

Mantra – a transcendental sound or Vedic hymn, which can deliver the mind from illusion.

Manu – a demigod son of Brahmā who is the forefather and lawgiver of the human race. There is a succession of fourteen Manus during each day of Brahmā.

Mathurā – Lord Kṛṣṇa’s abode, surrounding Vṛndāvana, where He took birth and to which He later returned after performing His childhood pastimes.

Matsya – the fish incarnation of the Supreme Lord.

Māyā – the inferior, illusory energy of the Supreme Lord, which rules over this material creation; forgetfulness of one’s relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

Mlecchas – uncivilized human beings, outside the Vedic social system, who are generally meat-eaters.

Nābhi – the saintly king who was the father of Lord Ṛṣabhadeva.

Nāgas – a race of serpents.

Nanda – one of the chief personal servants of Lord Nārāyaṇa in His spiritual abode, Vaikuṅṭha.

Nārada Muni – a pure devotee of the Lord, one of the sons of Lord Brahmā, who travels throughout the universes in his eternal body, glorifying devotional service while delivering the science of *bhakti*. He is the spiritual master of Vyāsadeva and of many other devotees.

Narasimha, Lord (Nṛsimhadeva) – the half-man, half-lion incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who killed the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu and saved His devotee, Prahlāda Mahārāja.

Nārāyaṇa – a name for the majestic four-armed form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead meaning “He who is the source and goal of all living entities.”

Nṛga – a king who was cursed to become a snake because of a slight discrepancy in his service to *brāhmaṇas*. He was delivered by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Om̐kāra – the sacred sound *om̐*, which is the beginning of many Vedic *mantras* and which represents the Supreme Lord.

Padma Purāṇa – one of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, or Vedic historical scriptures.

Pañcarātra – Vedic literature describing the process of Deity worship for devotees in the present age.

Pāṇḍavas – Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva, the five warrior-brothers who were intimate friends and devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Paramātmā – the Supersoul, Viṣṇu as manifest in the heart of each

embodied living entity and throughout material nature.

Paramparā – a disciplic succession of bona fide spiritual masters.

Parīkṣit Mahārāja – the emperor of the world who heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from Śukadeva Gosvāmī and thus attained perfection.

Paṇḍraka – an enemy of Lord Kṛṣṇa who attempted to imitate Him.

Pracetās – the ten sons of King Prācīnabarhi. They achieved perfection by worshipping Lord Viṣṇu.

Prācīnabarhi – a king who, entangled in fruitive activities, received instruction on devotional service from Nārada Muni.

Pradhāna – the total material energy in its unmanifest state.

Prahlāda Mahārāja – a devotee persecuted by his demoniac father but protected and saved by the Lord in the form of Nṛsiṃhadeva.

Prakṛti – material nature; an energy of the Supreme Lord; the enjoyed.

Priyavrata – the son of Svāyambhuva Manu and brother of Uttānapāda. He once ruled the universe.

Prṛthu Mahārāja – an empowered incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who demonstrated how to be an ideal ruler.

Purāṇas – the eighteen Vedic supplementary literatures, historical scriptures.

Pūtānā – a witch who was sent by Kāmsa to appear in the form of a beautiful woman to kill baby Kṛṣṇa, but who was instead killed by Him and granted liberation.

Rākṣasas – man-eating demons.

Rāmacandra – an incarnation of the Supreme Lord as the perfect king.

Rāvaṇa – a demoniac ruler who was killed by Lord Rāmacandra.

Ṛg Veda – one of the four *Vedas*, the original scriptures spoken by the Lord Himself.

Ṛṣabhadeva – an incarnation of the Supreme Lord as a devotee king who, after instructing His sons in spiritual life, renounced His kingdom for a life of austerity.

Rudra – See: Śiva

Rukmiṇī – Lord Kṛṣṇa’s principal queen in Dvārakā.

Śama – control of the mind.

Sāma Veda – one of the four original *Vedas*. It consists of sacrificial hymns set to music.

Samhitās – supplementary Vedic literatures expressing the conclusions of particular self-realized authorities.

Saṅkarṣaṇa – one of the four original expansions of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world; also, another name of Balarāma, given by Garga Muni.

Sāṅkhya – analytical discrimination between spirit and matter; also, the path of devotional service described by Lord Kapila, the son of Devahūti.

Saṅkīrtana – congregational or public glorification of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, especially through the chanting of the Lord’s holy names.

Sannyāsa – renounced life; the fourth order of Vedic spiritual life.

Satya-yuga – the first and best in the cycle of the four ages of the universe. It lasts 1,728,000 years.

Saubhari Muni – a powerful mystic who accidentally fell down to sex attraction.

Śiva – the special incarnation of the Lord as the demigod in charge of the mode of ignorance and the destruction of the material manifestation.

Skanda Purāṇa – one of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, or Vedic historical scriptures.

Śrīdhara Svāmī – an early Vaiṣṇava commentator on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Śūdra – a laborer; a member of the fourth of the Vedic social orders.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī – the devotee-sage who originally spoke *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to King Parīkṣit just prior to the king’s death.

Sūtra – the intermediate manifestation of the *mahat-tattva*, when it is predominated by the mode of passion.

Svāmī – a controller of the mind and senses; the title of one in the renounced, or *sannyāsa*, order.

Svar – the upper material planets.

Svāyambhuva Manu – the Manu who appeared first in Brahmā’s day and who was the grandfather of Dhruva Mahārāja.

Takṣaka – the king of the snakes.

Tārā – the wife of Bṛhaspati. She was kidnapped by the moon-god.

Tilaka – auspicious clay markings placed by devotees on the forehead and other parts of the body.

Tretā-yuga – the second in the cycle of the four ages of the universe. It lasts 1,296,000 years.

Trṇāvarta – a whirlwind-shaped demon who was sent by Kaṁsa to kill Kṛṣṇa, but whom Kṛṣṇa killed instead.

Uddhava – a confidential friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s in Vṛndāvana.

Vaiśyas – farmers and merchants; members of the third Vedic social order.

Vaivasvata Manu – the current Manu, the seventh of fourteen.

Vāmana – the incarnation of the Supreme Lord as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa*, to whom Bali Mahārāja surrendered everything.

Varṇāśrama-dharma – the Vedic social system of four social and four spiritual orders. *See also: Varṇa, Āśrama.*

Vāsudeva – the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva and proprietor of everything material and spiritual.

Vatsāsura – a demon who came to Vṛndāvana in the form of a calf to kill Kṛṣṇa but who was instead killed by Him.

Vedānta-sūtra – Śrīla Vyāsadeva’s conclusive summary of Vedic philosophical knowledge, written in brief codes.

Vedas – the original revealed scriptures, first spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Vidura – a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa who was a son of Vyāsadeva, an incarnation of Yamarāja and an uncle of the Pāṇḍavas.

Viṣṇu – the Supreme Lord; Lord Kṛṣṇa’s expansions in Vaikuṅṭha and for the creation and maintenance of the material universes.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura – a great Vaiṣṇava spiritual master in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He was a commentator on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Vṛndāvana – Kṛṣṇa’s eternal abode, where He fully manifests His quality of sweetness; the village on this earth in which He enacted His childhood pastimes five thousand years ago.

Vyāsadeva – the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who gave the *Vedas*, *Purāṇas*, *Vedānta-sūtra* and *Mahābhārata* to humankind.

Yadu dynasty – the dynasty in which Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared.

Yajur Veda – one of the four *Vedas*, the original revealed scriptures spoken by the Lord Himself.

Yakṣas – ghostly followers of the demigod Kuvera, the treasurer of the demigods.

Yoga – a spiritual discipline meant for linking one’s consciousness with the Supreme.

Yogī – a transcendentalist striving for union with the Supreme.

Guide to Sanskrit Pronunciation

The system of transliteration used in this book conforms to a system that scholars have accepted to indicate the pronunciation of each sound in the Sanskrit language.

The short vowel **a** is pronounced like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far**. Short **i** is pronounced as **i** in **pin**, long **ī** as in **pique**, short **u** as in **pull**, and long **ū** as in **rule**. The vowel **ṛ** is pronounced like **ri** in **rim**, **e** like the **ey** in **they**, **o** like the **o** in **go**, **ai** like the **ai** in **aisle**, and **au** like the **ow** in **how**. The *anusvara* (**ṁ**) is pronounced like the **n** in the French word *bon*, and *visarga* (**ḥ**) is pronounced as a final **h** sound. At the end of a couplet, **aḥ** is pronounced **aha**, and **iḥ** is pronounced **ihi**.

The guttural consonants – **k**, **kh**, **g**, **gh**, and **ṅ** – are pronounced from the throat in much the same manner as in English. **K** is pronounced as in **kite**, **kh** as in **Eckhart**, **g** as in **give**, **gh** as in **dig-hard**, and **ṅ** as in **sing**.

The palatal consonants – **c**, **ch**, **j**, **jh**, and **ñ** – are pronounced with the tongue touching the firm ridge behind the teeth. **C** is pronounced as in **chair**, **ch** as in **staunch-heart**, **j** as in **joy**, **jh** as in **hedgehog**, and **ñ** as in **canyon**.

The cerebral consonants – **ṭ**, **ṭh**, **ḍ**, **ḍh**, and **ṇ** – are pronounced with the tip of the tongue turned up and drawn back against the dome of the palate. **Ṭ** is pronounced as in **tub**, **ṭh** as in **light-heart**, **ḍ** as in **dove**, **ḍh** as in **red-hot**, and **ṇ** as in **nut**.

The dental consonants – **t**, **th**, **d**, **dh**, and **n** – are pronounced in the same manner as the cerebrals, but with the forepart of the tongue against the teeth.

The labial consonants – **p**, **ph**, **b**, **bh**, and **m** – are pronounced with the lips. **P** is pronounced as in **pine**, **ph** as in **uphill**, **b** as in **bird**, **bh** as in **rub-hard**, and **m** as in **mother**.

The semivowels – **y**, **r**, **l**, and **v** – are pronounced as in **yes**, **run**, **light**, and **vine** respectively. The sibilants – **ś**, **ṣ**, and **s** – are

pronounced, respectively, as in the German word *sprechen* and the English words **sh**ine and **sun**. The letter **h** is pronounced as in **home**.