

ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM

Eleventh Canto



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

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ALL GLORY TO ŚRĪ GURU AND GAURĀṄGA

ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM

of

KRṢṂA-DVAIPĀYANA VYĀSA
*bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet taṁ
bhaktyaikayeśaṁ guru-devatātmā*

Text 2.37

ŚRĪMAD BHĀGAVATAM

Eleventh Canto

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Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta
Kṛṣṇa, die Höchste Persönlichkeit der Gottheit.
Lehren des Herrn Caitanya
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Der Nektar der Unterweisung
Śrī Īsopaniṣad
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Lehren der Königin Kuntī
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Kṛṣṇa Bewusstsein: Das oberste Yoga-System
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Das Leben kommt aus dem Leben
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Dr.Jörg Listemann

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Berechtigung zum Empfangen von göttlichem Wissen
Man erreicht alles mit Kṛṣṇa
Uddhava's Ecstasy
Kṛṣṇa's Letzte Anweisungen für Uddhava
Uddhava geht nach Badarikāśrama

KAPITEL DREIßIG

Das Verschwinden der Yadu-Dynastie

Kapitel Zusammenfassung
Der Herr Kṛṣṇa ist die Kulmination aller Schönheit
Kṛṣṇa Unterrichtet die Yadu-Dynastie
Die Yadu-Krieger gehen zu Prabhāsa
Der Rausch der Yādavas
Die Yadus vernichten sich gegenseitig
Kṛṣṇa und Balarāma Bekämpfen Sie die Yādava Krieger
Das Verschwinden des Herrn Śrī Balarāma
Kṛṣṇa wird von einem Jägerpfeil in den Fuß geschlagen
Das Klagelied des Jägers Jarā
Kṛṣṇa schickt Jarā an Vaikuṅṭha
Kṛṣṇas Waffen und Chariot kehren in die spirituelle Welt zurück
Kṛṣṇa weist seinen Fahrer an, nach Dvārakā zu gehen

KAPITEL EINUNDDREIßIG

Das Verschwinden des Herrn Śrī Kṛṣṇa

Kapitel Zusammenfassung
Große Persönlichkeiten versammeln sich, um das Verschwinden von
Kṛṣṇa zu erleben

Der Herr Kṛṣṇa kehrt in seine eigene Wohnung zurück
Kṛṣṇas Auftauchen und Verschwinden ähnelt der Leistung eines
Schauspielers
Beweise dafür, dass Kṛṣṇa jenseits des Todes liegt
Die Qualen von Devakī, Vasudeva und anderen
Kṛṣṇa's Verwandte betreten die Begräbnisfeuer
Arjuna wird getröstet, indem er sich an das Bhagavad erinnert - gītā
Dvārakā wird überflutet
Segnungen für die Hörer

ANHÄNGE

Die Absolute Natur des Höchsten Herrn
Der Autor
Referenzen
Glossar
Sanskrit Aussprachehandbuch

Vorwort

Wir müssen das gegenwärtige Bedürfnis der menschlichen Gesellschaft erkennen. Worin besteht dieses Bedürfnis? Die menschliche Gesellschaft wird nicht mehr durch geographische Grenzlinien auf bestimmte Länder oder Gemeinden beschränkt. Sie ist weitläufiger als im Mittelalter, und die allgemeine Tendenz geht heute dahin, daß sich die Welt zu einem Staat oder einer Gesellschaft zusammenschließt. Die Ideale des spirituellen Kommunismus beruhen dem *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gemäß auf der Einheit der gesamten menschlichen Gesellschaft, ja der gesamten Energie der Lebewesen. Große Denker verspürten den Drang, dies zu einer erfolgreichen Ideologie zu machen. Das *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* wird dieses Bedürfnis der menschlichen Gesellschaft erfüllen. Es beginnt daher mit dem Aphorismus der Vedanta Philosophie (*janmādy asya yatab*), um das Ideal einer gemeinsamen Grundlage festzulegen.

Die Menschheit ist heute nicht mehr in die Finsternis der Unwissenheit gehüllt. Weltweit hat sie auf den Gebieten der materiellen Annehmlichkeiten, der Bildung und der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung rasche Fortschritte gemacht. Doch irgend etwas stimmt nicht im sozialen Gefüge der Welt, und so entstehen selbst um unbedeutende Sachverhalte großangelegte Auseinandersetzungen. Es bedarf eines Schlüssels, wie die Menschheit auf einer gemeinsamen Grundlage in Frieden, Freundschaft und Glück vereint werden kann. Das *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* wird dieses Bedürfnis erfüllen, denn es bietet eine kulturelle Vorlage zur Respiritualisierung der gesamten Menschheit. Das *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* soll auch an Schulen und Universitäten gelehrt werden, denn es wurde von dem großen Gottgeweihten Prahlāda Mahārāja, der selbst ein Schüler war, empfohlen, um das dämonische Gesicht der Gesellschaft zu verändern

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

(*Bhāg.* 7.6.1)

Uneinigkeit in der menschlichen Gesellschaft ist darauf zurückzuführen, daß es in einer gottlosen Zivilisation an religiösen Prinzipien mangelt. Die Existenz Gottes ist eine Tatsache - Er ist der Allmächtige, von dem alles ausgeht, von dem alles erhalten wird und in den alles zur Ruhe eingeht. Die materialistische Wissenschaft hat nur sehr unzureichend versucht, den letztlichen Ursprung der Schöpfung herauszufinden, doch es ist eine Tatsache, daß es einen letztlichen Ursprung alles Bestehenden gibt. Dieser letztliche Ursprung wird rational und autoritativ im *Srimad-Bhāgavatam*, dem "*herrlichen Bhāgavatam*", erklärt.

Die transzendente Wissenschaft des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* hilft uns nicht nur, den letztlichen Ursprung aller Dinge zu erkennen, sondern auch, unsere Beziehung zu Ihm und unsere Pflicht der Vervollkommnung der menschlichen Gesellschaft auf der Grundlage dieser Erkenntnis zu verstehen. Das *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* ist ein gewaltiger Lesestoff in der Sanskritsprache und wird jetzt mit großer Sorgfalt ins Englische und andere Sprachen übertragen. Wenn man das *Bhāgavatam* einfach aufmerksam liest, wird man zu einem vollkommenen Gottesverständnis gelangen, und dem Leser werden genügend Kenntnisse vermittelt, daß er sich gegen Angriffe von Atheisten verteidigen kann. Darüber hinaus wird er imstande sein, andere dazu zu bringen, Gott als konkretes Prinzip anzuerkennen.

Das *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* beginnt mit der Definition des letztlichen Ursprungs. Es ist ein authentischer Kommentar zum *Vedānta-sūtra* vom gleichen Verfasser, Śrīla Vyāsadeva, und führt den Leser Schritt für Schritt, durch neun Cantos, zur höchsten Stufe der Gotteserkenntnis. Die einzige Vorbedingung zum Studium dieses bedeutenden Werkes transzendentalen Wissens besteht darin, behutsam Schritt für Schritt vorzugehen und es nicht wie ein gewöhnliches Buch planlos zu überfliegen. Man soll es also Kapitel für Kapitel (eines nach dem anderen) studieren. Der Lesestoff ist mit dem Originalsanskrittext, der lateinischen Transliteration, den Synonymen, der Übersetzung und Erläuterung so aufgebaut, daß man sicher sein kann, am Ende der ersten neun Cantos eine gottesbewußte Seele zu sein.

Der Zehnte Canto unterscheidet sich von den ersten neun, denn er handelt unmittelbar von den transzendentalen Taten und Spielen der Höchsten Persönlichkeit Gottes, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Man wird die Wirkungen des Zehnten Cantos nicht erfahren können, ohne durch die ersten neun Cantos gegangen zu sein. Das Werk besteht insgesamt aus zwölf in sich abgeschlossenen Cantos, doch jedem ist zu empfehlen, sie in kleinen Abschnitten nacheinander zu lesen.

Ich muß meine Schwächen bei der Vorlage des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, eingestehen, doch ich hoffe trotzdem, daß es bei den Denkern und Führern der Gesellschaft guten Anklang finden wird, wobei ich auf folgende Aussage des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.11) vertraue:

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

"Auf der anderen Seite aber ist Literatur, die voller Beschreibungen der transzendentalen Herrlichkeit des Namens, des Ruhms, der Gestalt und der Spiele des unbegrenzten Höchsten Herrn ist, eine transzendente Schöpfung, die zu dem Zweck entstand, eine Umwälzung im gottlosen Dasein einer irreführenden Zivilisation einzuleiten. Selbst wenn solche transzendentalen Schriften Unregelmäßigkeiten aufweisen, werden sie von geläuterten, völlig rechtschaffenen Menschen gehört, gesungen und angenommen."

Om tat sat

- A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami -

Einleitung

“Diese *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* ist so strahlend wie die Sonne, und sie ist kurz nach dem Fortgang des Herrn Kṛṣṇa in sein eigenes Heim entstanden, begleitet von Religion, Wissen usw.. Personen, die im dunklen Kali-Zeitalter ihr Sehvermögen verloren haben, werden von dieses Purāṇa wieder ins Licht gelangen.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.43)

Die zeitlose Weisheit Indiens kommt in den *Vedas* zum Ausdruck, in alten Sanskrit-Texten, die alle Bereiche des menschlichen Wissens berühren. Ursprünglich durch mündliche Überlieferung erhalten, wurden die *Vedas* erstmals vor fünftausend Jahren von Śrīla Vyāsadeva, der "literarischen Inkarnation Gottes", aufgeschrieben. Nach der Zusammenstellung der *Vedas* legte Vyāsadeva ihre Essenz in Aphorismen dar, welche als die *Vedānta-sūtras* bekannt geworden sind. Das *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*) ist der eigene Kommentar von Vyāsadeva's *Vedānta-sūtras*. Es wurde in der Reife seines spirituellen Lebens unter der Leitung von Nārada Muni, seinem spirituellen Meister, geschrieben. Bezeichnet als "die reife Frucht des Baumes der vedischen Literatur", ist das *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* die vollständigste und verbindlichste Darstellung des vedischen Wissens.

Nach dem Zusammenstellen des *Bhāgavatam*, vermittelte Vyāsa die Zusammenfassung an seinen Sohn, den Weisen Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Śukadeva Gosvāmī rezitierte anschließend das gesamte *Bhāgavatam* an Mahārāja Parīkṣit in einer Versammlung von gelehrten Heiligen am Ufer des Ganges unter Hastināpura (jetzt Delhi). Mahārāja Parīkṣit war der Kaiser der Welt und ein großartiger Mann, ein *rājaṛṣi* (heiliger König). Nachdem er eine Warnung erhalten hatte, dass er innerhalb einer Woche sterben würde, verzichtete er auf sein gesamtes Königreich und zog sich zum Ufer des Ganges zurück, um bis zum Tod zu fasten und geistige Erleuchtung zu erhalten. Das *Bhāgavatam* beginnt mit der nüchternen Frage von Kaiser Parīkṣit an Śukadeva Gosvāmī: "Du bist der geistliche Meister großer Heiliger und Verehrer. Ich bitte Dich daher, alle Menschen den Weg der Vollkommenheit zeigen, und vor allem für diejenigen, die im Begriff sind zu sterben. Bitte lass mich wissen, was ein Mann hören, singen, sich erinnern und anbeten sollte, und auch, was er nicht tun sollte. Bitte erkläre mir das alles."

Die Antworten von Śukadeva Gosvāmī auf diese und zahlreiche andere von Mahārāja Parīkṣit gestellte Fragen, bezogen sich auf die Natur des Selbst bis hin zum Ursprung des Universums, und sie hielten die versammelten Weisen während der sieben Tage vor dem Tod des Königs ständig in Atem. Der Weise Sūta Gosvāmī, der in dieser Versammlung anwesend war, als Śukadeva Gosvāmī zum ersten Mal das *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, rezitierte, wiederholte später das *Bhāgavatam* vor einer Versammlung von Weisen im Wald von Naimiṣāraṇya. Diese Weisen, die um das geistliche Wohlergehen der Menschen im Allgemeinen besorgt waren, hatten sich versammelt, um

eine lange und kontinuierliche Kette von Opfern durchzuführen, um dem erniedrigenden Einfluss des beginnenden Zeitalters von Kali entgegenzuwirken. Als Antwort auf die Bitte der Weisen, die Essenz der vedischen Weisheit zu vorzutragen, wiederholte Sūta Gosvāmī auswendig die gesamten achtzehntausend Verse des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, wie sie von Śukadeva Gosvāmī vor Mahārāja Parīkṣit rezitiert wurden.

Der Leser des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* erfährt, wie sich Sūta Gosvāmī auf die Fragen von Mahārāja Parīkṣit und die Antworten von Śukadeva Gosvāmī bezieht. Aber auch Sūta Gosvāmī antwortet manchmal direkt auf Fragen von Śaunaka Ṛṣi Ṛṣi, dem Sprecher der Weisen, der sich im Naimiṣāraṇya-Wald versammelt hat. Man hört daher gleichzeitig zwei Dialoge: einen zwischen Mahārāja Parīkṣit und Śukadeva Gosvāmī am Ufer des Ganges und einen anderen im Naimiṣāraṇya-Wald zwischen Sūta Gosvāmī und den Weisen, die von von Śaunaka Ṛṣi Ṛṣi angeführt wurden. Darüber hinaus erzählt er, während er König Parīkṣit, Śukadeva Gosvāmī anweist, oft historische Episoden und berichtet von langen philosophischen Diskussionen zwischen so großen Seelen wie Nārada Muni und Vasudeva. Mit diesem Verständnis der Geschichte des *Bhāgavatam*, wird der Leser die Vermischung von Dialogen und Ereignissen aus verschiedenen Quellen leicht nachvollziehen können. Da im Text die philosophische Weisheit wichtiger als eine chronologische Ordnung ist, ist die tiefe Botschaft des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* voll und ganz zu würdigen.

Die Übersetzer dieser (englischen Original-) Ausgabe vergleichen das *Bhāgavatam* mit Zuckerwatte - wo auch immer Sie diese kosten, Sie werden es genauso süß und genussvoll finden. Um die Süße des *Bhāgavatam* zu schmecken, kann man damit beginnen, jeden seiner Inhalte zu lesen. Nach einem solchen einleitenden Geschmack ist es jedoch für den seriösen Leser am besten, zum ersten Canto zurückzukehren und sich dann dem *Bhāgavatam* in seiner natürlichen Ordnung, d.h. Canto für Canto, zuzuwenden.

Diese Ausgabe des *Bhāgavatam* ist die erste vollständige englische (Original-) Übersetzung dieses wichtigen Textes mit einem ausführlichen Kommentar, und es ist die erste, die der englischsprachigen Öffentlichkeit zur Verfügung steht. Die ersten zwölf Bände (Canto Eins bis Canto Zehn, Erster Teil) sind das Ergebnis des wissenschaftlichen und hingebungsvollen Einsatzes Seiner Göttlichen Gnade A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, dem Gründer-*ācārya* der International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) und der weltweit angesehensten Lehrer für religiöses und philosophisches Denken in Indien. Seine vollkommene Sanskrit-Forschung und seine intime Vertrautheit mit der vedischen Kultur und dem Denken sowie der modernen Lebensweise verbinden sich, um dem Westen eine großartige Ausstellung dieses wichtigen Klassikers zu offenbaren. Nach dem Weggang von Śrīla Prabhupāda aus dieser Welt im Jahre 1977 wurde seine monumentale Arbeit des Übersetzens und Kommentierens des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* von seinen Schülern Hridayananda dāsa Goswami und

Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa fortgesetzt. Der Leser wird dieses Werk aus vielen Gründen als wertvoll empfinden. Für Diejenigen, die sich für die klassischen Wurzeln der indischen Zivilisation interessieren, dient es als riesiges Reservoir an detaillierten Informationen über praktisch jeden seiner Aspekte. Für Studierende der vergleichenden Philosophie und Religion bietet das *Bhāgavatam* einen durchdringenden Einblick in die Bedeutung des tiefen spirituellen Erbes Indiens. Für Soziologen und Anthropologen offenbart das *Bhāgavatam* die praktische Funktionsweise einer friedlichen und wissenschaftlich organisierten vedischen Kultur, deren Institutionen auf der Grundlage einer hoch entwickelten spirituellen Weltanschauung integriert wurden. Für Literaturstudenten wird das *Bhāgavatam* ein Meisterwerk majestätischer Poesie sein. Für Studenten der Psychologie bietet der Text wichtige Perspektiven auf die Natur des Bewusstseins, das menschliche Verhalten und die philosophische Erforschung der Identität. Schließlich, für Diejenigen, die nach spiritueller Einsicht suchen, ist das *Bhāgavatam* eine einfache und praktische Anleitung zur Erlangung der höchsten Selbsterkenntnis und Verwirklichung der Absoluten Wahrheit. Der gesamte mehrbändige Text, der vom Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT) präsentiert wird, verspricht noch lange Zeit einen bedeutenden Platz im intellektuellen, kulturellen und spirituellen Leben des modernen Menschen einzunehmen.

- Die Verleger -

KAPITEL EINS

Der Fluch über die Yadu-Dynastie

Dieses Kapitel behandelt die Vorzeichen für die Vernichtung der Yadu-Dynastie, die mit der Erscheinung eines Eisenklumpens begann. Diese Erzählung zu hören, ist ein großer Anreiz, sich von der materiellen Welt zu lösen.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa hat den großen Kampf zwischen den Kurus und den Pāṇḍavas in Kurukṣetra fachmännisch organisiert und damit die Last der Erde weitgehend beseitigt. Aber der Höchste Herr, dessen Einfluss unvorstellbar ist, war wegen der anhaltenden Anwesenheit der unbesiegbaren Yadu-Familie immer noch nicht zufrieden. Der Herr wollte die Vernichtung der Yadu-Dynastie herbeiführen, um seine Spiele auf der Erde vollständig beenden und in sein eigenes Heim zurückkehren zu können. Unter dem Vorwand eines Fluches durch eine Versammlung von brāhmaṇas zog er seine gesamte Dynastie von der Erdoberfläche zurück.

Auf Wunsch von Śrī Kṛṣṇa versammelten sich viele große Weisen, angeführt von Nārada und Viśvāmītra, an dem heiligen Ort namens Piṇḍāraka in der Nähe der Stadt Dvārakā. Auch die kleinen Jungen der Yadu-Familie, die in eine spielerische Stimmung versetzt wurden, kamen dort an. Diese Jungen kleideten Sāmba in der Gestalt einer schwangeren Frau, die kurz vor der Geburt steht, und erkundigten sich bei den Weisen über die Fruchtbarkeit der sogenannten Schwangerschaft von Sāmba. Die Weisen verfluchten die verspottenden Jungen mit den Worten: "Sie wird einen Klumpen zur Welt bringen, der Deine Familie zerstören wird." Die Yadus, verängstigt von diesem Fluch, hoben das Kleidungsstück sofort vom Bauch von Sāmba und fanden einen Klumpen. Sie eilten zur Versammlung von Ugrasena, dem König der Yadus, und gaben einen Bericht über alles, was geschehen war. Aus Angst vor dem Fluch von brāhmaṇas' befahl Yadurāja Ugrasena, den Klumpen auf den Boden zu werfen, zu Puder zu zermalmen und dann ins Meer zu werfen. Im Ozeans schluckte ein Fisch die Reste des Eisenklumpens und die Wellen trugen das zermalmte Pulver wieder ans Ufer, wo es einsickerte und schließlich zu einem Rohrstockhain wurde. Fischer fingen den Fisch und ein Jäger namens Jarā benutzte den Eisenklumpen in seinem Bauch, um einen Pfeil zu formen. Obwohl die Überseele, Herr Śrī Kṛṣṇa, verstand, was geschah, wollte Er nichts tun, um dem Geschehen entgegenzuwirken. Vielmehr hat Er in Form der Zeit diese Ereignisse noch unterstützt.

TEXT 1.1

*śrī-śuka uvāca
kṛtvā daitya-vadhaṁ kṛṣṇaḥ
sa-rāmo yadubhir vṛtaḥ*

*bhuvo'vatārayad bhāram
javiṣṭham janayan kalim*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śuka said; *kṛtvā* – having performed; *daitya* – of the demons; *vadham* – the killing; *kṛṣṇaḥ* – Lord Kṛṣṇa; *sa-rāmaḥ* – accompanied by Balarāma; *yadubhiḥ* – by the Yādus; *vṛtaḥ* – surrounded; *bhuvaḥ* – of the earth; *avatārayat* – caused to be lessened; *bhāram* – the burden; *javiṣṭham* – most sudden, leading to violence; *janayan* – raising; *kalim* – a state of quarrel.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Śrī Śukadeva Śukadeva Gosvāmī sagte: Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, begleitet von Balarāma und umgeben von der Yadu-Dynastie, führte die Vernichtung vieler Dämonen durch. Dann, um die Last der Erde vollständig zu beseitigen, arrangierte der Herr die große Schlacht von Kurukṣetra, die plötzlich in Gewalt zwischen den Kurus und den Pāṇḍavas aus-brach.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Der elfte Canto von *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* beginnt mit einem Hinweis auf die Spiele, die Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa im Zehnten Canto ausgeführt hat. Der Beginn des Zehnten Cantos be-schreibt, dass, als die Erde von dämonischen Herrschern überlastet wurde, die per-sonifizierte Erde, Bhūmī, sich dem Herrn Brahmā mit Tränen in den Augen näherte und um Erleichterung flehte, und Brahmā ging sofort mit den Halbgöttern, um sich dem Höchsten Herrn in seiner Form von Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu zu nähern. Während die Halbgötter respektvoll am Ufer des Milchmeeres warteten, verkündete der Höchste Herr unter Brahmā, dass Er bald auf Erden inkarnieren würde und dass auch die Halbgötter herabsteigen sollten, um in seinen Spielen zu helfen. So wurde von Anfang an verstanden, dass mit der Erscheinung Kṛṣṇas der Herr auf die Erde herabsteigen würde, um die Dämonen zu beseitigen.

Wie Śrīla Prabhupāda in seinem Kommentar zur *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.6) feststellt, werden Diejenigen, die zustimmen, den Verfügungen der offenbarten Schriften zu gehorchen, als Halbgötter bezeichnet, während Diejenigen, die sich den Ordnungen der vedischen Schriften widersetzen, als Asuras oder Dämonen bezeichnet werden. Die vedischen Überlieferungen werden im Universum zur Führung der bedingten Seelen offenbart, die unter den drei Erscheinungsweisen der materiellen Natur gefangen sind und sich daher in einem kontinuierlichen Zyklus von Geburt und Tod befinden. Durch die strikte Einhaltung der vedischen Vorschriften können wir unsere materiellen Bedürfnisse leicht befriedigen und gleichzeitig spürbare Fortschritte auf dem Weg zurück nach Hause, zurück zu Gott, machen. So können wir ein ewiges Leben der Glückseligkeit und der Erkenntnis in der eigenen Heimstätte des Herrn erreichen, indem wir einfach den An-weisungen des Herrn gehorchen, wie sie in vedischen Literaturen dargestellt

werden, wie zum Beispiel in der *Bhagavad-gītā* und im *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Die Dämonen jedoch minimieren oder verspotten die absolute Autorität des Höchsten Herrn und seiner Lehren. Da diese Asuras die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes um ihren souveränen Status beneiden, setzen sie die Bedeutung der vedischen Schriften herab, die direkt aus der Atmung des Herrn stammen. Die Dämonen gründen eine Gesellschaft, die von ihren eigenen ausgeheckten Launen regiert wird, und erschaffen unweigerlich Chaos und Elend, besonders für fromme lebende Wesen, die aufrichtig den Willen Gottes befolgen wollen.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa erklärt in der *Bhagavad-gītā* dass, wenn es eine Vorherrschaft solcher chaotischen, ungläubigen Gesellschaften auf der Erde gibt, Er persönlich herabsteigt, um das Ungleichgewicht zu korrigieren. So tötete Kṛṣṇa von Anfang seiner transzendentalen Kindheit an systematisch die mächtigen Asuras oder Dämonen, die eine unerträgliche Last für die Erde waren. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa wurde von seinem Bruder Balarāma unterstützt, der ebenso die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes ist. Obwohl Gott eins ist, kann er sich um in viele Formen gleichzeitig erweitern und genießen. Das ist Seine Allmacht. Und die erste solche Erweiterung ist Balarāma oder Baladeva. Balarāma tötete viele bemerkenswerte Dämonen, darunter Dhenukāśura, Dvīvida und den neidischen Rukmī. Kṛṣṇa wurde auch von den Mitgliedern der Yadu-Dynastie begleitet, von denen viele Halbgötter waren, die gekommen sind, um dem Herrn zu helfen.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura hat jedoch enthüllt, dass, obwohl viele Halbgötter in der Yadu-Dynastie geboren wurden, um den Herrn zu unterstützen, einige Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie Kṛṣṇa gegenüber tatsächlich feindlich gesinnt waren. Auf-grund ihrer weltlichen Vision vom Herrn sahen sie sich auf der gleichen Ebene wie Kṛṣṇa. Nachdem sie in der Familie der Höchsten Persönlichkeit Gottes selbst geboren worden waren, hatten sie eine unvorstellbare Kraft, und so missverstanden sie die höchste Position von Kṛṣṇa. Da sie vergessen hatten, dass Kṛṣṇa die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes ist, würden sie eine große Last darstellen, und deshalb war es für Kṛṣṇa notwendig, sie von der Erde zu entfernen. Es gibt ein populäres Sprichwort, dass Vertrautheit auch Verachtung erzeugt. Um die verächtlichen Mitglieder seiner eigenen Dynastie zu vernichten, verursachte der Herr einen Streit unter ihnen. Zu diesem Zweck veranlasste er Nārada und andere Weisen, Wut gegen die Kārṣṇas, die Mitglieder seiner Familie, zu zeigen. Obwohl viele Yadus, die Kṛṣṇa gewidmet waren, anscheinend in diesem Bruderkrieg getötet wurden, brachte Lord Kṛṣṇa sie tatsächlich in ihre ursprünglichen Positionen als Universaldirektoren oder Halbgötter zurück. Es ist die Verheißung des Herrn in der *Bhagavad-gītā* dass Er immer diejenigen beschützen wird, die für Seinen Dienst günstig sind.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura Ṭhākura hat in seinem Kommentar zu diesem Vers wie folgt eine Zusammenfassung des gesamten elften Canto gegeben: Kapitel Eins beschreibt den Beginn der *mauṣala-līlā* bzw. den Auftakt zur Zerstörung der Yadu-Dynastie. Die Kapitel Zwei bis Fünf

beschreiben die Gespräche zwischen den neun Yogendras und König Nimi. Kapitel Sechs beschreibt die Gebete von Brahmā, Śiva und anderen Bewohnern des Himmels. Die Kapitel Sieben bis Neunundzwanzig stellen das Gespräch zwischen Kṛṣṇa und Uddhava dar, die sogenannte *Uddhava-gītā*. Kapitel Dreißig beschreibt den Rückzug der Yadu-Dynastie von der Erde. Das letzte Kapitel beschreibt das Verschwinden des Herrn Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 1.2

*ye kopitāḥ su-bahu pāṇḍu-sutāḥ sapatnair
durdyūta-helana-kaca-grahaṇādibhis tān
kṛtvā nimittam itaretarataḥ sametān
hatvā nṛpān niraharat kṣiti-bhāram īśaḥ*

ye – they who; *kopitāḥ* – were angered; *su-bahu* – excessively, time and time again; *pāṇḍu-sutāḥ* – the sons of Pāṇḍu; *sapatnair* – by their enemies; *durdyūta* – by duplicitous gambling; *helana* – insults; *kaca-grahaṇa* – grabbing the hair (of Draupadī); *ādibhiḥ* – and other impetuses; *tān* – them (the Pāṇḍavas); *kṛtvā* – making; *nimittam* – the immediate cause; *itara-itarataḥ* – confronting one another on opposite sides; *sametān* – all assembled; *hatvā* – killing; *nṛpān* – the kings; *niraharat* – took away once and for all; *kṣiti* – of the earth; *bhāram* – the burden; *īśaḥ* – the Supreme Lord.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Da die Söhne von Pāṇḍu durch die zahlreichen Vergehen ihrer Feinde, wie doppelte Glücksspiele, verbale Beleidigungen, das Beschlagnahmen von Draupadī's Haaren und viele andere grausame Übertretungen, erzürnt waren, engagierte der Höchste Herr diese Pāṇḍavas als unmittelbare Ursache für die Ausführung seines Willens. Unter dem Vorwand der Schlacht von Kurukṣetra ließ Lord Kṛṣṇa alle Könige, die die Erde belasteten, sich mit ihren Armeen auf gegenüberliegenden Seiten des Schlachtfeldes versammeln, und als der Herr sie durch den Krieg tötete, wurde die Erde von ihrer Last befreit.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Die Pāṇḍavas wurden wiederholt von ihren Feinden, wie Duryodhana und Duḥśāsana, schikaniert. Als unschuldige junge Prinzen hatten die Pāṇḍavas keinen Feind, aber Duryodhana intrigierte ständig gegen seine hilflosen Cousins. Die Pāṇḍavas wurden in ein Lack-Haus geschickt, das später niedergebrannt wurde. Ihnen wurden Gift verabreicht, und ihre keusche Frau Draupadī öffentlich erniedrigt, als man sie an den Haaren her-umzog und versuchte, sie nackt auszuziehen. Bei all diesen Gefahren schützte der Herr Śrī Kṛṣṇa ständig die Pāṇḍavas, die Ihm völlig ausgeliefert waren und die keinen anderen Schutz als Ihn kannten.

In diesem Vers wird das Wort *itaretarataḥ* bedeutsam: Vor der Schlacht von Kurukṣetra hatte Kṛṣṇa persönlich viele Dämonen getötet, darunter Pūtanā, Keśī, Aghāsura und Kaṁsa. Nun wollte Kṛṣṇa seine Mission, die Last der Erde zu beseitigen, erfüllen, indem er die verbliebenen böartigen Personen tötete. Aber wie hier mit *kṛtvā nimittam* gesagt wird, tötete der Herr nicht persönlich, sondern befähigte seine Anhänger Arjuna und die andere Pāṇḍavas, die pietätlosen Könige zu beseitigen. So handelte er persönlich und durch Seine unmittelbare Erweiterung als Balarāma, sowie durch die Befähigung Seiner reinen Anhänger, wie der Pāṇḍavas. Kṛṣṇa's Spiele als *yugāvātāra* sind die Wiederherstellung religiöser Prinzipien und die Befreiung der Welt von den Dämonen. Obwohl der allgemeine Zweck der Schlacht von Kurukṣetra darin bestand, die Dämonen zu töten, schienen nach der Anordnung von Kṛṣṇa auch einige große Anhänger, wie Bhīṣma, dem Herrn gegenüber feindlich eingestellt zu sein. Aber wie im ersten Canto des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.9.39) durch die Worte *hatā gatāḥ svarūpam* erwähnt, spielten viele große Anhänger mit dem Herrn seine Feinde und kehrten nach ihrem Tod durch Kṛṣṇa sofort zu Seiner Heimstätte am spirituellen Himmel in ihren ursprünglichen geistlichen Körpern zurück. Weil Gott absolut ist, entfernt Er durch Sein Töten gleichzeitig die Dämonen von der Erde und ermutigt Seine reinen Anhänger.

TEXT 1.3

*bhū-bhāra-rāja-pṛtanā yadubhir nirasya
guptaiḥ sva-bāhubhir acintayat aprameyaḥ
manye'vaner nanu gato'py agataṁ hi bhāraṁ
yad yādavaṁ kulam aho aviśahyam āste*

bhū-bhāra – existing as the burden of the earth; *rāja* – of the kings; *pṛtanāḥ* – the armies; *yadubhiḥ* – by the Yadus; *nirasya* – eliminating; *guptaiḥ* – protected; *sva-bāhubhiḥ* – by His own arms; *acintayat* – He considered; *aprimeyaḥ* – the unfathomable Lord; *manye* – I think; *avaneḥ* – of the earth; *nanu* – one may say; *gataḥ* – it is gone; *api* – but; *agataṁ* – it is not gone; *hi* – indeed; *bhāraṁ* – the burden; *yat* – because; *yādavam* – of Yadus; *kulam* – the dynasty; *aho* – ah; *aviśahyam* – intolerable; *āste* – remains.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes nutzte die Yadu-Dynastie, die durch seine eigenen Arme geschützt war, um die Könige zu eliminieren, die mit ihren Armeen die Last dieser Erde gewesen waren. Dann dachte der unergründliche Herr zu sich selbst: "Obwohl einige sagen mögen, dass die Last der Erde jetzt weg ist, ist sie meiner Meinung nach noch nicht weg, denn es bleibt noch die Dynastie Yādava selbst, deren Stärke für die Erde unerträglich ist".

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Obwohl die gewöhnlichen Menschen denken könnten, dass der Herr durch das Vernichten der Dämonen sowie durch die Wiederherstellung des *dharma* die Last von der Erde nun genommen hat, stellte Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in diesem Zusammenhang fest, dass der Herr, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, selbst erkennen konnte, dass noch weitere Gefahren durch die irreligiösen Aktivitäten seiner eigenen Familienmitglieder, die un-sachgemäß handelten, bestanden. Es wird im *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* erwähnt, dass ein gerechter König es ablehnen wird, seinen eigenen Feind zu bestrafen, wenn sein Feind un-schuldig ist, aber seinen eigenen Sohn bestrafen wird, wenn sein Sohn tatsächlich eine Strafe verdient. Obwohl also in den Augen der Welt die Mitglieder der eigenen Dynastie des Herrn immer verehrungswürdig sind, erkannte Lord Kṛṣṇa, dass durch ihre enge Verbindung mit Ihm einige Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie seinem Willen gegenüber gleichgültig geworden waren. Da solche wunderlichen Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie frei handeln konnten und Verwandte der Höchsten Persönlichkeit Gottes sind, würden sie sicherlich großes Unglück für die Welt verursachen, und dumme Menschen würden ein solches wunderliches Verhalten als den Willen von Kṛṣṇa ansehen. So begann der Herr, dessen Wünsche unvorstellbar sind, über die Notwendigkeit nachzudenken, die gleichgültigen, verächtlichen Mitglieder der Yadu-Familie zu vernichten.

Aus der Sicht der gewöhnlichen Menschen waren alle Dämonen durch die Spiele des Höchsten Herrn in Dvārakā und Mathurā sowie durch die Schlacht von Kurukṣetra getötet worden, und die Erde war nun frei von ihrer Last. Um die Erde jedoch von der verbleibenden Last seiner eigenen aufgeblasenen Familienmitglieder zu befreien, hat der Herr Śrī Kṛṣṇa sie von der Erde weggebracht, indem er einen Bruderkrieg unter ihnen verursacht hat. Auf diese Weise bereitete er sich auf sein eigenes Verschwinden von der Erde vor.

Śrīdhara Svāmī hat darauf hingewiesen, dass das Wort *bāhubhiḥ*, "durch seine Arme", im Plural (und nicht im Dual) verwendet wird, um aufzuzeigen, dass der Herr die Zerstörung der Yadu-Dynastie in seiner vierarmigen Form verursacht hat. Die ursprüngliche Form von Kṛṣṇa als Govinda ist zweiarmig, aber durch den Plenarteil des vierarmigen Nārāyaṇa tötete der Herr alle Dämonen auf der Erde und entfernte schließlich die belastenden Mitglieder seiner eigenen Familie. Man kann fragen: Wenn bestimmte Mitglieder der Yadu-Familie dem Willen des Herrn gegenüber gleichgültig geworden wären, warum haben sie sich dann nicht dem Herrn in seinem Plan, sie von der Erde zu entfernen, widersetzt? Deshalb ist das Wort *aprameyaḥ* verwendet, was darauf hindeutet, dass es für niemanden, auch nicht für die eigenen Familienmitglieder des Herrn, möglich ist, seinen Willen vollständig zu verstehen.

Śrīla Jīva Jīva Gosvāmī hat einen weiteren Grund für die Zerstörung der Yadu-Dynastie genannt. Er betont, dass die Aktivitäten der Höchsten Persönlichkeit der Gottheit niemals als gewöhnliche materielle Aktivitäten

angesehen werden sollten. Auch die Mitarbeiter des Herrn sind keine gewöhnlichen Menschen. Obwohl Herr Kṛṣṇa anscheinend für einige Zeit in dieser Welt inkarniert ist und dann verschwindet, sollte man verstehen, dass sich der Höchste Herr ewig mit seinem Gefolge in seinen verschiedenen Aufenthaltsorten am geistlichen Himmel befindet, wie Śrī Gokula, Mathurā und Dvārakā. Die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie sind ewige Mitarbeiter des Herrn, und deshalb können sie es nicht ertragen, vom Herrn getrennt zu sein. Da Kṛṣṇa sich darauf vorbereitete, seine irdischen Spiele aufzugeben, würden sie, wenn er die Yadu-Dynastie auf der Erde lassen würde, sicherlich so sehr durch Seine Abwesenheit gestört werden, dass sie in ihrem sehr aufgeregten Geisteszustand die Erde zertrampeln und zerstören würden. Deshalb organisierte Kṛṣṇa das Verschwinden der Yadu-Dynastie vor seinem eigenen Verschwinden.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī kommt zu dem Schluss, dass die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie letztendlich nie als ungläubig angesehen werden dürfen. Vaiṣṇava ācāryas haben erwähnt, dass die Geschichte vom Verschwinden der Yadu-Dynastie vor allem dazu dienen soll, den bedingten Seelen zu helfen, sich von den Fesseln des materialistischen Lebens zu befreien. Innerhalb der drei Welten gab es keine so mächtige und reiche Dynastie wie die der Yadu's. Die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes ist der Besitzer unbegrenzter Reichtümer, Schönheit, Stärke, Wissen, Ruhm und so weiter, und die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie, die die persönlichen Mitarbeiter des Herrn sind, wurden auch mit unvorstellbaren Reichtümern ausgestattet. Wenn wir also sehen, wie ein Bruderkrieg den Mitgliedern der Yadu-Dynastie plötzlich all ihren irdischen Besitz und sogar ihr Leben genommen hat, können wir verstehen, dass es keine feste Position in dieser materiellen Welt gibt. Mit anderen Worten, soll ihr plötzliches Verschwinden durch einen Bruderkrieg den bedingten Seelen die vorübergehende Natur dieser Welt aufprägen, obwohl die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie ewige Mitarbeiter des Herrn sind und sofort auf einen anderen Planeten versetzt wurden, auf dem der Herr erschien. Daher sollte die scheinbare Gleichgültigkeit oder Feindschaft bestimmter Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie gegenüber Kṛṣṇa nicht als tatsächliche Irreligion ihrerseits angesehen werden. Die gesamte Situation wurde von Lord Kṛṣṇa arrangiert, um den bedingten Seelen eine Lektion zu erteilen. In diesem Zusammenhang hat Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mehrere Verse aus dem Bhāgavatam zitiert, um zu beweisen, dass die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie ihre erhabene Geburt in der eigenen Familie des Herrn durch unzählige fromme Aktivitäten und durch die vollständige Aufnahme in Gedanken an Herrn Kṛṣṇa erreicht haben. Tatsächlich heißt es, dass sie beim Schlafen, Sitzen, Gehen und Sprechen nicht in der Lage waren, sich selbst zu erinnern, weil sie einfach an Kṛṣṇa dachten.

Im ersten Canto des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.15.33) hat sich Śrīla Prabhupāda wie folgt zum Verschwinden der Yadu-Dynastie geäußert: "Der Untergang der Sonne bedeutet nicht das Ende der Sonne. Das bedeutet, dass die Sonne außer Sichtweite ist. Ebenso bedeutet das Ende der Mission des Herrn auf

einem bestimmten Planeten oder Uni-versum nur, dass Er außerhalb unserer Sichtweite ist. Das Ende der Yadu-Dynastie bedeutet auch nicht, dass sie vernichtet wird. Es verschwindet mit dem Herrn, vor unseren Augen."

TEXT 1.4

*naivānyataḥ paribhavo'sya bhavet kathañcin
mat-saṁśrayasya vibhavonnanahasya nityam
antaḥ kalim̐ yadu-kulasya vidhāya veṇu-
stambasya vahnim iva śāntim upaimi dhāma*

na – not; *eva* – certainly; *anyataḥ* – from another cause; *paribhavaḥ* – defeat; *asya* – of this (dynasty); *bhavet* – there can be; *kathañcit* – by any means; *mat-saṁśrayasya* – which has fully taken shelter of Me; *vibhava* – with its power; *unnahanasya* – unrestricted; *nityam* – always; *antaḥ* – within; *kalim̐* – a quarrel; *yadu-kulasya* – the Yadu dynasty; *vidhāya* – inspiring; *veṇu-stambasya* – of a clump of bamboo plants; *vahnim* – a fire; *iva* – as; *śāntim* – peace; *upaimi* – I shall achieve; *dhāma* – My eternal personal abode.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Lord Kṛṣṇa dachte: "Keine äußere Kraft könnte jemals die Niederlage dieser Familie, der Yadu-Dynastie, herbeiführen, deren Mitglieder Mir immer vollständig übergeben waren und in ihrer Fülle uneingeschränkt sind. Aber wenn Ich einen Streit innerhalb der Dynastie anrege, wird sich dieser Streit wie ein Feuer verhalten, das aus der Reibung des Bambus in einem Hain entsteht, und dann werde Ich Meinen wahren Zweck erreichen und zu Meiner ewigen Heimstätte zurückkehren."

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Obwohl Lord Kṛṣṇa das Verschwinden der Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie veranlassen wollte, konnte er sie nicht persönlich töten, da er viele Dämonen getötet hatte, denn die Yadu-Dynastie war seine eigene Familie. Man könnte sich fragen, warum Lord Kṛṣṇa nicht dafür gesorgt hat, dass sie von anderen getötet werden. Deshalb wird es in diesem Vers *naivānyataḥ paribhavo'sya bhavet kathañcit* erwähnt: weil die Yadu-Dynastie die eigene Familie des Herrn war, war niemand im Universum in der Lage, sie zu töten, nicht einmal die Halbgötter. Tatsächlich weist Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura darauf hin, dass niemand im Universum in der Lage war, die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie zu beleidigen, um nicht zu sagen, sie zu besiegen oder zu töten. Der Grund dafür sind hier die Worte *mat-saṁśrayasya*. Die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie hatten sich vollständig unter Kṛṣṇa niedergelassen, und so standen sie immer unter dem persönlichen Schutz des Herrn. Es wird gesagt *māre kṛṣṇa rākhe ke, rākhe kṛṣṇa māre ke*: Wenn Kṛṣṇa jemanden schützt, kann ihn niemand töten, und wenn Kṛṣṇa jemanden töten will, kann ihn

niemand retten. Kṛṣṇa hatte ursprünglich alle Seine Mitarbeiter, zusammen mit den Halbgöttern, gebeten, auf der Erde zu erscheinen, um Ihm in seinen Spielen zu helfen. Nun, da seine Spiele auf diesem besonderen Planeten zu Ende gingen und auf einen anderen Planeten in einem anderen Universum übertragen werden sollten, wollte Kṛṣṇa alle Seine Mitarbeiter von der Erde entfernen, damit sie in seiner Abwesenheit keine weitere Last darstellen würden. Da die mächtige Yadu-Dynastie, die die persönliche Familie und Armee des Herrn ist, von niemandem besiegt werden konnte, arrangierte Kṛṣṇa einen internen Streit, so wie der Wind in einem Bambus-Wald manchmal die Bambus-Halme aneinander reibt und ein Feuer erzeugt, das den ganzen Wald verbrennt.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī hat darauf hingewiesen, dass normale Menschen, die von den Abenteuern der Yadu-Familie hören, denken könnten, dass die Helden der Yadu-Dynastie genauso verehrungswürdig sind wie Kṛṣṇa oder dass sie unabhängige Kontrolleure sind. Mit anderen Worten könnten Menschen, die durch die Māyāvāda-Philosophie verunreinigt sind, die Yadu-Dynastie als auf der gleichen Ebene wie Kṛṣṇa betrachten. Um also festzustellen, dass selbst das mächtigste lebende Wesen niemals dem Höchsten Herrn gleichkommen oder ihn übertreffen kann, hat Kṛṣṇa die Zerstörung der Yadu-Dynastie entschieden.

TEXT 1.5

*evam vyavasito rājan
satya-saṅkalpa īśvaraḥ
śāpa-vyājena viprāṅām
saṅjāre sva-kulam vibhuḥ*

evam – in this way; *vyavasitaḥ* – deciding for certain; *rājan* – O King; *satya-saṅkalpaḥ* – whose desire always proves true; *īśvaraḥ* – the Supreme Lord; *śāpa-vyājena* – by the pretext of a curse; *viprāṅām* – of *brāhmaṇas*; *saṅjāre* – withdrew; *sva-kulam* – His own family; *vibhuḥ* – the Almighty.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Mein lieber König Parīkṣit, als der höchste allmächtige Herr, dessen Wunsch sich immer erfüllt, sich so entschieden hatte, zog er seine eigene Familie unter dem Vorwand eines Fluches zurück, der vor einer Versammlung von brāhmaṇas ausgesprochen wurde.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Sarasvatī Ṭhākura hat einen sehr wichtigen Kommentar zu diesem Vers abgegeben: Er erklärt, dass, da die Absichten des Höchsten Herrn, Kṛṣṇacandra, immer perfekt sind, es sicherlich zum größten Nutzens für die ganze Welt war, dass Er Seine eigene Familie unter dem Vorwand eines Fluches durch *brāhmaṇas* zerstörte. In diesem

Zusammenhang hat Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura eine Parallele zu den Spielen von Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gezeigt, in denen Kṛṣṇa selbst als sein eigener Anhänger auftritt.

Lord Caitanya erschien zusammen mit seiner ersten Erweiterung, bekannt als Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, und mit Lord Advaita Prabhu. Alle drei Persönlichkeiten - Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu und Advaita Prabhu - werden von Vaiṣṇavas als *ācāryas* in der Kategorie der *viṣṇu-tattva's* akzeptiert, als vollständige Erweiterungen der Höchsten Persönlichkeit Gottes. Diese drei Persönlichkeiten Gottes erkannten, dass ihre so genannten vorbildlichen Nachkommen in Zukunft eine unangemessene Anerkennung erhalten würden und, wenn sie dann hochmütig geworden waren, schwere Vergehen gegen diejenigen begehen würden, die tatsächlich Vaiṣṇavas waren - *gurus* oder Vertreter des Herrn.

Jedes Lebewesen ist Teil des Höchsten Herrn, wie es in der Erklärung der *Bhagavad-gītā* (*mamaivāṁśaḥ*) lautet. Jedes Lebewesen ist ursprünglich ein Sohn Gottes, aber um seine Spiele auszuführen, wählt der Herr einige hochqualifizierte Lebewesen aus, die er als seine persönlichen Verwandten zur Welt bringen darf. Aber jene Lebewesen, die als Nachkommen der persönlichen Familie des Herrn erscheinen, können zweifellos stolz auf eine solche Stellung werden und so die große Bewunderung, die sie von den gewöhnlichen Menschen erhalten, missbrauchen. Auf diese Weise können solche Personen künstlich eine unangemessene Aufmerksamkeit erhalten und die Menschen vom eigentlichen Prinzip des geistlichen Fortschritts ablenken, das darin besteht, sich dem reinen Gläubigen zu ergeben, der den Herrn vertritt. Die letzten acht Verse des Zwölf-ten Kapitels der *Bhagavad-gītā* geben eine Beschreibung der reinen Anhänger, denen der Herr als *ācāryas* oder geistliche Führer der Menschheit zu handeln erlaubt. Mit anderen Worten ist die einfache Geburt in der persönlichen Familie von Kṛṣṇa nicht die Voraussetzung dafür, ein spiritueller Meister zu sein, denn nach Ansicht der *Bhaga-vad-gītā*, *pitāham asya jagataḥ* ist jedes Lebewesen für immer ein Mitglied der Familie des Herrn. Kṛṣṇa sagt in der *Bhagavad-gītā*, *samo 'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ*: "Ich bin jedem zugewandt. Niemand ist Mein Feind, und niemand ist Mein besonderer Freund." Wenn die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes eine besondere Familie wie die Yadu-Dynastie zu haben scheint, ist eine solche so genannte Familie eine besondere Form der Spiele des Herrn, um die bedingten Seelen anzuziehen. Wenn Kṛṣṇa herunterkommt, tut er so, als wäre er ein gewöhnlicher Mensch, um die Lebewesen für seine Spiele zu gewinnen. Deshalb tat Kṛṣṇa so, als wäre die Yadu-Dynastie seine persönliche Familie, obwohl in der Tat jedes lebende Wesen ein Mitglied seiner Familie ist.

Gewöhnliche Menschen jedoch, die die höheren Prinzipien des spirituellen Wissens nicht verstehen, vergessen leicht die tatsächlichen Qualifikationen eines echten spirituellen Meisters und geben stattdessen den Menschen, die in der sogenannten Familie des Herrn geboren wurden, eine übermäßige Bedeutung. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu hat daher dieses Hindernis auf dem

Weg der spirituellen Erleuchtung vermieden, indem er keine Kinder zurückließ. Obwohl Caitanya Mahāprabhu zweimal heiratete, war er kinderlos. Nityānanda Prabhu, der auch die Höchste Persönlichkeit der Gottheit ist, nahm keinen der natürlichen Söhne seines eigenen Sohnes, Śrī Vīrabhadra, auf. In ähnlicher Weise hat Lord Advaita Ācārya alle seine Söhne mit Ausnahme von Acyutānanda und zwei anderen von seiner Verbindung ausgeschlossen. Acyutānanda, der treue Hauptsohn von Advaita Ācārya, hatte keine zukunftssträchtigen Nachkommen, und die restlichen drei der sechs Söhne von Lord Advaita fielen vom Weg der Hingabe an den Herrn ab und werden als abgelehnte Söhne bezeichnet. Mit anderen Worten erlaubt es das Erscheinen von Caitanya Mahāprabhu kaum, eine so genannte zukunftssträchtige Familie fortzuführen, um Verwirrung zu stiften. Die Anerkennung einer zukunftssträchtigen Abstammung als tatsächliche vedische Autorität ist ungeeignet, die höchste Wahrheit gemäß den smārtas tatsächlich zu verstehen.

Andere ācāryas oder spirituelle Meister haben diesen Punkt auch in ihren eigenen Familien gezeigt. Seine Göttliche Gnade A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, unser eigener geliebter spiritueller Meister, der der mächtige Autor dieses Buches der *Śrī-mad-Bhāgavatam* Serie ist, wurde in einer Familie von reinen Anhängern geboren, und er selbst zeigte seit seiner Kindheit alle Symptome des reinen hingebungsvollen Dienstes. Śrīla Prabhupāda kam schließlich in die westlichen Länder und zeigte eine beispiellose spirituelle Potenz bei der Etablierung der Kṛṣṇa-Bewusstseinsbewegung auf der ganzen Welt. In wenigen Jahren übersetzte er mehr als fünfzig große Schriften der vedischen Philosophie. Durch seine praktische Tätigkeit wird er sicherlich als ein höchst ermächtigter Vertreter des Herrn verstanden. Dennoch haben seine eigenen Familienmitglieder, obwohl sie Kṛṣṇa-Anhänger, überhaupt nicht den angemessenen Standard des hingebungsvollen Dienstes erreicht und werden daher von den ISKCON-Mitgliedern nicht beachtet. Die natürliche Tendenz für die Mitglieder der International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) wäre es, den Mitgliedern der unmittelbaren Familie von Śrīla Prabhupāda jede Ehrerbietung und Anbetung anzubieten. Aber da sich diese Familienmitglieder durch die Anordnung von Kṛṣṇa überhaupt nicht auf der Plattform des reinen Andachtsdienstes befinden, schenken ihnen die Mitglieder von ISKCON kaum Aufmerksamkeit, sondern verehren diejenigen, die tatsächlich die Qualitäten von hochmodernem Vaiṣṇavas aufweisen, unabhängig von ihrer sogenannten Geburt. Mit anderen Worten kann die Geburt nicht die Voraussetzung für eine respektable Person sein, auch wenn man in der eigenen Familie des Herrn oder in der Familie der ācārya geboren wird, was man von einer gewöhnlichen wohlhabenden oder gelehrten Familie sprechen kann.

In Indien gibt es eine Klasse von Männern, die als *nityānanda-varṁśa* bezeichnet werden und die behaupten, direkte Nachkommen des Herrn Nityānanda zu sein und daher den höchsten Respekt für ihre Stellung im

Andachtsdienst einfordern. In diesem Zusammen-hang hat Śrīla Prabhupāda in *The Nectar of Devotion* geschrieben "Im Mittelalter, nach dem Verschwinden von Lord Caitanyas großem Gefährten Lord Nityānanda, behauptete eine Klasse von Priestern, die Nachkommen von Nityānanda zu sein und selbst zur *gosvāmī* Kaste zu gehören. Sie behaupteten weiter, dass die Praxis und Verbreitung des hingebungsvollen Dienstes nur ihrer besonderen Klasse der *nityānanda-vaṁśa* zusteht. Auf diese Weise übten sie ihre künstliche Kraft für einige Zeit aus, bis Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, die mächtige *ācārya* von der Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*, ihre Vorstellung völlig zerstörte. Es gab einige Zeit lang einen großen harten Kampf, aber er hat sich als erfolgreich erwiesen, und es ist jetzt richtig und praktisch erwiesen, dass der hingebungsvolle Dienst nicht auf eine bestimmte Klasse von Männern beschränkt ist. Darüber hinaus ist jeder, der sich mit dem hingebungsvollen Dienst beschäftigt, bereits ein qualifizierter *brāhmaṇa*. So ist der Kampf von Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Sarasvatī Ṭhākura für diese Bewegung erfolgreich verlaufen. Auf der Grundlage seiner Position kann jeder, aus jedem Teil des Univer-sums, ein Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava werden.

Mit anderen Worten besteht die Essenz des geistlichen Wissens darin, dass jedes Lebewesen, unabhängig von seinem gegenwärtigen Lebens-Status, ursprünglich ein Diener des Höchsten Herrn ist, und es ist die Mission des Herrn, alle diese gefallenen Lebewe-sen zurückzuholen. Trotz seiner vergangenen Situation kann sich jedes Lebewesen, das bereit ist, sich wieder zu den Lotusfüßen des Höchsten Herrn oder seines frommen Vertreters hinzugeben, durch strikte Einhaltung der Regeln und Vorschriften von *bhakti-yoga* ein hochklassiger *brāhmaṇa* werden. Dennoch glauben die zukunftssträchtigen Nachkommen des Herrn, dass sie den Charakter und die Stellung ihres Vorfahren er-erbt haben. So verwirrt der Höchste Herr, der der Wohltäter des gesamten Universums und insbesondere seiner Anhänger ist, die Unterscheidungskraft seiner eigenen Nachkommen in einer so widersprüchlichen Weise, dass diese vielversprechenden Nachkom-men als abweichend anerkannt werden und die eigentliche Qualifikation, ein Vertreter des Herrn zu sein, nämlich die ungeteilte Hingabe an den Willen von Kṛṣṇa, im Vordergrund bleibt.

TEXTS 1.6-7

*sva-mūrtyā loka-lāvaṇya-
nirmuktyā locanaṁ nṛṇām
gīrbhis tāḥ smaratām cittaṁ
padais tām īkṣatām kriyāḥ
ācchidya kīrtim su-ślokām
vitatya hy añjasā nu kau
tamo'nayā tariṣyantīty
agāt svaṁ padam īśvaraḥ*

sva-mūrtyā – by His own form; *loka* – of all the material worlds; *lāvaṅya* – the beauty; *nirmuktyā* – which takes away; *locanam* – (He attracted) the eyes; *nṛṇām* – of men; *gīrbhiḥ* – by His words; *tāḥ smaratām* – of those who remembered them; *cittam* – the mind; *padaiḥ* – by His feet; *tān īkṣatām* – of those who saw them; *kriyāḥ* – the physical activities (walking, etc.); *ācchidya* – having attracted; *kīrtim* – His glories; *su-ślokām* – praised by the best verses; *vitatya* – having spread; *hi* – certainly; *añjasā* – easily; *nu* – indeed; *kau* – upon the earth; *tamaḥ* – ignorance; *anayā* – by those (glories); *tariṣyanti* – people will cross over; *iti* – thus thinking; *agāt* – He obtained; *svam padam* – His own desired position; *Īśvaraḥ* – the Lord.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes, Kṛṣṇa, ist das Reservoir aller Schönheit. Alle schönen Dinge gehen von Ihm aus, und Seine persönliche Form ist so attraktiv, dass sie die Augen von allen anderen Gegenständen wegnimmt, die dann im Vergleich zu Ihm ohne Schönheit erscheinen. Als Herr Kṛṣṇa auf der Erde war, zog er die Augen aller Menschen auf sich. Als Kṛṣṇa sprach, zogen seine Worte die Köpfe aller an, die sich an sie erinnerten. Indem sie die Fußstapfen des Herrn Kṛṣṇa sahen, wurden die Menschen von Ihm angezogen, und so wollten sie ihre körperlichen Aktivitäten dem Herrn als seinen Nachfolgern anbieten. Auf diese Weise verbreitete Kṛṣṇa sehr leicht Seine Herrlichkeiten, die in der ganzen Welt durch die erhabensten und wesentlichsten vedi-schen Verse gesungen werden. Lord Kṛṣṇa war der Ansicht, dass allein durch das Hören und Singen dieser Herrlichkeiten die bedingten Seelen, welche in der Zukunft geboren werden, über die Dunkelheit der Unwissenheit hinausgehen würden. Da er mit diesem Plan zufrieden war, ging er zu seinem gewünschten Ziel.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Laut Śrīdhara Svāmī deuten diese beiden Verse darauf hin, dass der Herr Kṛṣṇa, nachdem er alle Ziele erreicht hat, zu denen er herabgestiegen ist, zu seinem geistigen Königreich zurückgekehrt ist. Es ist natürlich, dass sich die Menschen in der materi-ellen Welt danach sehnen, ein schönes Objekt zu sehen. Im materialistischen Leben wird unser Bewusstsein jedoch durch den Einfluss der drei Erscheinungsformen der Natur verschmutzt, und deshalb sehnen wir uns nach materiellen Objekten von Schönheit und Genuss. Der materialistische Prozess der Sinnenbefriedigung ist unvollkom-men, weil die Gesetze der materiellen Natur es uns nicht erlauben werden, im materia-listischen Leben glücklich oder zufrieden zu sein. Das Lebewesen ist grundsätzlich ein ewiger Diener Gottes und soll die unendliche Schönheit und Freude des Höchsten Herrn schätzen. Lord Kṛṣṇa ist die Absolute Wahrheit und das Reservoir aller Schönheit und Freude. Indem wir Kṛṣṇa dienen, können wir auch an Seinem Ozean der Schönheit und des Vergnügens

teilhaben, und so wird unser Wunsch, schöne Dinge zu sehen und das Leben zu genießen, vollständig erfüllt sein. Das Beispiel zeigt, dass die Hand das Essen nicht selbstständig genießen kann, sondern es indirekt aufnehmen kann, indem sie es dem Magen gibt. Ebenso wird das lebende Wesen, das ein Teil des Herrn ist, durch den Dienst am Herrn Kṛṣṇa unbegrenztes Glück erlangen.

Durch die Offenbarung Seiner eigenen wahren Form befreite der Höchste Herr, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, die Lebewesen von der irreführenden Suche nach anderen als Seiner Schönheits-Form, die bereits die Quelle aller schönen Dinge ist. Allein dadurch, dass sie Seine Lo-tusfüße sahen, konnten glückliche Lebewesen ihre Aktivitäten mit den gottlosen Bemühungen der *karmīs*, welche primitive Freude nur an ihrer eigenen Sinnesbefriedigung suchen, mit dem Dienst am Herrn zu verbinden. Obwohl Philosophen ständig über die Natur Gottes spekulieren, befreite Lord Kṛṣṇa die *jīva's* direkt aus allen spekulativen Missverständnissen über Ihn, indem er seine eigentliche transzendente Form und Aktivität zeigt. Oberflächlich betrachtet ähneln die persönlichen Formen, Wörter und Aktivitäten von Kṛṣṇa denen gewöhnlicher bedingter Seelen. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sara-svatī Ṭhākura Ṭhākura erklärt, dass diese offensichtliche Ähnlichkeit zwischen den Aktivitäten des Herrn und denen der lebenden Wesen ein barmherziges Zugeständnis des Herrn ist, so dass die bedingten Seelen zu Ihm hingezogen und befähigt werden, in Sein Reich für ein ewiges Leben der Glückseligkeit und des Wissens zurückzukehren. Indem Herr Kṛṣṇa den lebenden Wesen seine eigene geistige Form und sein eigenes Königreich auf eine für sie greifbare Weise zeigte, vertrieb er ihre falsche, genussvolle Haltung und entfernte ihre langjährige Gleichgültigkeit gegenüber seiner Persönlichkeit. Wie in der *Bhagavad-gītā* erwähnt, wird man nie wieder in die Verstrickungen der materiellen Illusionen fallen, wenn man die Position von Śrī Kṛṣṇa als Höchste Persönlichkeit der Gottheit verstehen kann. Ein solcher Abstieg kann vermieden werden, wenn man ständig von der einzigartigen transzendentalen Form und Schönheit des Herrn aus autorisierten vedischen Literaturen hört. Wie in der *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.42-43) gesagt wird

*yām imām puṣpitām vācam
pravadanty avipaścitaḥ
veda-vāda-ratāḥ pārtha
nānyad astīti vādinaḥ
kāmātmānaḥ svarga-parā
janma-karma-phala-pradām
kriyā-viśeṣa-bahulām
bhogaiśvarya-gatim prati*

"Menschen mit geringem Wissen hängen sehr stark an den blumigen Worten der Veden, die verschiedene fruchtbare Aktivitäten zur Erhebung zu himmlischen Planeten, daraus resultierende gute Geburt, Kraft usw.

empfehlen. Sie wünschen sich Sinnesbefriedigung und ein opulentes Leben und sagen, dass es nichts anderes gibt als dieses."

Auf der anderen Seite sind bestimmte Teile der vedischen Literatur speziell dazu bestimmt, der bedingten Seele eine materielle Sinnesbefriedigung zu verleihen und sie gleichzeitig allmählich dazu zu bringen, den vedischen Vorschriften zu gehorchen. Die Teile der Veden, die fruchtbringende Aktivitäten für eine geregelte Sinnesbefriedigung empfehlen, sind selbst gefährlich, denn das Lebewesen, das sich an solchen Aktivitäten beteiligt, verstrickt sich leicht in den angebotenen materiellen Genuss und vernachlässigt den eigentlichen Zweck der Veden. Der ultimative Zweck der vedischen Literatur ist es, das Lebewesen wieder in sein ursprüngliches Bewusstsein zu bringen, in dem er als ewiger Diener der Höchsten Persönlichkeit der Gottheit handelt. Indem es dem Herrn dient, kann das Lebewesen unbegrenzte geistige Glückseligkeit in der Gegenwart des Herrn in dessen eigenen Königreich genießen. Wer also ernsthaft wünscht, sein Bewusstsein auf Kṛṣṇa zu erweitern, sollte speziell die vedische Literatur hören, die sich mit dem reinen hingebungsvollen Dienst am Herrn beschäftigt. Man sollte von denen hören, die im Kṛṣṇa-Bewusstsein hoch entwickelt sind und Interpretationen vermeiden, die Wünsche nach materialistischem Genuss stimulieren.

Wenn das winzige Lebewesen endlich in der Lage ist, den Unterschied zwischen den vorübergehenden Angelegenheiten dieser Welt und den transzendentalen Aktivitäten von Lord Trivikrama, Kṛṣṇa, zu erkennen, widmet es sich dem Herrn und entfernt aus seinem Herzen die dunkle Hülle der Materie, die keine Sinnesbefriedigung mehr verlangt, die unter den beiden Überschriften Sünde und Frömmigkeit genossen wird. Mit anderen Worten werden auf der materiellen Ebene sowohl Sünde als auch Frömmigkeit zur persönlichen Befriedigung ausgeführt, obwohl die Menschen in dieser Welt bereits als sündhaft oder fromm angesehen werden. Wenn man verstehen kann, dass sein wahres Glück darin besteht, Kṛṣṇa Freude zu bereiten, nimmt Lord Kṛṣṇa ein so glückliches Leben zurück in seine eigene Heimstätte, die Goloka Vṛndāvana genannt wird. Laut Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura gibt der Herr einer aufrichtigen Seele zuerst die Möglichkeit, von seinen Spielen zu hören. Wenn der Gläubige in seiner natürlichen Anziehungskraft auf solche Erzählungen fortgeschritten ist, gibt ihm der Herr die Möglichkeit, an seinen spirituellen Beschäftigungen teilzunehmen, wie sie in dieser Welt erscheinen. Indem er an den Spielen des Herrn in einem bestimmten Universum teilnimmt, löst sich das Lebewesen völlig von der materiellen Welt, und schließlich bringt ihn der Herr zu Seiner persönlichen Heimstätte im spirituellen Himmel.

Törichte Menschen können diesen erheblichen Nutzen, den der Herr bietet, nicht verstehen, aber Herr Kṛṣṇa handelt zum Nutzen solcher törichten Menschen, indem er sie vor ihrer Absenkung in die vorübergehende Welt des falschen Genusses bewahrt. Der Herr tut dies, indem er persönlich Seine eigene überragende transzendente Schönheit, transzendente Worte und transzendente Aktivitäten zeigt. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī hat darauf hingewiesen,

dass die Worte *tamo'nayā tariṣyanti* zeigen, dass, obwohl Herr Kṛṣṇa vor fünftausend Jahren erschienen ist, jemand, der über die Aktivitäten, Formen und Worte des Herrn hört und singt, genau den gleichen Nutzen haben wird wie diejenigen, die diese Dinge persönlich als Zeitgenossen des Herrn Kṛṣṇa erlebt haben. Mit anderen Worten wird er auch die Dunkelheit der materiellen Existenz überwinden und die Wohnstätte des Herrn erreichen. So kommt Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī zu dem Schluss, dass, wenn ein solch erhabenes Ziel für alle Lebewesen zugänglich ist, es sicherlich den Yādavas zugesprochen worden sein muss, die persönliche Gefährten des Herrn waren. In diesem Vers heißt es auch, dass Kṛṣṇa durch Seine Schönheit den Menschen, die Ihn gesehen haben, die Sehkraft gestohlen hat. Der Vortrag von Kṛṣṇa war so attraktiv, dass diejenigen, die Ihn hörten, sprachlos wurden. Da im Allgemeinen diejenigen, die nicht sprechen können, auch taub sind, haben die Worte des Herrn auch denen, die Ihn gehört haben, die Ohren gestohlen, da sie nicht mehr daran interessiert waren, andere Äußerungen als die des Herrn zu hören. Indem er ihnen die Schönheit Seiner Schritte zeigte, nahm Kṛṣṇa denen, die sie sahen, die Energie für weitere materialistische Aktivitäten. So beraubte Kṛṣṇa durch Sein Erscheinen in dieser Welt die Menschen ihrer Sinne. Mit anderen Worten machte Er die Menschen blind, stumm, taub, verrückt und anderweitig behindert. Deshalb fragt Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura: "Da Er alles, was die Menschen besaßen, weggenommen hat, wer würde Ihn richtig barmherzig nennen? Vielmehr ist er nur ein Dieb." Auf diese Weise lobpreiste er indirekt die Schönheit des Herrn. Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura weist auch darauf hin, dass, obwohl Kṛṣṇa die Dämonen mit ihrer Vernichtung befreite, denjenigen, die sich zu Ihm hingezogen fühlten, reine Gottes-Liebe zu vermitteln und sie im Meer Seiner eigenen Schönheit ertränkte. Somit ist Kṛṣṇa keine Person, die Wohltätigkeit ohne eine Unterscheidung spendet. Und Kṛṣṇa ist so barmherzig, dass Er nicht nur den höchsten Segen für die Bewohner der Erde gegeben hat, sondern auch große heilige Personen wie Vyāsadeva befähigte, seine Spiele mit schönen poetischen Versen zu beschreiben. So könnten Menschen, die in Zukunft auf der Erde geboren werden, durch diese Herrlichkeiten, die mit einem starken Boot verglichen werden, das Meer von Geburt und Tod leicht überqueren. **Tatsächlich bestätigen diejenigen von uns, die jetzt den Ruhm von Kṛṣṇa durch das transparente System des Bhaktivedanta genießen, dass sie das Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, durch die Barmherzigkeit Seiner Göttlichen Gnade A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, sind die glücklichen Empfänger der Barmherzigkeit von Kṛṣṇa, die auch für noch zu Geborene barmherzig war.**

Mit dem Zitat aus dem *Amara-kośa* -Wörterbuch *padam vyavasita-trāṇa-sthāna-lakṣmy-aṅghri-vastuṣu* hat Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī hat auch erklärt, dass möglichen Definitionen für Padam "das, was entschieden wurde", "der Erfüllungsort", "das Vermögen", "der Fuß" oder "das Objekt" sind. So übersetzt er das Wort *padam* auch mit der Bedeutung *vyavasita*, "das, was entschieden wurde." Mit anderen Worten zeigt die Anweisung *agāt*

svaṁ padam īśvaraḥ nicht nur an, dass Kṛṣṇa lediglich zu Seiner Heimstätte gegangen ist, sondern dass Kṛṣṇa Seinen entschlossenen Wunsch verwirklicht hat. Wenn wir sagen, dass Kṛṣṇa zu Seiner ewigen Heimstätte zurückgekehrt ist, implizieren wir, dass Kṛṣṇa von Seinem Aufenthaltsort abwesend war und nun zurückkehrt. Daher weist Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura darauf hin, dass es falsch ist, im normalen Sinne zu sagen, dass Kṛṣṇa "zu Seiner Heimstätte zurückgekehrt ist". Gemäß der *Brahma-saṁhitā* ist die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes, Kṛṣṇa, immer in Seiner ewigen Heimstätte am spirituellen Himmel gegenwärtig. Doch durch seine grundlose Barmherzigkeit offenbart er sich von Zeit zu Zeit auch in der materiellen Welt. Mit anderen Worten ist Gott allgegenwärtig. Auch wenn er vor uns anwesend ist, ist er gleichzeitig in seiner Heimstätte. Die gewöhnliche Seele oder *jīva* ist nicht alldurchdringend wie die Überseele, und deshalb ist sie durch ihre Gegenwart in der materiellen Welt von der spirituellen Welt abwesend. Tatsächlich leiden wir aufgrund dieser Abwesenheit von der spirituellen Welt oder von Vaikuṅṭha. Die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes ist jedoch allgegenwärtig, und deshalb übersetzt Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura die Worte *agāt svaṁ padam* mit der Bedeutung, dass Kṛṣṇa genau das erreicht hat, was Er wollte. Der Herr ist alldurchdringend und autark bei der Erfüllung seiner vollkommenen Wünsche. Sein Erscheinen und Verschwinden in dieser Welt sollte niemals mit gewöhnlichen materiellen Aktivitäten verglichen werden.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī hat eine Erklärung von Uddhava zu Beginn des dritten Canto von *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.7), worin Uddhava das Verschwinden des Herrn Kṛṣṇa mit dem Untergang der Sonne vergleicht. In seiner Bedeutung für diesen Vers hat Śrīla Prabhupāda geschrieben: "Der Vergleich von Kṛṣṇa mit der Sonne ist sehr angemessen. Sobald die Sonne untergeht, erscheint automatisch Dunkelheit. Aber die Dunkelheit, die der gewöhnliche Mensch erlebt, beeinflusst die Sonne selbst weder bei Sonnenaufgang noch bei Sonnenuntergang. Das Erscheinen und Verschwinden von Lord Kṛṣṇa ist genau wie das der Sonne. Er erscheint und verschwindet in unzähligen Universen, und solange Er in einem bestimmten Universum gegenwärtig ist, gibt es alles transzendente Licht in diesem Universum, aber das Universum, von dem Er stirbt, wird in die Dunkelheit versetzt. Mit seinen Spielen ist Der Herr immer in irgendeinem Universum gegenwärtig, so wie die Sonne entweder in der östlichen oder westlichen Hemisphäre vorhanden ist. Die Sonne ist immer entweder in Indien oder in Amerika vorhanden, aber wenn die Sonne in Indien vorhanden ist, befindet sich das amerikanische Land in der Dunkelheit, und wenn die Sonne in Amerika vorhanden ist, befindet sich die indische Hemisphäre in der Dunkelheit."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī hat einen Vers aus dem Ende des elften Canto zitiert, der weiter verdeutlicht, dass die Heimstätte des Herrn so ewig ist wie der Herr selbst: "Der Ozean schluckte sofort Dvārakā, O Mahārāja und nahm dem

Herrn die persönliche Wohnung weg, die der Herr verlassen hatte. Der Höchste Herr, Madhusūdāna, ist immer auf Dvārakā präsent, was allein durch die Erinnerung alles Ungünstige wegnimmt. Es ist der vielversprechendste der vielversprechendsten Orte." (*Bhāg.* 11.31.23-24) So wie die Sonne von der Nacht verschluckt zu werden scheint, scheint Kṛṣṇa oder Seine Heimstätte oder Seine Dynastie zu verschwinden, aber tatsächlich sind der Herr und alle Seine Dinge, einschließlich Seiner Heimstätte und Dynastie, ewig, so wie die Sonne immer am Himmel ist. Śrīla Prabhupāda sagt in diesem Zusammenhang: "Wenn die Sonne am Morgen erscheint und allmählich zum Meridian aufsteigt und dann wieder in der einen Hemisphäre untergeht und gleichzeitig in der anderen aufsteigt, so geschieht das Verschwinden des Herrn Kṛṣṇa in einem Universum und der Beginn Seiner verschiedenen Spiele in einem anderen gleichzeitig. Sobald ein Spiel hier beendet ist, manifestiert er sich in einem anderen Universum. Und so auch seine *nitya-līlā* oder ewigen Spiele, die ununterbrochen weitergehen."

TEXT 1.8

śrī-rājovāca
brahmaṇyānām vadānyānām
nityam vṛddhopasevinām
vipra-śāpaḥ katham abhūd
vṛṣṇīnām kṛṣṇa-cetasām

śrī-rājā uvāca - the King said; *brahmaṇyānām* - of them who were respectful to the *brāhmaṇas*; *vadānyānām* - charitable; *nityam* - always; *vṛddha-upasevinām* - engaged in serving elders; *vipra-śāpaḥ* - the *brāhmaṇas*' curse; *katham* - how; *abhūt* - did it come about; *vṛṣṇīnām* - of the Vṛṣṇis; *kṛṣṇa-cetasām* - whose minds were totally absorbed in thought of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

ÜBERSETZUNG

König Parīkṣit erkundigte sich: Wie konnten die brāhmaṇas die Vṛṣṇis verfluchen, die immer respektvoll gegenüber den brāhmaṇas waren, wohltätig und geneigt, älteren und erhabenen Persönlichkeiten zu dienen, und deren Geist immer vollständig in Gedanken an Herrn Kṛṣṇa versunken war ?

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Brāhmaṇas werden im Allgemeinen auf Menschen wütend, die die brahmanische Kaste nicht respektieren, die unbarmherzig sind und es ablehnen, älteren, angesehenen Persönlichkeiten zu dienen. Die Vṛṣṇis jedoch waren nicht so, und so werden sie hier von König Parīkṣit als *brahmaṇyānām* beschrieben oder aufrichtige Anhänger der brahmanischen Kultur. Außerdem, selbst wenn die *brāhmaṇas* wütend wurden, warum

sollten sie Mitglieder der eigenen Familie von Kṛṣṇa verfluchen ? Da die *brāhmaṇas* gut ausgebildet waren, müssen sie gewusst haben, dass es beleidigend ist, sich persönlichen Gefährten des Höchsten Herrn zu widersetzen. Die Yadu-Dynastie wird hier ausdrücklich als *vṛṣṇīnām* und *kṛṣṇa-cetasām* beschrieben. Mit anderen Worten waren sie die eigenen Männer von Lord Kṛṣṇa und sie waren immer damit beschäftigt, an Kṛṣṇa zu denken. Selbst wenn man sie irgendwie oder anders als von den *brāhmaṇas* verflucht hatte, wie konnte dieser Fluch irgendeine Wirkung haben ? Das sind die Fragen von Parīkṣit Mahārāja.

Obwohl die Vṛṣṇis in diesem Vers als *kṛṣṇa-cetasām* beschrieben werden, die immer in das Kṛṣṇa-Denken vertieft sind, wird klar darauf hingewiesen, dass Kṛṣṇa wollte, dass die *brāhmaṇas* wütend werden und die Yadu-Dynastie verfluchen. Der Höchste Herr wollte seine persönliche Dynastie von der Erde entfernen, und deshalb zeigten die kleinen Jungen aus der eigenen Familie von Kṛṣṇa ein ungewöhnlich respektloses Verhalten.

Es ist aus diesem Vorfall ersichtlich, dass, wenn ein Mann Missgunst und Verspottung gegenüber Viṣṇu-Anhängern an den Tag legt, seine gesamte eigene *brahmaṇyatā* oder hohe spirituelle Qualifikationen und seine Ehrfurcht vor Śrī Kṛṣṇa zerstört werden. Verachtung und Hohn, die sich gegen angesehenen und wahre Menschen richtet, beseitigen auch alle guten Eigenschaften bei *brāhmaṇas*. Wenn es einen Bruch in der Etikette gegenüber seinen Anhängern gibt, wird der Höchste Herr selbst seinen eigenen Verwandten und Freunden gegenüber schlecht gesinnt sein und so dafür sorgen, dass diejenigen vernichtet werden, die sich seinen Anhängern widersetzen. Wenn unter dem Deckmantel als Mitglieder der persönlichen Familie von Kṛṣṇa törichte Personen Feindseligkeiten gegenüber Vaiṣṇavas ausdrücken, können solche Übeltäter nicht wirklich als Nachkommen von Lord Kṛṣṇas' Dynastie bezeichnet werden. Das ist die höchste Gerechtigkeit der Persönlichkeit Gottes.

TEXT 1.9

*yan-nimittaḥ sa vai śāpo
yādṛśo dvija-sattama
katham ekātmanām bheda
etat sarvaṁ vadasva me*

yat-nimittaḥ – arising by what cause; *saḥ* – that; *vai* – indeed; *śāpaḥ* – curse; *yādṛśaḥ* – what kind; *dvija-sat-tama* – O purest of twice-born *brāhmaṇas*; *katham* – how; *eka-ātmanām* – of those who shared the same soul (Śrī Kṛṣṇa); *bhedaḥ* – the disagreement; *etat* – this; *sarvaṁ* – all; *vadasva* – please tell; *me* – to me.

ÜBERSETZUNG

König Parīkṣit fuhr mit der Untersuchung fort: Was war das Motiv für diesen Fluch ? Woraus bestand es, O reinste der Zweimalgeborenen ? Und wie konnte es zu einer solchen Meinungsverschiedenheit zwischen den Yadus kommen, die alle das gleiche Ziel des Lebens hatten ? Bitte erzähl mir all diese Dinge.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Ekātmanām bedeutet, dass die Yadus alle die gleiche Meinung teilten, nämlich dass Kṛṣṇa, die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes, das Ziel ihres Lebens war. Daher konnte Parīkṣit Mahārāja keinen offensichtlichen Grund für einen solchen zerstörerischen Streit unter den Mitgliedern der Yadu-Dynastie sehen, und er war gespannt, die eigentliche Ursache zu erfahren.

TEXT 1.10

śrī-bādarāyaṇir uvāca
bibhrat vapuḥ sakala-sundara-sanniveśam
karmācāraṇaḥ bhuvī su-maṅgalaḥ āpta-kāmaḥ
āsthāya dhāma ramamāṇa udāra-kīrtiḥ
saṁhartum aicchata kulam sthita-kṛtya-śeṣaḥ

śrī-bādarāyaṇiḥ – Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Bādarāyaṇa; *uvāca* – said; *bibhrat* – bearing; *vapuḥ* – a divine body; *sakala* – of all; *sundara* – beautiful things; *sanniveśam* – the amalgamation; *karma* – activities; *ācāraṇa* – performing; *bhuvī* – on the earth; *su-maṅgalaḥ* – very auspicious; *āpta-kāmaḥ* – being satisfied in all His desires; *āsthāya* – residing; *dhāma* – in His abode (Dvārakā); *ramamāṇaḥ* – enjoying life; *udāra-kīrtiḥ* – He whose glories are very magnanimous in themselves; *saṁhartum* – to destroy; *aicchata* – He wanted; *kulam* – His dynasty; *sthita* – there remaining; *kṛtya* – of His business; *śeṣaḥ* – some remnant.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Śukadeva Gosvāmī sagte: Der Herr, der Seinen Leib als die Vereinigung von allem Schönen trug, führte pflichtbewusst die vielversprechendsten Aktivitäten auf der Erde aus, obwohl Er in der Tat ohne jede Anstrengung bereits in allen Wünschen erfüllt war. Der Herr, der in Seiner Heimstätte wohnt und das Leben genießt, dessen Verherrlichung an sich großmütig ist, wollte nun seine Dynastie vernichten, da noch ein kleiner Teil seiner Pflicht zu erfüllen ist.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Dieser Vers beantwortet die Frage von Parīkṣit Mahārāja, wie die mächtigen Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie von den *brāhmaṇas* in einen vernichtenden Bruderkrieg geführt wurden. Mit den Worten *saṁhartum aicchata kulam* wird

klar ausgedrückt, dass der Herr Kṛṣṇa selbst seine Dynastie zurückziehen wollte und sich deshalb mit den *brāhmaṇas* als seine Bevollmächtigten verbündete. Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura Ṭhākura bemerkt hier, dass Kṛṣṇa allen Bewohnern der Erde die unübertreffliche Schönheit und Stärke seiner persönlichen Form, seiner Spiele und seiner Freuden deutlich gemacht hat. So war seine Inkarnation, die Dämonen zu töten, die Anhänger zu retten und religiöse Prinzipien wiederherzustellen, vollkommen erfolgreich gewesen. Als Herr Kṛṣṇa feststellte, dass Seine Mission nun abgeschlossen ist, nachdem alles perfekt gemacht worden war, wollte Er gemeinsam mit den Vṛṣṇis in Seine transzendente Heimstätte zurückkehren. So hat der Herr persönlich dafür gesorgt, dass die Menschen der Yadu-Dynastie von den *brāhmaṇas* verflucht werden.

Laut Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura *āpta-kāmaḥ* bedeutet, dass Kṛṣṇa immer selbstzufrieden ist, doch um seine transzendentalen Spiele auszuführen, hat er es arrangiert, seine eigene Dynastie aus drei besonderen Gründen zu zerstören, nämlich um den unter den Yadus geborenen Halbgötter zu helfen, wieder auf die himmlischen Planeten zu gelangen, um seine vollkommenen Viṣṇu-Erweiterungen in ihre Heimstätten, wie Vaikuṅṭha, Śvetadvīpa und Badarikāśrama, zurückzuziehen und um sich selbst aus dem Blickfeld der materiellen Welt zusammen mit seinen ewigen Mitarbeitern zu entfernen.

In diesem Zusammenhang hat Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī mehrere wichtige Anmerkungen zur Vernichtung der Yadu-Dynastie gemacht. Er erklärt, dass viele so genannte religiöse Personen gescheitert sind, indem sie das zweite Vergehen gegen das Rezitieren des heiligen Namens begangen haben, nämlich *viṣṇau sarveśvareṣe tad-itara-sama-dhīḥ*, d.h. eine andere lebendige Einheit als gleichwertig mit dem Herrn Viṣṇu, der der Herr der Herren ist, zu betrachten. Wer von der unpersönlichen Tendenz der Māyāvāda-Philosophie erfasst wird, denkt fälschlicherweise, dass die äußere materielle Energie des Herrn Seiner inneren spirituellen Potenz gleich ist. Auf diese Weise setzt man gewöhnliche Lebewesen mit der Höchsten Persönlichkeit der Gottheit gleich und nimmt Kṛṣṇa als einen weiteren Aspekt von *māyā* an. Das ist ein höchst unglückliches Missverständnis, denn es verdirbt einem die Möglichkeit, Gott so zu verstehen, wie er tatsächlich ist.

Personen, die zu dieser illusorischen Vorstellung vom Leben neigen, würden in jeder Hinsicht und zweifellos die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie als gleichwertig mit Kṛṣṇa betrachten und die zukünftigen Nachkommen der Familie von Kṛṣṇa als gleichwertig mit Kṛṣṇa selbst verehren. So würde die anhaltende Präsenz der Yadu-Dynastie auf der Erde sicherlich ein großes Hindernis auf dem Weg des geistigen Verständnisses und eine große Last auf der Erde darstellen. Um der Gefahr für die Welt durch die Gleichsetzung von Viṣṇu mit der Familie von Viṣṇu entgegenzuwirken, beschloss der Herr, die Yadu-Familie zu vernichten.

Der Höchste Herr, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, ist immer liebevoll zu seinen Anhängern, aber immer dann, wenn die familiären Nachkommen des Herrn Kṛṣṇa Ihm gegenüber unempfindlich oder gleichgültig werden, Seine reinen Anhängern

nicht lieben oder Freundschaft mit Seinen Dienern schließen, werden solche sogenannten Familienmitglieder des Herrn zu Hindernissen für Seinen Willen. Es besteht die greifbare Gefahr, dass ignorante Lebewesen solche unbedarften Personen anbeten und sie als enge Mitarbeiter von Kṛṣṇa verehren. Zum Beispiel wäre eine völlig falsche Schlussfolgerung, Kaṁsa als mütterlichen Onkel von Kṛṣṇa und damit als treuen Diener von Kṛṣṇa zu betrachten. Durch ein solches Missverständnis können böse Menschen, die sich dem Herrn widersetzen, als seine intimen Gefährten akzeptiert werden, und Personen, die Kṛṣṇa schaden, können als seine hingebungsvollen Angehörigen betrachtet werden, die in seiner eigenen Familie erscheinen. Der Zweck der Vernichtung der Yadu-Dynastie war es, die falsche Logik der Māyāvādīs zu beseitigen, die alles in jeder Hinsicht als eins sehen will und die daher zu Unrecht argumentiert, dass die Feinde der Anhänger von Kṛṣṇa seine intimen Familienmitglieder sein können.

TEXTS 1.11-12

*karmāni puṇya-nivahāni su-maṅgalāni
gāyaj-jagat-kali-malāpaharāṇi kṛtvā
kālātmanā nivasatā yadu-deva-gehe
piṅḍārakaṁ samagaman munayo nisṛṣṭāḥ
viśvāmitro'sitaḥ kaṇvo
durvāsā bhṛgur aṅgirāḥ
kaśyapo vāmadevo'trir
vasiṣṭho nāradādayaḥ*

karmāṇi – fruitive rituals; *puṇya* – piety; *nivahāni* – which bestow; *su-maṅgalāni* – most auspicious; *gāyat* – chanting (about which); *jagat* – for the whole world; *kali* – of the current, degraded age; *mala* – the impurities; *apaharāṇi* – which take away; *kṛtvā* – having performed; *kāla-ātmanā* – by Him who is the very personification of time; *nivasatā* – residing; *yadu-deva* – of the lord of the Yadus (King Vasudeva); *gehe* – in the home; *piṅḍārakaṁ* – to the pilgrimage site known as Piṅḍāraka; *samagaman* – they went; *munayaḥ* – the sages; *nisṛṣṭāḥ* – being let out; *viśvāmitraḥ asitaḥ kaṇvaḥ* – the sages Viśvāmitra, Asita and Kaṇva; *durvāsāḥ bhṛguḥ aṅgirāḥ* – Durvāsā, Bhṛgu and Aṅgirā; *kaśyapaḥ vāmadevaḥ atriḥ* – Kaśyapa, Vāmadeva and Atri; *vasiṣṭhaḥ nārada-ādayaḥ* – Vasiṣṭha, Nārada and others.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Die Weisen Viśvāmitra, Asita, Kaṇva, Durvāsā, Bhṛgu, Aṅgirā, Kaśyapa, Vāmadeva, Atri und Vasiṣṭha führten zusammen mit Nārada und anderen einst fruchtbare Rituale durch, die reichlich

fromme Ergebnisse bescherten, großes Glück bringen und die Sünden des Kali-yuga von der ganzen Welt entfernten, indem sie nur erzählt werden. Die Weisen führten ordnungsgemäß diese Rituale im Haus des Oberhauptes der Yadus, von Vasudeva, dem Vater des Herrn Kṛṣṇa, aus. Nachdem Lord Kṛṣṇa, der als personifizierte Zeit in Vasudevas Haus wohnte, die Weisen am Ende der Zeremonien respektvoll verabschiedet hatte, gingen sie an den heiligen Ort namens Piṇḍāraka.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

In diesem Vers beginnt Śukadeva Gosvāmī, die Geschichte des brahmanischen Fluches zu erzählen, der durch den Wunsch des Herrn gegen die Yadu-Dynastie entstanden ist. Laut Śrīdhara Svāmī rufen bestimmte religiöse Rituale, wie z.B. die *aśvamedha-yajña*, fromme Reaktionen hervor. Andererseits bereiten Aktivitäten, wie die Betreuung der eigenen Kinder, nur in der Gegenwart unmittelbaren Genuss, während Rituale als Sühne sündhafte Reaktionen beseitigen. Aber die in Vers 11 genannten religiösen Aktivitäten, die durch die Worte *karmāṇi puṇya-nivahāni su-maṅgalāni gāyaj-jagat-kali-malāpaharāṇi* angezeigt werden, waren in jeder Hinsicht fromm. Sie erbrachten reichlich fromme Ergebnisse und große Freude und waren so stark, dass die bloße Verherrlichung dieser Rituale einen von all den sündhaften Reaktionen von Kali-yuga befreit.

Die Weisen riefen zu Vasudevas Haus, um solche verheißungsvollen religiösen Aktivitäten durchzuführen, wurden mit geeigneten Geschenken zufrieden gestellt und dann von Kṛṣṇa nach Piṇḍāraka geschickt, einem nahegelegenen heiligen Ort etwa zwei Meilen vom Arabischen Meer an der Küste von Gujarat. Der aktuelle Name lautet weiterhin Piṇḍāraka.

Bezeichnenderweise wird Lord Kṛṣṇa hier als *kālātmanā* erwähnt, die Form der Zeit oder die Überseele. Im elften Kapitel der *Bhagavad-gītā* offenbart sich die Höchste Persönlichkeit Gottes gegenüber Arjuna als personifizierte Zeit, die auf dem Schlachtfeld von Kurukṣetra erscheint, um alle Könige und Armeen zu vernichten, die eine Last für die Erde darstellen. In ähnlicher Weise bedeutet *kālātmanā nivasatā yadu-deva-gehe*: Kṛṣṇa wohnte im Haus seines Vaters Vasudeva als personifizierte Zeit und dass die Zeit für die Zerstörung seiner eigenen Dynastie nach seinem Wunsch gekommen war.

TEXTS 1.13-15

*krīḍantas tān upavrajya
kumārā yadu-nandanāḥ
upasaṅgrhya papracchur
avinītā vinīta-vat
te veṣayitvā strī-veṣaiḥ
sāmbaṁ jāmbavatī-sutam
eṣā pṛcchati vo viprā
antarvatny asitekṣaṇā*

*praṣṭum vilajjatī sākṣāt
prabrūtāmogha-darśanāḥ
prasoṣyantī putra-kāmā
kim svit sañjanayiṣyati*

krīḍantaḥ – playing; *tān* – them (the sages); *upavrajya* – approaching; *kumārāḥ* – the young boys; *yadu-nandanāḥ* – the sons of the Yadu dynasty; *upasaṅgrhya* – taking hold of the sages' feet; *papracchuḥ* – they asked; *avinītāḥ* – not humble; *vinīta-vat* – acting as if humble; *te* – they; *veṣayitvā* – dressing; *strī-veṣaiḥ* – in a woman's clothes and ornaments; *sāmbam jāmbavatī-sutam* – Sāmba, the son of Jāmbavatī; *eṣā* – this woman; *prcchati* – is asking; *vaḥ* – you; *viprāḥ* – O learned *brāhmaṇas*; *antarvatnī* – pregnant; *asita-īkṣanā* – black-eyed; *praṣṭum* – to ask; *vilajjatī* – embarrassed; *sākṣāt* – directly herself; *prabrūta* – please speak; *amogha-darśanāḥ* – O you whose vision is never bewildered; *prasoṣyantī* – she who is just about to give birth; *putra-kāmā* – and desirous of getting a son; *kim svit* – what indeed (a son or daughter?); *sañjanayiṣyati* – will she give birth to.

ÜBERSETZUNG

An diesen heiligen Ort hatten die kleinen Jungen der Yadu-Dynastie Sāmba, den Sohn von Jāmbavatī, im Frauengewand gebracht. Spielerisch näherten sich die Jungen den dort versammelten großen Weisen, packten die Füße der Weisen und fragten sie unverschämt mit vorgetäuschter Demut: "O gelehrte brāhmaṇas, diese schwarzäugige Schwangere hat etwas zu fragen. Sie ist zu verlegen, um sich selbst zu erkundigen. Sie steht kurz vor der Geburt und ist sehr begierig darauf, einen Sohn zu bekommen. Da ihr alle große Weisen mit unfehlbarer Sicht seid, sagt uns bitte, ob ihr Kind ein Junge oder ein Mädchen wird."

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī hat den folgenden Kommentar abgegeben: "Das unverschämte Verhalten des jungen Yadus gegenüber den Weisen, die von Nārada angeführt, allesamt *brāhmaṇas* sowie Anhänger des Herrn waren, war ein Beispiel für die Abweichung vom Weg des Herrn Kṛṣṇa. Obwohl die *prākṛta-sahajiyās* sich selbst als innige Gefährten von Kṛṣṇa betrachten, ist die Entschlossenheit des überaus barmherzigen Herrn vollkommen richtig, wenn es darum geht, solche falschen Anhänger zu töten. Solche Betrüger akzeptieren tatsächlich nie einen echten Dienst an Kṛṣṇa. Die Täuschung durch die *yadu-kumāras*' wird als "scheinbar bescheiden" bezeichnet, was bedeutet, dass sie in der Tat alles andere als bescheiden waren. Deshalb führte die Verhöhnung von Vaiṣṇavas durch die Familie des Herrn zu einem großen Vergehen gegen die Anhänger des Herrn."

Ein ähnlicher Vorfall ereignete sich während der Spiele von Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, als man seine eigene Mutter Śrī Advaita Ācārya beleidigte. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu persönlich korrigierte dieses Vergehen eines großen Vaiṣṇava, und so zeigte der Herr seine Großzügigkeit. Lord Kṛṣṇa's Spiele, die Yadu-Dynastie zu zerstören, ist auch ein Zeichen seiner Barmherzigkeit gegenüber seinen Anhängern.

Im Glauben, dass die *brāhmaṇas*, Vaiṣṇavas und *ṛṣis* dumm sind, und im mangelhaften Wissen um materielle Angelegenheiten zur Sinnesbefriedigung verkleideten die *yadu-kumāras* Sāmba, den Sohn von Jāmbavatī, als Frau und versuchten, die heilige Versammlung zu verspotten. Lord Kṛṣṇa wollte lehren, dass ein solches Vergehen, das von Seinem Gefährten Sāmba gegen große Ebene begangen wurde, die Ursache für die Zerstörung der Yadu-Dynastie sein würde, alles als Teil Seines *līlā*.

In der Neuzeit hat sich ein solches Fehlverhalten auch innerhalb der Gemeinde der Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava manifestiert. Nicht befähigte Personen haben den Prozess der betrügerischen Verleihung der Kleidung einer Frau an ihre Anhänger eingeführt. Dieser Prozess ist in einer Vielzahl von Faktoren als *aparādha* oder Verstoß gegen Kṛṣṇa zu betrachten. Ein solcher Versuch, den Andachtsdienst für Kṛṣṇa zu entwerten und zu verspotten, wird sicherlich durch Neid auf echte Vaiṣṇavas verursacht, die sich treu im Andachtsdienst nach den Regeln und Vorschriften der vedischen Literatur engagieren. So hat Rūpa Gosvāmī gesagt:

*śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi-
pañcarātra-vidhiṁ vinā
aikāntikī harer bhaktir
utpātāyaiva kalpate*

"Wenn man seine große Hingabe an den Höchsten Herrn demonstrieren will, aber der Vorgang des hingebungsvollen Dienstes gegen die Standardregeln der offenbarten Schriften, wie zum Beispiel *śruti*, *smṛti*, *Purāṇas* und *Nārada-pañcarātra*, verstößt, dann wird eine angebliche Liebe zu Gott die Gesellschaft einfach nur stören, indem man die Menschen vom verheißungsvollen Weg des geistlichen Fortschritts irreführt." (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.101) Die Übernahme der Kleidung einer Frau durch einen Mann in im *kṛṣṇa-līlā* sollte auf diese Tatsache hinweisen. Ein solcher Akt bedeutet Betrug und Spott gegenüber den Anhängern von Kṛṣṇa. Sāmba ist ein persönlicher Gefährte des Herrn, aber Sāmba fungiert als Vorbote des zukünftigen Unglücks, das in Kali-yuga von falschen Anhängern von Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu geschaffen werden soll. Sāmba zeigte dieses lehrreiche Spiel, um den lebenden Wesen zu helfen, für den richtigen Weg des hingebungsvollen Dienstes gesegnet zu werden.

Die Jungs sagten zu den Weisen. "O *ṛṣis*, O *brāhmaṇas*, O Nārada und Ihr anderen großen Persönlichkeiten, könnt Ihr uns sagen, ob ein Sohn oder eine Tochter aus dem Schoß dieser schwangeren Frau geboren wird ?" Mit

entstellter neuzeitlicher *sampradāyas* (spiritueller Schülernachfolge), bei der in der Praxis *sakhī-bheka* bzw. Männer als weibliche Gefährten von *gopīs* verkleidet werden, erwarteten sie, reine Vaiṣṇavas ansprechen zu dürfen. Diese nicht unzulässige Handlung stellt Verachtung und Spott der reinen Anhänger des Herren dar.

Viele falsche *yogīs* versuchen in der Vorstellung, dass sie erstklassige Hingabe auf der befreiten Ebene vermitteln, den Adepten den Status eines "reinen Geweihten" zu verleihen, die den transzendentalen Geschmack von *madhura-rati* oder der ehelichen Liebe zum Herrn in der geistlichen Welt beinhaltet. Obwohl sie wissen, dass die allgemeine Bevölkerung ungeeignet ist, den befreiten Gefährten des Herrn nachzueifern, schmücken sie gewöhnliche Menschen künstlich mit den Symbolen der spirituellen Vollkommenheit, wie Tränen, einem geschmolzenen Herzen und dem Aufrichten der Körperhaare. So haben diese gefälschten *yogīs* Praxen eingeführt, welche die Welt irreführen. Weil Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu verstanden hat, dass durch solche von *yogīs* oder *kuyogīs* verursachte falsche Handlungen großes Unheil angerichtet wird und dieses im Kali-yuga nicht abgewendet werden kann, infizierte er sie mit großen Begierden nach materiellen Objekten der Lust, so dass gewöhnliche Menschen solche falschen *yogīs*, die vom Weg des reinen hingebungsvollen Dienstes abweichen, leicht erkennen können.

Die Verspottung der *brāhmaṇas* und Vaiṣṇavas durch die Yadu-Jungen, welche Sāmba in Frauengarderobe kleideten, und die daraufhin folgende Vernichtung der Yadu-Dynastie zeigen eindrucksvoll die Unbrauchbarkeit der *sahajiyāsampradāyas*.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī bestätigte, dass der Mangel an Demut, den die Söhne der Yadu-Dynastie an den Tag legten, eine Entscheidung des Herrn selbst war. Mit anderen Worten sind die Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie letztendlich Gefährten von Lord Kṛṣṇa, und um den lehrreichen Spiele des Herrn zu unterstützen, handelten sie auf scheinbar unethische Weise.

TEXT 1.16

*evam pralabdhā munayaḥ
tān ūcuḥ kupitā nṛpa
janayiṣyati vo mandā
muṣalam kula-nāśanam*

evam – thus; *pralabdhāḥ* – tricked; *munayaḥ* – the sages; *tān* – to those boys; *ūcuḥ* – they spoke; *kupitāḥ* – angered; *nṛpa* – O King Parīkṣit; *janayiṣyati* – she will give birth; *vaḥ* – for you; *mandāḥ* – O fools; *muṣalam* – to a club; *kula-nāśanam* – which will destroy the dynasty.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Derart durch die Täuschung verspottet, wurden die Weisen wütend, o König, und sagten den Jungen: "Narren ! Sie wird in sich einen eisernen Klumpen tragen, der Eure gesamte Dynastie zerstören wird."

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Die vier Fehler der bedingten Seele, nämlich die Tendenz zu Fehlern (*bhrama*), Illusion (*pramāda*), unvollkommene Sinne (*karaṇāpāṭava*) und die Tendenz zum Betrug (*vipralipsā*), finden sich nicht bei reinen Geweihten des Herrn. Lord Kṛṣṇa hat jedoch dafür gesorgt, dass die jungen Mitglieder seiner eigenen Familie, der Yadu-Dynastie, die gefährlichen niedrigeren Neigungen der Menschheit zeigen. So imitierten die Jungs von Yādava die Aktivitäten der Anhänger eines pseudodevotionalen Kultes.

Kurz vor seinem Verschwinden wünschte Kṛṣṇa, dass die Weisen über die jungen Mitglieder der Yadu-Dynastie wütend werden, um zu lehren, dass Vaiṣṇavas nicht als töricht, ignorant oder weltlich angesehen werden können, und um den falschen Stolz seiner eigenen Familienmitglieder zu verringern. Manchmal übernehmen irreführte Personen die Rolle von Pseudo-Devotees und lästern den eigentlichen Prozess des reinen hingebungsvollen Dienstes und der reinen Anhänger, die sich der Verkündigung der Sendung des Herrn ergeben haben. Solche dummen Pseudo-Devotees denken, dass ihr Hass oder Neid auf die eigentliche Predigt-Mission des Herrn *bhakti* darstellt, aber in Wirklichkeit ist es die Ursache aller Schwierigkeiten sowohl für sie als auch für die unglücklichen Menschen, die ihnen folgen.

Die Prediger des reinen hingebungsvollen Dienstes enthüllen die verhängnisvollen Versuche von Pseudo-Devotees, und ebenso die Weisen unter Nārada, die alle erhabene Anhänger des Herrn waren, richteten sich an die kleinen Jungen der Yadu-Dynastie als verwirrte Narren und sagten ihnen: "Aus diesem falschen Mutterleib oder falschen Kleid eines *sādhu* wird ein Klumpen geboren werden, der die Quelle der Vernichtung Eurer Dynastie sein wird".

Vor allem in Indien, aber jetzt auch in den westlichen Ländern, gibt es eine Klasse von Leuten mit verunreinigten Sinnen, die sich als Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇavas bezeichnen und vorgeben, den höchsten Zustand des *prema-bhakti* zu demonstrieren. Sie erklären, dass sie sich auf der höchsten Stufe der Hingabe befinden und daher nur mit den intimsten Angelegenheiten des *mādhurya-līla* beschäftigt sind, welche man in Vṛndāvana vorfindet. Manchmal ziehen sie sich sogar als *gopīs* an, und geben eine entstellte Vorstellung von Kṛṣṇa's Spielen, ohne den autorisierten Regularien gerecht zu werden. Sie begehen manchmal im Namen von *prema-bhakti* schwere

Verfehlungen gegen die reinen Kṛṣṇa-Geweihten. Durch den Vorfall mit dem Eisenklumpen in der vorgeblichen Gebärmutter von Sāmba veranschaulichte Lord Kṛṣṇa selbst die gefährlichen Ergebnisse einer solchen Pseudo-Anhängerschaft..

TEXT 1.17

*tac chrutvā te'ti-santrastā
vimucya sahasodaram
sāmbasya dadṛśus tasmin
muṣalaṁ khalv ayasmayam*

tat - that; *śrutvā* - having heard; *te* - they; *ati-santrastāḥ* - extremely afraid; *vimucya* - uncovering; *sahasā* - hastily; *udaram* - the belly; *sāmbasya* - of Sāmba; *dadṛśuḥ* - they saw; *tasmin* - within it; *muṣalam* - a club; *khalu* - indeed; *ayaḥ-mayam* - made of iron.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Als sie den Fluch der Weisen hörten, enthüllten die verängstigten Jungen schnell den Bauch von Sāmba, und tatsächlich beobachteten sie, dass darin ein eiserner Klumpen war.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Als sie die Worte der von Nārada angeführten Vaiṣṇavas hörten, hoben die Yadu-Jungs das Kleidungsstück an, das den Bauch von Sāmba bedeckte, und sahen die Frucht der Vergehen, die sie gegen die Vaiṣṇavas durch ihren Betrug begangen hatten: Ein echter Klumpen war da, um ihre Dynastie zu zerstören. Dieses Beispiel zeigt, dass in einer verschmutzten Gesellschaft der Klumpen der Doppelzüngigkeit niemals jenen Frieden bringen kann, den man in einer Glaubens-Gemeinschaft findet. Vielmehr zerschlägt eine solche Doppelzüngigkeit alle nicht-devotiven Aktivitäten und skurrilen Doktrinen der Pseudo-Devotees. Die Yadu-Jungs waren vorsichtig, ihre vorgeschobene Position zu gefährden und dachten tatsächlich, dass, solange sie ihre Tricks geheim halten, andere nie in der Lage sein würden, solch raffiniertes Betrügen zu erkennen. Dennoch konnten sie ihre Familie nicht vor der Reaktion auf ihr schweres Vergehen gegen die Anhänger des Herrn schützen.

TEXT 1.18

*kiṁ kṛtam manda-bhāgyair naḥ
kiṁ vadiṣyanti no janāḥ
iti vihvalitā gehān
ādāya muṣalaṁ yayuḥ*

kim - what; *kṛtam* - has been done; *manda-bhāgyaiḥ* - who are very unfortunate; *naḥ* - by us; *kim* - what; *vadiṣyanti* - will they say; *naḥ* - to us;

janāḥ – the family; *iti* – thus speaking; *vihvalitāḥ* – overwhelmed; *gehān* – to their homes; *ādāya* – taking; *muṣalam* – the club; *yayuḥ* – they went.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Die jungen Männer der Yadu-Dynastie sagten: "Oh, was haben wir getan ? Wir sind so unglücklich ! Was werden unsere Familienmitglieder zu uns sagen ?" So gesprochen und sehr verstört, kehrten sie in ihre Häuser zurück und nahmen den Klumpen mit.

TEXT 1.19

*tac copanīya sadasi
parimlāna-mukha-śriyaḥ
rājña āvedayām cakruḥ
sarva-yādava-sannidhau*

tac – that club; *ca* – and; *upanīya* – bringing; *sadasi* – into the assembly; *parimlāna* – completely faded; *mukha* – of their faces; *śriyaḥ* – the beauty; *rājñe* – the King; *āvedayām cakruḥ* – they informed; *sarva-yādava* – of all the Yadus; *sannidhau* – in the presence.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Die Yadu-Jungs, deren Glanz ihrer Gesichter völlig verblasste, brachten den Klumpen in die königliche Versammlung, und in Anwesenheit all der Yādavas erzählten sie König Ugrasena, was passiert war.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura Ṭhākura weist darauf hin, dass sich das Wort *rājñe* auf König Ugrasena und nicht auf Śrī Kṛṣṇa bezieht. Aus Scham und Angst näherten sich die Jungen der Höchsten Persönlichkeit Gottes, Kṛṣṇa, nicht.

TEXT 1.20

*śrutvāmoghaṁ vipra-śāpaṁ
dṛṣṭvā ca muṣalam nṛpa
vismitā bhaya-santrastā
babhūvur dvārakaukasaḥ*

śrutvā – hearing about; *amogham* – infallible; *vipra-śāpam* – the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*; *dṛṣṭvā* – seeing; *ca* – and; *muṣalam* – the club; *nṛpa* – O King; *vismitāḥ* – amazed; *bhaya* – with fear; *santrastāḥ* – distraught; *babhūvuḥ* – they became; *dvārakā-okasaḥ* – the inhabitants of Dvārakā.

ÜBERSETZUNG

O König Parīkṣit, als die Bewohner von Dvārakā vom unfehlbaren Fluch der brāhmaṇas hörten und den Klumpen sahen, waren sie erstaunt und vor Angst verzweifelt.

TEXT 1.21

*tac cūrṇayitvā muṣalam
yadu-rājaḥ sa āhukaḥ
samudra-salile prāsyat
loham cāsyāvaśeṣitam*

tat – that; *cūrṇayitvā* – having ground to bits; *muṣalam* – club; *yadu-rājaḥ* – the King of the Yadus; *saḥ* – he; *āhukaḥ* – Āhuka (Ugrasena); *samudra* – of the ocean; *salile* – in the water; *prāsyat* – he threw; *loham* – the iron; *ca* – and; *asya* – of the club; *avaśeṣitam* – the remnant.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Nachdem der Klumpen am Boden zerstückelt worden war, warf König Āhuka [Ugrasena] von den Yadus die Stücke zusammen mit dem restlichen Eisenklumpen persönlich ins Wasser des Ozeans.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

König Ugrasena dachte, "Sāmba und die anderen sollten keine Scham oder Angst empfinden", und ohne Śrī Kṛṣṇa zu konsultieren, zerlegte er den Klumpen in Stücke und warf ihn ins Wasser, zusammen mit einem kleinen Eisenklumpen, der übrig blieb, was er für unbedeutend hielt.

TEXT 1.22

*kaścīn matsyo'grasīt loham
cūrṇāni taralais tataḥ
uhyamānāni velāyām
lagnāny āsan kilairakāḥ*

kaścīn – a certain; *matsyaḥ* – fish; *agrasīt* – swallowed; *loham* – the iron; *cūrṇāni* – the bits of powder; *taralaiḥ* – by the waves; *tataḥ* – from that place; *uhyamānāni* – being carried; *velāyām* – on the shore; *lagnāni* – becoming stuck; *āsan* – they became; *kila* – indeed; *erakāḥ* – a particular species of grass with long, sharp-edged blades.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Ein bestimmter Fisch schluckte den Eisenklumpen, und die Eisenstücke, die von den Wellen zum Ufer zurückgebracht wurden,

platzierten sich dort und wuchsen zu hohen, scharfen Schilfrohren heran.

TEXT 1.23

*matsyo grhīto matsya-ghnair
jālenānyaiḥ sahārṇave
tasyodara-gataṁ lohaṁ
sa śalye lubdhako'karot*

matsyaḥ – the fish; *grhītaḥ* – being seized; *matsya-ghnaiḥ* – by fishermen; *jālena* – with a net; *anyaiḥ saha* – along with other fish; *arṇave* – within the ocean; *tasya* – of the fish; *udara-gatam* – contained in the stomach; *loham* – lump of iron; *saḥ* – he (Jarā); *śalye* – on his arrow; *lubdhakaḥ* – a hunter; *akarot* – placed.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Der Fisch wurde im Meer zusammen mit anderen Fischen in einem Fischernetz gefangen. Der eiserne Klumpen aus dem Bauch des Fisches wurde vom Jäger Jarā an sich genommen, der ihn als Pfeilspitze am Ende seines Schaftes befestigte.

TEXT 1.24

*bhagavān jñāta-sarvārtha
īśvaro'pi tad-anyathā
kartuṁ naicchad vipra-śāpam
kāla-rūpy anvamodata*

bhagavān – the Supreme Lord; *jñāta* – knowing; *sarva-arthaḥ* – the meaning of everything; *īśvaraḥ* – quite capable; *api* – although; *tad-anyathā* – otherwise; *kartum* – to make; *na icchat* – He did not desire; *vipra-śāpam* – the *brāhmaṇas'* curse; *kāla-rūpī* – exhibiting His form of time; *anvamodata* – He gladly sanctioned.

ÜBERSETZUNG

Obwohl er in der Lage war, den Fluch der brāhmaṇas aufzuheben, wollte es der Höchste Herr im Wissen um die Bedeutung all dieser Ereignisse nicht tun. Vielmehr hat er in seiner Form der Zeit die Ereignisse bereitwillig zugelassen.

ERLÄUTERUNGEN

Gewöhnliche Menschen können überrascht oder verwirrt sein, dass der Herr den Fluch und die Vernichtung seiner eigenen Dynastie gerne genehmigt hat. Das hier verwendete Wort *anvamodata* bedeutet, dass man sich an

etwas erfreut, sanktioniert oder genehmigt. Es wird auch der Begriff *kālarūpī* erwähnt: Kṛṣṇa hat dem Fluch der *brāhmaṇas'* gerne seine Zustimmung in Form von Zeit gegeben. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda kommentierte, dass der Höchste Herr, Kṛṣṇacandra, beschlossen hat, den Fluch aufrechtzuerhalten, um die eigentlichen Prinzipien der Religion zu schützen und die ungebührliche Übertretung der hinterlistigen Mitglieder der Kārṣṇa-Dynastie zu ahnden. In der Bhagavad-gītā wird klar erklärt, dass der Sinn des Abstiegs des Herrn in die materielle Welt darin besteht, die authentischen Prinzipien der Religion wiederherzustellen, durch die die bedingten Seelen, die besonders stark unter den Gesetzen der materiellen Natur leiden, ihren ursprünglichen existentiellen Status als ewig befreite Diener der Höchsten Persönlichkeit Gottes, Kṛṣṇa, zurückgewinnen können. Das Lebewesen kommt mit dem Wunsch in diese materielle Welt, über die materielle Natur zu herrschen, obwohl das Lebewesen in Wirklichkeit kein Herr, sondern ein ewiger Diener ist. Aufgrund dieser widernatürlichen Tendenz, die ganze Welt für seine Sinnesbefriedigung auszunutzen, ist das Lebewesen auch für den Versuch anfällig, die Prinzipien des spirituellen Lebens zu untergraben, so dass die ewigen religiösen Prinzipien seiner eigenen materiellen Sinnesbefriedigung angepasst werden. Die Religion ist jedoch dazu bestimmt, dem Höchsten Herrn zu gefallen, indem sie seinen Gesetzen nachkommt. Und deshalb kommt Herr Kṛṣṇa selbst von Zeit zu Zeit persönlich, um die richtige Methode des hingebungsvollen Dienstes an seinen Lotusfüßen wiederzubeleben. Im elften Canto des *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* wird klar festgehalten, dass Lord Kṛṣṇa den überwiegenden Teil seiner Zeit auf der Erde verbrachte und nun die letzten Vorbereitungen für seine Abreise getroffen hat. Deshalb wollte er den Lebewesen dieser Zeit eine klare Lektion erteilen, dass jeder so genannte Gläubige, auch wenn er so erhaben ist, dass er in der persönlichen Familie des Herrn geboren wird, nicht gegen den Respekt und die Ehrfurcht verstossen kann, die den reinen Anhängern des Herrn, wie Nārada Muni, gebührt. Das Prinzip, den reinen Kṛṣṇa-Geweihten zu dienen, ist für den geistlichen Fortschritt so bedeutend, dass der Herr den unvorstellbaren Vorgang der Vernichtung seiner gesamten Dynastie inszenierte, um insbesondere diesen Aspekt den bedingten Seelen im Kali-yuga nochmals zu verdeutlichen.

Im *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* wird auf das große Unglück hingedeutet, das nach dem Verschwinden der Höchsten Persönlichkeit Gottes eintreten würde. Solche Unglücke ereigneten sich auch nach dem Verschwinden des Herrn Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, der von Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas als Kṛṣṇa selbst akzeptiert wird. Durch verschiedene Anweisungen sieht das *Bhāgavatam* vor, betrügerische Pseudo-Religionen zu beseitigen, die in der menschlichen Gesellschaft nach dem Weggang des Herrn entstehen.

Lord Caitanya vertrieb aus Südindien alle falschen Lehren der *apasampradāyas* oder so genannte Traditionen von Pseudo-Devotees, die

großen Einfluss gewonnen hatten, indem sie auf die atheistischen Theorien der Buddhisten und Jains zurückgriffen. So wandte Er sich in ganz Indien dem hingebungsvollen Dienst des Herrn Kṛṣṇa zu, so dass aufgrund der umfangreichen Predigten von Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu und seinen Anhängern kein anderes Thema in der Welt zur Diskussion stand als der hingebungsvolle Dienst am Höchsten Herrn. Tridaṇḍipāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī hat dies in seinem Vers *strī-putrādi-kathām-kathām jahur viṣayiṇaḥ* erläutert.

In seinem Buch *Kṛṣṇa-bhajanāmṛta* hat Śrī Narahari Sarakāra Ṭhākura die falschen Aussagen der *gaurāṅga-nāgarī-vādīs*, *sakhībheka-vādīs* und anderer der elf pseudo-disziplinären Ketten korrigiert, die behaupten, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu zu folgen. Diese unbefugten Personen sind ein Betrug unter dem Deckmantel der Religion und bewerben ihre Doppelzüngigkeit als *kathā* oder reine Anbetung des Herrn. So wie Kṛṣṇa einen erbitterten Streit um die Vernichtung seiner eigenen Familie auslöste, sorgte Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu dafür, dass die Welt kurz nach seinem Verschwinden von einer Vielfalt von Māyāvāda und *karma-vāda* Philosophien überschwemmt wurde. Er tat dies, um Personen zu vernichten, die zu den elf *apasampradāyas* oder zu nicht autorisierte Traditionen gehörten, sowie die vielen anderen *apasampradāyas*, die in der Zukunft erscheinen und sich anmaßen würden, sich Anhänger von Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu zu nennen oder vorzugeben, Nachkommen in seiner Familienlinie zu sein. Gleichzeitig sorgte Caitanya Mahāprabhu dafür, dass seine eigenen Anhänger von der Pseudo-Hingabe dieser Betrüger ferngehalten wurden. Die Anhänger von Lord Gaurasundara, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, können die Geheimnisse Seiner Zeitgenossen erkennen, die sich in den Zeitgenossen von Lord Kṛṣṇa manifestieren. Die Aktivitäten des transzendentalen Körpers der Höchsten Persönlichkeit Gottes können auf keine alltägliche Weise verstanden werden. Das ist die wesentliche Bedeutung dieses Kapitels.

Hiermit enden die Erläuterungen Seiner Göttlichen Gnade A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda zum elften Canto, Erstes Kapitel, des Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam mit dem Titel "Der Fluch über die Yadu-Dynastie"

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CHAPTER TWO

Mahārāja Nimi Meets the Nine Yogendras

In this chapter Nārada gives instructions in *bhāgavata-dharma* to the faithful and inquisitive Vasudeva by recounting a conversation between Mahārāja Nimi and the nine Yogendras.

Greatly eager to see Lord Kṛṣṇa, Devarṣi Nārada resided almost exclusively in Dvārakā. Vasudeva, bewildered by the Lord's illusory potency, had previously offered worship to the Supreme Lord Ananta for the purpose of getting a son, but had failed to worship Him for liberation.

Once Nārada arrived at the home of Vasudeva, who worshiped him according to proper etiquette, greeted him respectfully and requested to hear about pure devotional service, which frees one from all kinds of fear. Nārada praised Vasudeva's fixed intelligence and then related the ancient history of the conversation between the nine Yogendras, who were sons of Lord Ṛṣabhadeva, and Nimi, the King of Videha.

Svāyambhuva Manu's son was Priyavrata. His son was Āgnīdhra, whose son was Nābhi. Lord Ṛṣabhadeva, the plenary portion of Vāsudeva, incarnated as the son of Nābhi. The oldest of Ṛṣabhadeva's one hundred sons was Bharata, an exalted devotee of Nārāyaṇa by whose name this earth, previously called Ajanābha-varṣa, became famous as Bhārata-varṣa. Nine other sons of Ṛṣabhadeva were widely known as the *nava-yogendras*: Kavi, Havir, Antarīkṣa, Prabuddha, Pippalāyana, Āvirhotra, Drumila, Camasa and Karabhājana. They were well versed in knowledge of the self, fixed in their goal and always striving for perfection. Nine other sons of Ṛṣabhadeva took on the duty of *kṣatriyas* and became masters of the nine *dvīpas* comprising Bhārata-varṣa. His other eighty-one sons became *brāhmaṇas* expert in *smṛti* doctrines who propagated the path of fruitive sacrifice.

The nine Yogendras, free to move without impediment, traveled everywhere as they wished. They were direct associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Madhusūdana, and wandered freely to give protection to the various planets in the universe. The human body can be lost at any moment, but it is still a very rare attainment. Still rarer is to get the association of the confidential devotees of the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha while in this very human body. The association of such saintly persons, even for a fraction of a second, bestows all benefits on a living being. Therefore King Nimi offered the nine Yogendras suitable seats, worshiped them, humbled himself with obeisances and joyfully inquired from them about *bhāgavata-dharma*. *Bhāgavata-dharma*, or pure devotional service to the Lord, is the only means of ultimate good fortune for the soul. The Supreme Lord, being pleased by such service, offers His own self to the devotee.

In answer to the King's question, one of the nine Yogendras, Kavi, spoke as follows: "Those means of advancement which are described by the Personality of Godhead Himself and which enable even foolish persons easily to achieve perfect self-realization are called *bhāgavata-dharma*. This *bhāgavata-dharma*, manifested as service to the lotus feet of the infallible Supreme Lord, eradicates all fear for the living being. By abiding in *bhāgavata-dharma* one will never stumble or fall, even while running with

both eyes closed. Whatever one does with his body, mind, words, intelligence, consciousness, senses and natural proclivities should all be offered to Lord Nārāyaṇa. Living entities averse to the Lord's lotus feet come under the control of the Lord's illusory energy, *māyā*. They forget the Lord's identity and are trapped by the illusion of identifying with the temporary body. Under the sway of material attraction, they become greatly fearful. Thus the best thing for them is to surrender their very life energy to a qualified *guru* and execute worship of the Supreme Lord, the absolute controller of *māyā*, with pure devotion. Just as by eating one gradually appeases his hunger and with every bite feels more and more satisfied and nourished, a surrendered devotee achieves detachment from all objects other than Kṛṣṇa, gains direct personal experience of the Lord and relishes pure love for the Lord, all simultaneously."

Next Havir spoke, describing the different characteristics of first-class, second-class and third-class devotees: "One who offers prescribed worship with faith to the Deity of Lord Viṣṇu but has no devotion for Vaiṣṇavas and things related to Viṣṇu is a materialistic devotee. One who shows love for the Lord, friendship for the Lord's devotees, mercy for the ignorant and indifference for the enemies of Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavas is an intermediate devotee. And one who sees the presence of the Supreme Lord in everything and sees everything within the Lord is the topmost devotee." The first-class devotees are described in eight verses, which conclude by stating that the first-class devotee keeps the Supreme Lord perpetually fastened to his own heart with ropes of affection. Lord Hari never leaves the heart of such a devotee.

TEXT 2.1

śrī-śuka uvāca
govinda-bhuja-guptāyām
dvāravatyām kurūdvaha
avātsīn nārada'bhīkṣṇam
kṛṣṇopāsana-lālasaḥ

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śuka said; *govinda* – of Lord Govinda; *bhuja* – by the arms; *guptāyām* – protected; *dvāravatyām* – in the capital Dvāravatī; *kuru-udvaha* – O best of the Kurus; *avātsīt* – dwelled; *nāradaḥ* – Nārada Muni; *abhīkṣṇam* – constantly; *kṛṣṇa-upāsana* – to engage in the worship of Kṛṣṇa; *lālasaḥ* – who had great eagerness.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Eager to engage in the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa, O best of the Kurus, Nārada Muni stayed for some time in Dvārakā, which was always protected by the arms of Govinda.

PURPORT

In the Second Chapter of this canto, *bhāgavata-dharma*, or pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, is explained by Nārada Muni to Vasudeva, who had inquired with devotion. Nārada Muni cites a conversation between King Nimi and the

Jāyanteyas. According to Jīva Gosvāmī, the word *abhikṣṇam* indicates that although Nārada Muni was frequently sent by Lord Kṛṣṇa here and there for various pastimes, such as inquiring about the affairs of the world, Nārada continuously returned to reside in Dvārakā. The word *kṛṣṇopāsana-lālasaḥ* indicates that Nārada was very eager to be near Kṛṣṇa and worship Him. Because of the curse of Dakṣa, Nārada is never allowed to live continuously in one place. Śrīdhara Svāmī, however, has pointed out, *na tasyām śāpādeḥ prabhāvaḥ*: in Dvārakā there is no influence of curses or other such evils, because Dvārakā is the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is always protected by His arms, as shown by the word *govinda-bhuja-guptāyām*. The conditioned souls are struggling within the kingdom of *māyā* against the cruel laws of material nature, such as birth, death, old age and disease, but if such conditioned souls have the good fortune to enter the city of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whether Dvārakā, Mathurā or Vṛndāvana, and live there under the direct protection of the omnipotent arms of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, they will experience the unlimited transcendental bliss of real life, which is eternal and which is meant to be lived in the personal company of God.

TEXT 2.2

*ko nu rājann indriyavān
mukunda-caraṇāmbujam
na bhajet sarvato-mṛtyur
upāśyam amarottamaiḥ*

kaḥ – who; *nu* – indeed; *rājan* – O King; *indriya-vān* – possessed of senses; *mukunda-caraṇa-ambujam* – the lotus feet of Lord Mukunda; *na bhajet* – would not worship; *sarvataḥ-mṛtyuḥ* – being faced by death on all sides; *upāśyam* – worshipable; *amara-uttamaiḥ* – by the best of liberated personalities.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, in the material world the conditioned souls are confronted by death at every step of life. Therefore, who among the conditioned souls would not render service to the lotus feet of Lord Mukunda, who is worshipable even for the greatest of liberated souls?

PURPORT

The word *indriyavān* is significant in this verse. *Indriyavān* means “possessing senses.” Although we are conditioned within the material world, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord we are awarded a human body, which possesses distinct senses, such as the eyes, ears, tongue, nose and skin. Generally the conditioned souls use these senses in a false attempt to exploit the material nature for sense gratification. But our material senses and their objects are temporary, and it is not possible to become peaceful or happy in the attempt to gratify our temporary senses with the temporary sense objects offered by *māyā*, the illusory energy of the Lord. In fact, our

strenuous endeavor to satisfy the material senses inevitably brings exactly the opposite result, namely material suffering. A man is attracted to a woman. Being sexually aroused he marries her, and soon there is a family that requires ever-increasing support. In this way his innocent and simple life is ended, and he spends the major portion of his life working hard like an ass to support the demands of his family. In the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Lord Kapila describes very clearly that in spite of the exhausting work a man performs throughout his life, his family is ultimately dissatisfied, and when the exhausted father reaches old age, the irritated family members look upon him just as farmers look upon an old and useless ox. Sometimes the sons dream of receiving their father's money as an inheritance and secretly wish for him to die. Nowadays people strongly resent the trouble of caring for elderly parents and therefore send them to an institution, where they die lonely and neglected after a life of hard work for their so-called loved ones. One doctor in England is seriously proposing euthanasia for elderly persons who are no longer productive.

Nowadays some people, desiring material sense gratification but hoping to avoid the inconvenience of family life, try to enjoy "free" sexual relations with women, without the trouble of marriage. Through birth control and abortion they eliminate the disturbance of caring for children. In this way they hope to enjoy material sense gratification without any material impediment. By the laws of nature, however, such persons become bound in a network of sinful reactions by avoiding their real duty to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and by thoughtlessly causing violence and suffering to others for increasing their own sense gratification. Caught in a network of impious activities, they drift further and further away from their original pure consciousness and gradually lose all power to understand the laws of nature. Therefore it is stated here, *sarvato-mṛtyuḥ*. *Mṛtyu* means "death." Death suddenly appears, startling such confident sense gratifiers, and destroys their entire program of so-called material happiness. Often such persons are afflicted with ghastly diseases and undergo inconceivable suffering, which ends in death. If a sincere well-wisher points these facts out to them, trying to inform them of the reality, they become angry and accuse him of being a pessimist or a religious fanatic. In this way they blindly ignore the laws of nature until these laws inevitably smash them down and drag them out of their fool's paradise. Because of an excessive accumulation of sinful results, they are forced into situations of great distress by the laws of *karma*. Sinking down into the lower species of life, they lose all awareness of that which lies beyond their gross material senses.

Sometimes a living being is able to understand the miserable result of materialistic sense gratification. Being frustrated by the pain and suffering of materialistic life and being ignorant of any superior life, he adopts a neo-Buddhist philosophy and seeks shelter in so-called nothingness. But there is no actual void within the kingdom of God. The desire to merge into nothingness is a reaction against material pain; it is not a tangible concept of

the Supreme. For example, if I feel unbearable pain in my leg and the pain cannot be cured, I may finally agree to have my leg amputated. But it is far better to remove the pain and keep my leg. Similarly, because of false ego we think, “I am everything. I am the most important person. No one is as intelligent as me.” Thinking in this way, we suffer constantly and experience intense anxiety. But as soon as we purify the ego by admitting that we are insignificant eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa, our ego will give us great pleasure. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the blissfully variegated spiritual sky, called Vaikuṅṭha, is always absorbed in transcendental enjoyment. In fact, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all pleasure. People absorbed in materialistic enjoyment are bound by the laws of omnipresent death, but if we endeavor instead to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we can immediately be connected to His *hlādinī śakti*, or blissful potency. If we serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of His authorized representative, the spiritual master, we can immediately get relief from material distress. Then we shall not yearn after nothing, but instead we shall be able to relish unlimited spiritual bliss in the service of the Supreme Lord.

Sarvato-mṛtyuḥ also indicates that birth and death occur on every planet in the universe. Therefore our so-called space travel and cosmic consciousness are useless, since there is no eternal life anywhere within the material cosmos. In conclusion, to understand the futility of engaging in the service of anything other than Kṛṣṇa and to engage instead in serving that which is eternal and full of bliss is the highest possible development of intelligence. Although our present intelligence is narrow, being conditioned by the laws of nature, we can create unlimited good fortune for ourselves by taking shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, learning to discriminate between that which is temporary and useless and that which is eternal and real.

TEXT 2.3

*tam ekadā tu devarṣim
vasudevo grhāgatam
arcitaṁ sukham āsīnam
abhivādyedam abravīt*

tam – him; *ekadā* – once; *tu* – and; *deva-ṛṣim* – the sage among the demigods, Nārada; *vasudevaḥ* – Vasudeva, the father of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *grhā-āgatam* – who had come to his house; *arcitam* – worshiped with paraphernalia; *sukham āsīnam* – comfortably seated; *abhivādyā* – respectfully greeting him; *idam* – this; *abravīt* – said.

TRANSLATION

One day the sage among the demigods, Nārada, came to the house of Vasudeva. After worshiping Nārada with suitable paraphernalia, seating him comfortably and respectfully bowing down to him, Vasudeva spoke as follows.

TEXT 2.4

*śrī-vasudeva uvāca
bhagavan bhavato yātrā
svastaye sarva-dehinām
kṛpaṇānām yathā pitror
uttama-śloka-vartmanām*

śrī-vasudevaḥ uvāca – Śrī Vasudeva said; *bhagavan* – O lord; *bhavataḥ* – of your good self; *yātrā* – the coming; *svastaye* – for the benefit; *sarva-dehinām* – of all embodied beings; *kṛpaṇānām* – of the most wretched; *yathā* – as; *pitroḥ* – that of a father; *uttama-śloka* – the Supreme Lord, who is praised by excellent verses; *vartmanām* – of those who are fixed on the path toward.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Vasudeva said: My lord, your visit, like that of a father to his children, is for the benefit of all living beings. You especially help the most wretched among them, as well as those who are advanced on the path toward the Supreme Lord, Uttamaśloka.

PURPORT

Vasudeva herein describes the glories of Nārada Muni. The words *kṛpaṇānām yathā pitror uttama-śloka-vartmanām* are significant. *Kṛpaṇānām* refers to the most wretched persons, whereas *uttama-śloka-vartmanām* refers to the most fortunate, those who are advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīdhara Svāmī has stated, *tathā bhagavad-rūpasya bhavato yātrā sarva-dehinām svastaya iti*. The word *bhagavad-rūpasya* indicates that Nārada Muni is an expansion of the Supreme Lord and that his activities therefore bring immense benefit for all living beings. In the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Nārada Muni is described as a manifestation of the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There it is stated that Nārada is especially empowered to give instructions in the art of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Nārada is especially able to advise the conditioned souls as to how they can dovetail their present activities with the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa without unnecessarily disrupting their present life.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī has defined the word *kṛpaṇa* by quoting from the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (3.8.10). *Etad akṣaram gārgi aviditvāsmāl lokāt praiti sa kṛpaṇaḥ*: “O daughter of Gargācārya, he who leaves this world without learning about the infallible Supreme is a *kṛpaṇa*, or miser.” In other words, we are awarded the human form of life so that we may understand our eternal, blissful relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As indicated in verse 2 of this chapter by the word *indriyavān*, the human body is specifically awarded so that we may serve the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. This human form of body is the greatest fortune because the highly evolved intelligence of human life enables us to understand Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth. If we are unable to understand our eternal relationship with God, we shall derive no permanent benefit whatsoever in this present life, nor can we ultimately benefit others. One who receives a great treasure but can neither use it himself nor dedicate it to the happiness of others is called a miser.

Therefore, a person who leaves this world without having understood his actual position as servant of God is called a *kṛpaṇa*, or miser. This verse states that Nārada Muni is so empowered in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa that he can lift even miserly rascals out of their illusion, just as a kind father goes to his child and wakes him from a distressing nightmare. Our present materialistic life is just like a troublesome dream, from which great souls such as Nārada can wake us. Nārada Muni is so powerful that even those already advanced in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa can greatly enhance their spiritual position by hearing his instructions, as they will be given here in the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Therefore Śrī Nārada is the *guru* and father of all living beings, who are originally devotees of the Lord but who are now artificially attempting to enjoy the material world in the material bodies of human beings, animals, and so on.

TEXT 2.5

*bhūtānām deva-caritaṁ
duḥkhāya ca sukhāya ca
sukhāyaiva hi sādḥūnām
tvāḍṛśām acyutātmanām*

bhūtānām – of the living beings; *deva-caritam* – the activities of demigods; *duḥkhāya* – result in the misery; *ca* – also; *sukhāya* – in happiness; *ca* – as well; *sukhāya* – in happiness; *eva* – only; *hi* – indeed; *sādḥūnām* – that of saints; *tvāḍṛśām* – like you; *acyuta* – the infallible Supreme Lord; *ātmanām* – who have accepted as their very soul.

TRANSLATION

The activities of demigods lead to both misery and happiness for living beings, but the activities of great saints like you, who have accepted the infallible Lord as their very soul, result only in the happiness of all beings.

PURPORT

This verse clearly states that the pure devotees of the Lord such as Nārada Muni are saintly persons, to be considered superior even to the demigods, the living beings empowered by the Supreme Lord to administer the entire universe. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.12) it is stated:

*iṣṭān bhogān hi vo devā
dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo
yo bhukte stena eva saḥ*

“The demigods in charge of the various necessities of life, being satisfied by the performance of *yajña* [sacrifice], supply all necessities to man. But one who enjoys these gifts without offering them in return to the demigods is certainly a thief.” In this connection Śrīla Prabhupāda has made the following comment regarding the demigods: “The demigods are empowered administrators of material affairs. The supply of air, light, water and other blessings for maintaining the body and the soul of all living entities are

entrusted to the demigods, who are innumerable assistants in the different parts of the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Their pleasure and displeasure depend on the performance of *yajñas* by the human being.” In other words, by the Lord’s arrangement, material prosperity depends upon the satisfaction of the demigods. If the demigods are dissatisfied due to nonperformance or improper performance of sacrifice, they are empowered to impose various types of suffering upon human beings. Usually this suffering takes the form of either excessive or insufficient supply of material necessities. For example, sunshine is necessary for life, but if there is excessive heat or insufficient heat from the sun, we suffer. Excessive or insufficient rain is also a cause of suffering. Thus the demigods bestow either happiness or suffering upon human beings, in accordance with the performance of sacrifice.

As stated here, however, great saintly persons such as Nārada Muni are always merciful to all living beings.

*titikṣavaḥ kārūṇikāḥ
suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām
ajāta-śatravaḥ śāntāḥ
sādhavaḥ sādhu-bhūṣaṇāḥ*

“The symptoms of a *sādhu* are that he is tolerant, merciful and friendly to all living entities, he has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime.” (*Bhāg.* 3.25.21) Śrīla Prabhupāda, in his commentary on this verse, has portrayed the *sādhu* as follows: “A *sādhu* as described above is a devotee of the Lord. His concern, therefore, is to enlighten people in devotional service to the Lord. That is his mercy. He knows that without devotional service to the Lord, human life is spoiled. A devotee travels all over the country door to door preaching, ‘Be Kṛṣṇa conscious. Be a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Don’t spoil your life in simply fulfilling your animal propensities. Human life is meant for self-realization, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness.’ These are the preachings of a *sādhu*. He is not satisfied with his own liberation. He always thinks about others. He is the most compassionate personality toward all the fallen souls. One of his qualifications, therefore, is *kārūṇika*, great mercy to the fallen souls. While engaged in preaching work he has to meet with so many opposing elements, and therefore the *sādhu*, or devotee of the Lord, has to be very tolerant. Someone may ill-treat him, because the conditioned souls are not prepared to receive the transcendental knowledge of devotional service. They do not like it; that is their disease. The *sādhu* has the thankless task of impressing upon them the importance of devotional service. Sometimes devotees are personally attacked with violence. Lord Jesus Christ was crucified. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was caned in twenty-two marketplaces, and Lord Caitanya’s principal assistant, Nityānanda, was violently attacked by Jagāi and Mādhāi. But still they were tolerant because their mission was to deliver the fallen souls. One of the qualifications of a *sādhu* is that he is very tolerant and is merciful to all fallen souls. He is merciful because he is a well-wisher of all

living entities. He is not only a well-wisher of human society, but a well-wisher of animal society as well. It is said here, *sarva-dehinām*, which indicates all living entities who have accepted material bodies. Not only does a human being have a material body, but other living entities, such as cats and dogs, also have material bodies. The devotee of the Lord is merciful to everyone – the cats, dogs, trees, etc. He treats all living entities in such a way that they can ultimately get salvation from this material entanglement. Śivānanda Sena, one of the disciples of Lord Caitanya, gave liberation to a dog by treating the dog transcendently. There are many instances where a dog got salvation by association with a *sādhū*, because a *sādhū* engages in the highest philanthropic activities for the benediction of all living entities. Although the *sādhū* is not inimical toward anyone, the world is so ungrateful that even a *sādhū* has many enemies.

“What is the difference between an enemy and a friend? It is a difference in behavior. A *sādhū* behaves with all conditioned souls for their ultimate relief from material entanglement. Therefore, no one can be more friendly than the *sādhū* in relieving a conditioned soul. A *sādhū* is calm, and he quietly and peacefully follows the principles of scripture and at the same time is a devotee of the Lord. One who actually follows the principles of scripture must be a devotee of God because all the *śāstras* instruct us to obey the orders of the Personality of Godhead. *Sādhū*, therefore, means a follower of the scriptural injunctions and a devotee of the Lord. All these characteristics are prominent in a devotee. A devotee develops all the good qualities of the demigods, whereas a nondevotee, even though academically qualified, has no actual good qualifications or good characteristics according to the standards of transcendental realization.”

Vasudeva, therefore, has used the word *sādhū* to describe Nārada Muni, indicating that the position of the devotee of the Lord is superior even to that of the demigods.

TEXT 2.6

*bhajanti ye yathā devān
devā api tathāiva tān
chāyeva karma-sacivāḥ
sādhavo dīna-vatsalāḥ*

bhajanti – worship; *ye* – they who; *yathā* – in which way; *devān* – the demigods; *devāḥ* – the demigods; *api* – also; *tathā eva* – just in that way; *tān* – them; *chāyā* – in a shadow; *iva* – as if; *karma* – of material work and its reactions; *sacivāḥ* – the attendants; *sādhavaḥ* – saintly persons; *dīna-vatsalāḥ* – merciful to the fallen.

TRANSLATION

Those who worship the demigods receive reciprocation from the demigods in a way just corresponding to the offering. The demigods are attendants of karma, like a person’s shadow, but *sādhū*s are actually merciful to the fallen.

PURPORT

The words *chāyeva karma-sacivāḥ* are significant here. *Chāyā* means “shadow.” The shadow of the body precisely follows the movements of the body. The shadow has no power to move in a way different from the movement of the body. Similarly, as stated here, *bhajanti ye yathā devān devā api tathaiva tāt*: the results the demigods award to living beings correspond exactly to the living beings’ actions. The demigods are empowered by the Lord to follow precisely the particular *karma* of a living entity in awarding him happiness and distress. Just as a shadow cannot move independently, the demigods cannot punish or reward a living being independently. Although the demigods are millions of times more powerful than the human beings on earth, they are ultimately tiny servants of God whom the Lord allows to play as the controllers of the universe. In the Fourth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Pṛthu Mahārāja, an empowered incarnation of the Lord, states that even the demigods are subject to punishment by the Lord if they deviate from His laws. On the other hand, devotees of the Lord such as Nārada Muni, by their potent preaching, can interfere in the *karma* of a living being by persuading him to give up his fruitive activity and mental speculation and surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In material existence, one works hard under the bondage of ignorance. But if one becomes enlightened by association with a pure devotee of the Lord, one can understand one’s actual position as an eternal servant of God. By rendering such service, one dissolves his attachment to the material world and the reactions of his previous activities, and as a surrendered soul he is endowed with unlimited spiritual freedom in the service of the Lord. In this regard, the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.54) states:

*yas tv indragopam athavendram aho sva-karma-
bandhānurūpa-phala-bhājanam ātanoti
karmāṇi nirdahati kintu ca bhakti-bhājāṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

“I adore the primeval Lord, Govinda, who burns to the root all the fruitive activities of those imbued with devotion. For those who walk the path of work – no less for Indra, king of the demigods, than for the tiny insect *indragopa* – He impartially ordains the due enjoyments of the fruits of activities in accordance with the chain of works previously performed.” Even the demigods are bound to the laws of *karma*, whereas a pure devotee of the Lord, having completely given up the desire for material enjoyment, successfully burns to ashes all traces of *karma*.

In this regard, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has commented that unless one is engaged as a surrendered soul in the devotional service of the Lord, he cannot actually be considered *niṣkāma*, or free from all personal desire. Sometimes a materialistic person will engage in charity or altruistic activities and in this way consider himself a selfless worker. Similarly, those who engage in mental speculation with the ultimate goal of merging into the impersonal Brahman aspect of the Lord also advertise themselves as being

selfless or desireless. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, however, such *karmīs* and *jñānīs*, while busy in their so-called “selflessness,” are in fact servants of lusty desires. In other words, they have not perfectly understood their position as eternal servants of God. The altruistic *karmī* falsely considers himself the best friend of humanity, although he is unable to give actual benefit to others because he is ignorant of the eternal life of bliss and knowledge beyond the temporary hallucination of material existence. Similarly, although the *jñānī* proudly declares himself God and invites others to become God also, he neglects to explain how the so-called gods have come to be bound by the laws of material nature. Actually, the attempt to become God is based not on love of God but on the desire to take the same status as God. In other words, the desire to be equal in all respects to the Supreme is simply another materialistic desire. Therefore the *karmīs* and *jñānīs*, because of their dissatisfaction in artificially trying to fulfill their own desires, can show no actual mercy to the fallen souls. In this regard, Śrī Madhvācārya has quoted the *Uddāma-saṁhitā*:

*sukham icchanti bhūtānām
prāyo duḥkhāsahā nṛṇām
tathāpi tebhyaḥ pravarā
devā eva hareḥ priyāḥ*

“Ṛṣis want happiness for all beings and are almost always incapable of tolerating the unhappiness of men. Nevertheless, the demigods are superior because they are very dear to Lord Hari.” But although Śrīla Madhvācārya has placed the demigods in a higher position than the merciful *ṛṣis*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has stated, *sādhavas tu na karmānugatāḥ*: the *sādhus* are actually better than the demigods because the *sādhus* are merciful regardless of the pious or impious acts of the conditioned souls. This apparent disagreement between Madhvācārya and Jīva Gosvāmī is resolved by Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who points out that in the statement by Śrīla Madhvācārya, the word *ṛṣi*, or “sage,” indicates the so-called *sādhus* or saintly persons among the *karmīs* and *jñānīs*. Ordinary fruitive workers and speculative philosophers certainly consider themselves to be at the summit of pious morality and altruism. However, since they are ignorant of the supreme position of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they cannot be considered equal to the demigods, who are all devotees of the Lord and aware that all living beings are eternal servants of the Lord. Even such demigods, however, cannot be compared to the pure devotees such as Nārada. Such pure devotees are empowered to award the highest perfection of life to both pious and impious living beings, who have only to follow the orders of such pure devotees.

TEXT 2.7

*brahmaṁs tathāpi pṛcchāmo
dharmān bhāgavatāṁs tava*

*yān śrutvā śraddhayā martyo
mucyate sarvato bhayāt*

brahman – O brāhmaṇa; *tathā api* – nevertheless (although I am completely satisfied just by seeing you); *ṛcchāmaḥ* – I am inquiring about; *dharmān* – religious duties; *bhāgavatān* – which are specifically meant for pleasing the Supreme Lord; *tava* – from you; *yān* – which; *śrutvā* – hearing; *śraddhayā* – with faith; *martyaḥ* – one destined to die; *mucyate* – he is freed; *sarvataḥ* – from all; *bhayāt* – fear.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇa, although I am satisfied simply by seeing you, I still wish to inquire about those duties which give pleasure to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Any mortal who faithfully hears about them is freed from all kinds of fear.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Nārada Muni might have been reluctant to instruct Vasudeva because of natural respect for Vasudeva's exalted position as the father of Kṛṣṇa. Nārada might have thought that since Vasudeva was already perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness there was no need to instruct him in the process of devotional service. Therefore, anticipating Nārada's possible reluctance, Vasudeva specifically requested Nārada to preach to him about devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. This is the symptom of a pure devotee. A pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa never considers himself exalted. To the contrary, he meekly feels that his devotional service is most imperfect but that somehow or other Lord Kṛṣṇa, out of His causeless mercy, is accepting such imperfect service. Caitanya Mahāprabhu has stated in this regard:

*tṛṇād api sunīcena
taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

“One can chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, feeling himself lower than the straw in the street. One should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and ready to offer all respect to others.” (*Śikṣāṣṭaka* 3) The conditioned souls in this material world become falsely proud of their so-called family lineage. This pride is false because one who has taken birth in the material world is in a fallen situation, even in the best of cases. Vasudeva, however, was certainly not fallen, since he had taken birth in the family of Kṛṣṇa. Since he was Kṛṣṇa's father, his position was most exalted, yet because he was a pure devotee he did not become proud of his special relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Instead, considering himself deficient in spiritual understanding, he took advantage of the appearance of Nārada Muni, a great preacher of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by immediately inquiring from him about devotional service. This incomparable humility of a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa is far superior to the false humility of the impersonalist, who actually maintains a desire to be equal to God though adopting the external behavior of a meek and saintly person.

Bhayam, or fear, is caused by seeing something other than Kṛṣṇa (*dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ*). Everything is actually an emanation from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as stated in *Vedānta-sūtra* (*janmādy asya yataḥ*) and as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*aham sarvasya prabhavaḥ, vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*, etc.). Kṛṣṇa is the well-wishing friend of every living entity (*suhṛdam sarva-bhūtānām*). If a living being gives up his misguided attempt to defy the Supreme Personality of Godhead and surrenders to the Lord, certainly he becomes confident in his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. A surrendered soul can actually experience that Kṛṣṇa is his well-wishing friend, and since that friend is the supreme absolute controller of all existence, there is certainly no cause for fear. The son of a rich man certainly feels confident while touring the estate of his father. Similarly, an empowered representative of the government feels confident in the discharge of his duty. In the same way, a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, acting as a representative of the Supreme Lord, feels confident because he can understand at every moment that the entire material and spiritual creation is strictly under the control of his benevolent master. The nondevotee, however, denies the supreme position of Kṛṣṇa and therefore imagines that something is different from Kṛṣṇa. For example, if a servant of the government thinks that there is some dangerous obstacle that cannot be controlled by the government's power, he becomes fearful. If a child feels that there is some power that cannot be subdued by his father, then he becomes fearful. Similarly, because we artificially think that there is something within existence that is not under the strict control of the benevolent Lord, we become fearful. Such a concept of a second thing (something other than Kṛṣṇa) is called *dvitīyābhiniveśa*, and it immediately creates a foreign atmosphere of *bhayam*, or fear. Kṛṣṇa is called *abhayaṅkara*, which means that He destroys all fear in the heart of His devotee.

Sometimes so-called scholars, distraught after many years of impersonal speculation and enjoyment of materialistic life, become fearful and anxious. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī compares such disturbed philosophers to the bound vulture in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Desiring liberation from fear, such speculators unfortunately concoct an imaginary liberation (*vimukta-māninaḥ*) and try to take shelter of impersonal spiritual existence or voidness. But the *Bhāgavatam* (10.2.32) states, *āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ/ patanty adho 'nādrta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*: because such speculators have not rectified their original mistake of rejecting their eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they fall from their concocted liberation and thus remain in a fearful condition. Vasudeva, however, is openly eager to hear more and more about devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, and therefore he states, *yān śrutvā śraddhayā martyo mucyate sarvato bhayāt*: simply by hearing about pure devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, a conditioned soul can easily free himself from all types of fear, and this transcendental freedom is certainly eternal.

TEXT 2.8

*aham̐ kila purānantam̐
prajārtho bhuvi mukti-dam
apūjayam̐ na mokṣāya
mohito deva-māyayā*

aham – I; *kila* – indeed; *purā* – long ago; *anantam* – the Supreme Lord, who is unlimited; *prajā-arthaḥ* – wanting a child; *bhuvi* – on the earth; *mukti-dam* – the Lord, who awards liberation; *apūjayam* – I worshiped; *na mokṣāya* – not for liberation; *mohitaḥ* – bewildered; *deva-māyayā* – by the illusory energy of the Lord.

TRANSLATION

In a previous birth on this earth, I worshiped the Supreme Lord, Ananta, who alone can award liberation, but because I desired to have a child, I did not worship Him for liberation. Thus I was bewildered by the Lord’s illusory energy.

PURPORT

According to Śrīdhara Svāmī the word *kila* (meaning “indeed, it is true,” “it is said” or “as is well known”) indicates that Vasudeva was remembering the words the Lord had spoken to him when the Lord had appeared as four-armed Viṣṇu in the prison of Kāmsa. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī states that from the anxiety of Vasudeva, which is expressed in this verse by the words *apūjayam̐ na mokṣāya mohito deva-māyayā*, it is to be discerned that Vasudeva had heard of the curse of the *brāhmaṇas* at Piṇḍāraka against the Yadu dynasty and that he could understand from this curse that the Lord’s disappearance from the earth was imminent. Vasudeva understood that the Lord’s manifest pastimes within this universe were coming to an end, and he now lamented that he had not directly taken advantage of the opportunity to worship Kṛṣṇa to go back home, back to Godhead.

Significantly, Vasudeva has used the word *mukti-dam* to describe the Lord. *Mukti-dam* is a synonym of Mukunda, or that personality who can give liberation from the cycle of birth and death. It is stated in Vedic literature that even the demigods are bound to the cycle of birth and death, although their life span is inconceivably long by earthly calculations. It is the almighty God alone who can free the conditioned soul from the reactions to his previous sinful activities and award him an eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

Vasudeva lamented that he had desired Kṛṣṇa to come to him as a son instead of desiring to go back to Kṛṣṇa, back to Godhead, to serve the Lord in the spiritual sky. Commenting on this incident in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrīla Prabhupāda has emphasized that we should desire to go back home, back to Godhead, rather than try to bring the Lord to this world as our son. Nor can we artificially imitate the severe penances Vasudeva and

Devakī performed for thousands of heavenly years in their previous births as Sutapā and Pṛśni. In this connection Śrīla Prabhupāda states, “If we want to get the Supreme Personality of Godhead to become one of us in this material world, this requires great penance, but if we want to go back to Kṛṣṇa (*tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*), we need only understand Him and love Him. Through love only we can very easily go back home, back to Godhead.” Śrīla Prabhupāda goes on to explain that Caitanya Mahāprabhu freely bestows the benediction of love of Kṛṣṇa, which allows one to return to Kṛṣṇa’s abode, through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. This chanting process is far more effective in this age than artificial attempts to perform severe penances and austerities. Śrīla Prabhupāda concludes, “Therefore, one need not undergo severe penances for many thousands of years. One need only learn how to love Kṛṣṇa and be always engaged in His service (*sevonmukhe hi jihvādaḥ svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*). Then one can very easily go back home, back to Godhead. Instead of bringing the Lord here for some material purpose, to have a son or whatever else, if we go back home, back to Godhead, our real relationship with the Lord is revealed, and we eternally engage in our eternal relationship. By chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, we gradually develop our eternal relationship with the Supreme Person and thus attain the perfection called *svarūpa-siddhi*. We should take advantage of this benediction and go back home, back to Godhead.” (*Bhāg.* 10.3.38 purport)

Although Vasudeva and Devakī desired that Kṛṣṇa become their son, it should be understood that they are devotees eternally situated in love of Kṛṣṇa. As stated by the Lord Himself (*Bhāg.* 10.3.39), *mohitau devamāyayā*: Vasudeva and Devakī, His pure devotees, were covered by His internal potency. In the Fourth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.1.20) the great sage Atri Muni prayed to the Lord, *prajāṁ ātma-samāṁ mahyaṁ prayacchatu*: “Kindly be pleased to offer me a son exactly like You.” Atri Muni said he wanted a son exactly *like* the Lord, and therefore he was not a pure devotee, because he had a desire to be fulfilled and that desire was material. If he had desired the Supreme Personality of Godhead as his child, he would have been completely free of material desires because he would have wanted the Supreme Absolute Truth, but because he wanted a similar child, his desire was material. Thus Atri Muni cannot be counted among the pure devotees. Vasudeva and Devakī, however, did want the Lord Himself, and therefore they were pure devotees of the Lord. In this verse, therefore, Vasudeva’s statement *apūjayāṁ na mokṣāya mohito deva-māyayā* should be taken to mean that Kṛṣṇa’s internal potency bewildered Vasudeva so that he would desire Kṛṣṇa as his son. This paved the way for the Lord’s appearance as the son of His loving devotees.

TEXT 2.9

*yathā vicitra-vyasanād
bhavadbhir viśvato-bhayāt*

*mucyema hy añjasaivāddhā
tathā naḥ śādhi su-vrata*

yathā - so that; *vicitra-vyasanāt* - which is full of various dangers; *bhavadbhiḥ* - because of you; *viśvataḥ-bhayāt* - (from this material world) which is fearful everywhere; *mucyema* - I may be liberated; *hi* - indeed; *añjasā* - easily; *eva* - even; *addhā* - directly; *tathā* - thus; *naḥ* - us; *śādhi* - please instruct; *su-vrata* - O you who are always true to your vow.

TRANSLATION

My dear lord, you are always true to your vow. Please instruct me clearly, so that by your mercy I may easily free myself from material existence, which is full of many dangers and keeps us constantly bound in fear.

PURPORT

The word *mucyema* is significant here. In the previous verse Vasudeva stated that because he had been bewildered by the illusory energy of the Lord he could not achieve from the Supreme Personality of Godhead the boon of liberation. Therefore he is now approaching the pure devotee of the Lord, confident that by the mercy of the Lord's devotee he will certainly achieve liberation from material bondage.

In this connection the words *añjasā*, "easily," and *addhā*, "directly," are very important. Although foolish persons proudly want to jump up directly to the Supreme Personality of Godhead without accepting His pure devotee as spiritual master, those who are experienced in spiritual science know that by submission and service at the lotus feet of a pure devotee one directly contacts the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27) Lord Kṛṣṇa has stated, *ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit*. Thus one should understand that the pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa stands on the same spiritual level as the Lord Himself. This does not mean that a pure devotee is also God, but because of his intimate loving connection with the Lord, he is accepted by the Lord as being the Lord's very soul. In other words, Kṛṣṇa is always in the heart of His pure devotee, and the pure devotee is always in the heart of Kṛṣṇa. Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa is eternally the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one without a second, the Lord is more pleased to see His pure devotee worshiped. Therefore the Lord says, *ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyāt*. One must offer the same respect to the Vaiṣṇava spiritual master as one would offer to the Lord. Therefore as soon as one pleases the Vaiṣṇava spiritual master, one immediately pleases Kṛṣṇa and makes spiritual advancement. The word *añjasā* means that this bona fide process is the easiest method of achieving spiritual perfection. And because the pure devotee is a transparent medium, the word *addhā*, "directly," is used, indicating that service rendered to the pure devotee goes directly to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, whereas service one whimsically offers to Kṛṣṇa directly, bypassing the bona fide spiritual master, is not actually accepted and is therefore useless.

Those who actually desire the highest perfection, that of going back home, back to the eternal, blissful kingdom of Kṛṣṇa, should study very carefully the example shown by Śrī Vasudeva in these two verses. He indicates that although one cannot achieve liberation by directly worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one can very easily achieve the perfection of life simply by a moment's association with a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa such as Nārada Muni, the exalted Vaiṣṇava saint among the demigods. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the word *viśvato-bhayāt* indicates that Vasudeva very much feared the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*. As one can become perfect by worshiping the Vaiṣṇavas, by displeasing the Vaiṣṇavas one can bring about all misfortune. Thus Vasudeva feared the curse delivered by the *brāhmaṇas* at Piṅḍāraka-tīrtha.

TEXT 2.10

*śrī-śuka uvāca
rājann evaṁ kṛta-praśno
vasudevena dhīmatā
pṛītas tam āha devarṣir
hareḥ saṁsmārito guṇaiḥ*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca - Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *rājan* - O King; *evam* - thus; *kṛta-praśnaḥ* - questioned; *vasudevena* - by Vasudeva; *dhīmatā* - the intelligent; *pṛītaḥ* - pleased; *tam* - to him; *āha* - spoke; *deva-ṛṣiḥ* - the sage among the demigods; *hareḥ* - of Lord Hari; *saṁsmāritaḥ* - made to remember; *guṇaiḥ* - by the qualities.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, Devarṣi Nārada was pleased by the questions of the highly intelligent Vasudeva. Because they suggested the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they reminded Nārada of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus Nārada replied to Vasudeva as follows.

TEXT 2.11

*śrī-nārada uvāca
samyag etad vyavasitaṁ
bhavatā sātvataṛṣabha
yat pṛcchase bhāgavatān
dharmāṁs tvam viśva-bhāvanān*

śrī-nāradaḥ uvāca - Nārada Muni said; *samyak* - correctly; *etat* - this; *vyavasitam* - determined; *bhavatā* - by you; *sātvata-ṛṣabha* - O best of the Sātvata clan; *yat* - because; *pṛcchase* - you are asking about; *bhāgavatān dharmān* - duties toward the Supreme Lord; *tvam* - you; *viśva-bhāvanān* - which can purify the entire universe.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Nārada said: O best of the Sātvatas, you have quite correctly asked about the eternal duty of the living entity toward the

Supreme Lord. Such devotional service to the Lord is so potent that its performance can purify the entire universe.

PURPORT

A similar statement was made by Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī in the first verse of the Second Canto when he congratulated Parīkṣit Mahārāja for asking about Kṛṣṇa.

*varīyān eṣa te praśnaḥ
kṛto loka-hitaṁ nṛpa
ātmavit-sammataḥ puṁsām
śrotavyādiṣu yaḥ paraḥ*

“My dear King, your question is glorious because it is very beneficial to all kinds of people. The answer to this question is the prime subject matter for hearing, and it is approved by all transcendentalists.”

Similarly, Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī congratulated the inquiring sages of Naimiṣāraṇya in the following words:

*munayaḥ sādhu pṛṣṭo’haṁ
bhavadbhir loka-maṅgalam
yat kṛtaḥ kṛṣṇa-sampraśno
yenātmā suprasīdati*

“O sages, I have been justly questioned by you. Your questions are worthy because they relate to Lord Kṛṣṇa and so are of relevance to the world’s welfare. Only questions of this sort are capable of completely satisfying the self.” (*Bhāg.* 1.2.5)

Nārada will now answer Vasudeva’s inquiry about the process of devotional service. Later, at the end of their conversation, he will reply to Vasudeva’s comments about Vasudeva’s own faulty intentions.

TEXT 2.12

*śruto’nupaṭhito dhyāta
āḍṛto vānumoditaḥ
sadyaḥ punāti sad-dharmo
deva-viśva-druho’pi hi*

śrutaḥ – heard; *anupaṭhitaḥ* – subsequently chanted; *dhyātaḥ* – meditated on; *āḍṛtaḥ* – faithfully accepted; *vā* – or; *anumoditaḥ* – praised when performed by others; *sadyaḥ* – immediately; *punāti* – purifies; *sat-dharmaḥ* – pure devotional service; *deva* – to the demigods; *viśva* – and to the universe; *druhaḥ* – those who are hateful; *api hi* – even.

TRANSLATION

Pure devotional service rendered to the Supreme Lord is spiritually so potent that simply by hearing about such transcendental service, by chanting its glories in response, by meditating on it, by respectfully and faithfully accepting it, or by praising the devotional service of others, even persons who hate the demigods and all other living beings can be immediately purified.

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has commented that the word *sad-dharma* refers to *bhāgavata-dharma*. This is also confirmed by Śrīdhara Svāmī. *Bhāgavata-dharma* is spiritually so powerful that even those who by worldly standards are implicated in various ways in sinful behavior can easily be purified by adopting any of the processes mentioned in this verse. In the practice of ordinary piety, one worships God with the expectation of receiving something in return for one's service. Similarly, the impersonalist aspires for his own liberation, wishfully thinking that he will become equal to God. In *bhāgavata-dharma*, however, there is no such impurity. *Bhāgavata-dharma* is devotional service to the Lord in which the only objective is the satisfaction of the Lord. If one rejects this process and instead wants to hear about, teach or meditate upon another process, the chance for immediate purification is lost.

Neither ordinary materialistic *yoga* processes meant for achieving mystic powers nor impersonal processes based on speculation have the power to purify immediately those who have fallen into sinful behavior. *Sad-dharma*, or *bhāgavata-dharma*, pure devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is unique in that even the most fallen souls can immediately rise to the highest perfectional stage by surrendering at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa or His pure devotee. This was vividly demonstrated in the preaching work of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, especially in the case of the sinful brothers Jagāi and Mādhāi.

TEXT 2.13

*tvayā parama-kalyāṇaḥ
puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ
smārito bhagavān adya
devo nārāyaṇo mama*

tvayā - by you; *parama* - supremely; *kalyāṇaḥ* - blissful; *puṇya* - very pious; *śravaṇa* - hearing; *kīrtanaḥ* - and chanting (about whom); *smāritaḥ* - brought to memory; *bhagavān* - the Supreme Lord; *adya* - today; *devaḥ nārāyaṇaḥ* - Lord Nārāyaṇa; *mama* - my.

TRANSLATION

Today you have made me remember my Lord, the supremely blissful Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. The Supreme Lord is so auspicious that whoever hears and chants about Him becomes completely pious.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has stated, *nārāyaṇas tādrśa-dharme madīya-guru-rūpo nārāyaṇarṣiḥ*. The word *nārāyaṇa* in this verse refers to the incarnation of Godhead Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, who acted as Nārada's spiritual master in this *dharma*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has also pointed out, *smārita iti kṛṣṇopāsanāveśena tasyāpi vismaraṇāt*. The word *smārita*, "he is brought back to memory," indicates that because of Nārada's absorption in the

worship of Kṛṣṇa he had forgotten Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa. In other words, if intense engagement in devotional service makes one sometimes forget the Personality of Godhead, by Kṛṣṇa's arrangement such a sincere servitor will again be reminded of the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 2.14

*atrāpy udāharantīmam
itihāsaṁ purātanam
ārṣabhāṅām ca saṁvādam
videhasya mahātmanaḥ*

atra api - in this very matter (of describing *bhāgavata-dharma*); *udāharanti* - is given as an example; *imam* - this; *itihāsam* - historical account; *purātanam* - ancient; *ārṣabhāṅām* - of the sons of Ṛṣabha; *ca* - and; *saṁvādam* - the conversation; *videhasya* - with Janaka, King of Videha; *mahā-ātmanaḥ* - who was a great broad-minded soul.

TRANSLATION

To explain the devotional service of the Lord, sages have related the ancient history of the conversation between the great soul King Videha and the sons of Ṛṣabha.

PURPORT

The words *itihāsaṁ purātanam*, meaning “ancient historical account,” are significant here. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is *nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalam*, the ripe fruit of the desire tree of Vedic knowledge. In the pages of the *Bhāgavatam* we find true historical narrations relating to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the liberation of the conditioned souls. These historical accounts are not fiction or mythology, but describe the wonderful activities of the Lord and His devotees that took place in *yugas* previous to the advent of this puny age. Although mundane scholars have foolishly tried to depict the *Bhāgavatam* as a mythological work or a recent creation, the actual fact is that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is a perfect transcendental literature describing not only the entire situation of this universe but also that which lies far beyond this universe, in both the material and spiritual skies. If one seriously studies the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* he becomes the most learned intellectual man. Caitanya Mahāprabhu desires that all pious persons become highly learned by hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and then preach the glories of the Lord in a scientific way all over the world. It is essential that we hear these historical narrations, such as the conversation between the *navayogendras* and King Videha, with complete faith and submission. Then, as stated in verse 12 of this chapter, even if our former life is filled with abominable activities, simply by hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we shall be promoted to the same transcendental status as the Lord and His pure devotees. This is the extraordinary power of *bhāgavata* history, as contrasted with useless, mundane historical accounts, which ultimately serve no purpose. Although mundane historians justify their work on the plea that we have to learn from history, we can practically see that the world situation

is now rapidly deteriorating into unbearable conflict and chaos while so-called historians stand helplessly by. But the *bhāgavata* historians who have faithfully heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* can give perfect and potent instructions for the restoration of a peaceful and blissful world. Therefore those who are inclined to enrich their intellectual life through the study of history should educate themselves in the historical narrations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This will bring them the perfection of intellectual and spiritual life.

TEXT 2.15

*priyavrato nāma suto
manoḥ svāyambhuvasya yaḥ
tasyāgnīdhraḥ tato nābhir
ṛṣabhas tat-sutaḥ smṛtaḥ*

priyavrataḥ – Mahārāja Priyavrata; *nāma* – by name; *sutaḥ* – the son; *manoḥ svāyambhuvasya* – of Svāyambhuva Manu; *yaḥ* – who; *tasya* – his; *āgnīdhraḥ* – (son was) Āgnīdhra; *tataḥ* – from him (Āgnīdhra); *nābhiḥ* – King Nābhi; *ṛṣabhaḥ* – Lord Ṛṣabhadeva; *tat-sutaḥ* – his son; *smṛtaḥ* – is so remembered.

TRANSLATION

Svāyambhuva Manu had a son named Mahārāja Priyavrata, and among Priyavrata's sons was Āgnīdhra. From Āgnīdhra was born Nābhi, whose son was known as Ṛṣabhadeva.

PURPORT

The genealogical background of the sons of Ṛṣabhadeva is given in this verse.

TEXT 2.16

*tam āhur vāsudevāmśam
mokṣa-dharma-vivakṣayā
avatīrṇam suta-śatam
tasyāsīd brahma-pāragam*

tam – Him; *āhuḥ* – they call; *vāsudeva-amśam* – a plenary expansion of the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva; *mokṣa-dharma* – the process of attaining liberation; *vivakṣayā* – with the desire to teach; *avatīrṇam* – appeared in this world; *suta* – sons; *śatam* – one hundred; *tasya* – His; *āsīt* – there were; *brahma* – the Vedas; *pāra-gam* – who perfectly assimilated.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Ṛṣabhadeva is accepted as an expansion of the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva. He incarnated in this world to propagate those religious principles that lead living entities to ultimate liberation. He had one hundred sons, all perfect in Vedic knowledge.

TEXT 2.17

*teṣām vai bharato jyeṣṭho
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ*

*vikhyātaṁ varṣam etad yan-
nāmnā bhāratam adbhutam*

teṣām – of them; *vai* – indeed; *bharataḥ* – Bharata; *jyeṣṭhaḥ* – the oldest; *nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ* – completely devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa; *vikhyātam* – is famous; *varṣam* – the planet; *etat* – this; *yat-nāmnā* – by whose name; *bhāratam* – Bhārata-varṣa; *adbhutam* – wonderful.

TRANSLATION

Of the one hundred sons of Lord Ṛṣabhadeva, the eldest, Bharata, was completely devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa. It is because of Bharata's fame that this planet is now celebrated as the great Bhārata-varṣa.

TEXT 2.18

*sa bhukta-bhogāṁ tyaktvemāṁ
nirgatas tapasā harim
upāsīnas tat-padavīm
lebhe vai janmabhis tribhiḥ*

saḥ – he; *bhukta* – used up; *bhogām* – all the pleasures; *tyaktvā* – rejecting; *imām* – of this (earth); *nirgataḥ* – having left home; *tapasā* – by austerities; *harim* – the Supreme Lord, Hari; *upāsīnaḥ* – having worshiped; *tat-padavīm* – His destination; *lebhe* – he achieved; *vai* – indeed; *janmabhiḥ* – in births; *tribhiḥ* – three.

TRANSLATION

King Bharata rejected this material world, considering all types of material pleasure temporary and useless. Leaving his beautiful young wife and family, he worshiped Lord Hari by severe austerities and attained the abode of the Lord after three lifetimes.

PURPORT

The complete narration of the three lives of Bharata – as a king, as a deer and as an exalted *paramahansa* devotee of the Lord – is given in the Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 2.19

*teṣāṁ nava nava-dvīpa-
patayo'sya samantataḥ
karma-tantra-praṇetāra
ekāśītir dvijātayaḥ*

teṣām – of them (the one hundred sons of Ṛṣabhadeva); *nava* – nine; *nava-dvīpa* – of the nine islands (comprising Bhārata-varṣa); *patayaḥ* – the masters; *asya* – of this *varṣa*; *samantataḥ* – covering it entirely; *karma-tantra* – of the path of fruitive Vedic sacrifices; *praṇetāraḥ* – initiators; *ekāśītiḥ* – eighty-one; *dvi-jātayaḥ* – twice-born *brāhmaṇas*.

TRANSLATION

Nine of the remaining sons of Ṛṣabhadeva became the rulers of the nine islands of Bhārata-varṣa, and they exercised complete sovereignty over this planet. Eighty-one sons became twice-born

brāhmaṇas and helped initiate the Vedic path of fruitive sacrifices [karma-kāṇḍa].

PURPORT

The nine *dvīpas*, or islands, ruled by nine sons of Ṛṣabhadeva are the nine *varṣas* of Jambudvīpa, namely Bhārata, Kinnara, Hari, Kuru, Hiraṇmaya, Ramyaka, Ilāvṛta, Bhadrāśva and Ketumāla.

TEXTS 2.20-21

*navābhavan mahā-bhāgā
munayo hy artha-śaṁsinaḥ
śramaṇā vāta-rasanā
ātma-vidyā-viśāradāḥ
kaviḥ havir antarīkṣaḥ
prabuddhaḥ pippalāyanaḥ
āvirhotro'tha drumilaś
camasaḥ karabhājanaḥ*

nava - nine; *abhavan* - there were; *mahā-bhāgāḥ* - greatly fortunate souls; *munayaḥ* - sages; *hi* - indeed; *artha-śaṁsinaḥ* - engaged in explaining the Absolute Truth; *śramaṇāḥ* - thus exerting great endeavor; *vāta-rasanāḥ* - dressed by the wind (naked); *ātma-vidyā* - in spiritual science; *viśāradāḥ* - learned; *kaviḥ havir antarīkṣaḥ* - Kavi, Havir and Antarīkṣa; *prabuddhaḥ pippalāyanaḥ* - Prabuddha and Pippalāyana; *āvirhotraḥ* - Āvirhotra; *atha* - also; *drumilaḥ* - Drumila; *camasaḥ karabhājanaḥ* - Camasa and Karabhājana.

TRANSLATION

The nine remaining sons of Ṛṣabha were greatly fortunate sages who worked vigorously to spread knowledge of the Absolute Truth. They wandered about naked and were very well versed in spiritual science. Their names were Kavi, Havir, Antarīkṣa, Prabuddha, Pippalāyana, Āvirhotra, Drumila, Camasa and Karabhājana.

PURPORT

Nimi, the King of Videha, asked the following nine questions of the nine Yogendras, the saintly sons of Ṛṣabha. (1) What is the highest good? (Chapter Two, verse 30); (2) What are the religious principles (*dharma*), natural proclivities (*svabhāva*), behavior (*ācāra*), speech (*vākya*) and outward symptoms (*lakṣaṇa*) of a *bhāgavata*, a Vaiṣṇava devotee of the Lord? (2.44); (3) What is the external energy of Viṣṇu, the Supreme Lord? (3.1); (4) How can one become dissociated from this *māyā*? (3.17); (5) What is the true identity of Brahman? (3.34); (6) What are the three types of *karma*, namely *karma* based on the enjoyment of the fruits of work, *karma* offered to the Supreme Lord, and *naiṣkarmya*? (3.41); (7) What are the various pastimes of the various incarnations of God? (4.1); (8) What is the aim or destination of one who is against the Supreme Lord and devoid of *bhakti* (in other words, a nondevotee)? (5.1); and (9) What are the respective colors, forms and names of the four *yugāvatāras*, the four incarnations of the

Supreme Lord who appear in the four ages, and what is the process of worshipping each of Them? (5.19).

The transcendental answers to these inquiries were given by the great devotees Kavi, Havir, Antarīkṣa, Prabuddha, Pippalāyana, Āvirhotra, Drumila, Camasa and Karabhājana. These nine *paramahāṁsas* answered the nine questions, each in turn, in the following verses: (1) 2.33-43; (2) 2.45-55; (3) 3.3-16; (4) 3.18-33; (5) 3.35-40; (6) 3.43-55; (7) 4.2-23; (8) 5.2-18; and (9) 5.20-42.

TEXT 2.22

*ta ete bhagavad-rūpaṁ
viśvaṁ sad-asad-ātmakam
ātmano'vyatirekeṇa
paśyanto vyacaran mahīm*

ta ete – these (nine Yogendras); *bhagavat* – of the Supreme Lord; *rūpaṁ* – a form; *viśvam* – the entire universe; *sat-asat-ātmakam* – consisting of both gross and subtle objects; *ātmanaḥ* – from the self; *avyatirekeṇa* – as nondifferent; *paśyantaḥ* – seeing; *vyacaran* – they wandered; *mahīm* – the earth.

TRANSLATION

These sages wandered the earth seeing the entire universe, with all its gross and subtle objects, as a manifestation of the Supreme Lord and as nondifferent from the self.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, it is clearly demonstrated in this and the following verse that the nine saintly sons of Ṛṣabhadeva known as the *navayogendras* were situated in the highest stage of spiritual perfection, called *pāramahāṁsya-caritam*, or “having fully developed the character of *paramahāṁsas*.” In other words, they were pure devotees of the Lord. According to Śrīdhara Svāmī and Jīva Gosvāmī, the words *ātmano'vyatirekeṇa* indicate that the nine sages saw the universe as being nondifferent from themselves as well as nondifferent from the Supreme Soul, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has additionally commented, *ātmanaḥ paramātmanaḥ sakāśād avyatirekeṇa, viśvasya tac-chakti-mayatvād iti bhāvaḥ*: “*Ātmanaḥ* indicates the Supersoul. This universe is not different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Paramātmā, since the entire universe is composed of His energy.”

Although it is stated here that the cosmic manifestation is nondifferent from both the living entity and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one should not think that either the living entity or the Supreme Lord is material. A Vedic aphorism states, *asaṅgo hy ayaṁ puruṣaḥ*: “The living entity and the Supreme Personality of Godhead have nothing to do with the material world.” Furthermore, *Bhagavad-gītā* says that the entire universe, consisting of eight gross and subtle elements, constitutes the *bhinnā prakṛti*, or *aparā prakṛti* – the separated, inferior energy – of the Supreme Personality of

Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly states in *Bhagavad-gītā* that He has eternally established His own abode in the kingdom of God, where life is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge, and that the living entity, being part and parcel of God, is also eternal (*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*). Furthermore, once having gone to that eternal abode of the Lord the living entity never returns to this temporary manifestation (*yam prāpya na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama*).

One may therefore ask why the living entity and the Supreme Lord are stated to be nondifferent from the material universe. The question is very nicely answered by Śrīla Nārada Muni in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.20). *Idam hi viśvaṁ bhagavān ivetaro yato jagat-sthāna-nirodha-sambhavāḥ*: “The Supreme Lord Personality of Godhead is Himself this cosmos, and still He is aloof from it. From Him only has this cosmic manifestation emanated, in Him it rests, and unto Him it enters after annihilation.” Commenting on Nārada’s statement, Śrīla Prabhupāda has very nicely explained this delicate philosophical point: “For a pure devotee, the conception of Mukunda, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is both personal and impersonal. The impersonal cosmic situation is also Mukunda because it is the emanation of the energy of Mukunda. For example, a tree is a complete unit, whereas the leaves and branches of the tree are emanated parts and parcels of the tree. The leaves and branches of the tree are also the tree, but the tree itself is neither the leaves nor the branches. The Vedic version that the whole cosmic creation is nothing but Brahman means that since everything is emanating from the Supreme Brahman, nothing is apart from Him. Similarly, the part-and-parcel hands and legs are called the body, but the body as the whole unit is neither the hands nor the legs. The Lord is the transcendental form of eternity, cognition and beauty. And thus the creation of the energy of the Lord appears to be partially eternal, full of knowledge and beautiful also.

...

“According to the Vedic version, the Lord is naturally fully powerful, and thus His supreme energies are always perfect and identical with Him. Both the spiritual and the material skies and their paraphernalia are emanations of the internal and external energies of the Lord. External energy is comparatively inferior, whereas the internal potency is superior. The superior energy is living force, and therefore she is completely identical [with the Lord], but the external energy, being inert, is partially identical. But both the energies are neither equal to nor greater than the Lord, who is the generator of all energies; such energies are always under His control, exactly as electrical energy, however powerful it may be, is always under the control of the engineer.

“The human being and all other living beings are products of His internal energies. Thus the living being is also identical with the Lord. But he is never equal or superior to the Personality of Godhead.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda has clearly explained here that both the cosmic manifestation and the living entities are emanations from the Supreme Lord,

as confirmed both in *Vedānta-sūtra* and in the opening statement of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. *Janmādy asya yataḥ*: “The Absolute Truth is that from which everything emanates.” Similarly, the *Īśopaniṣad* states:

*om pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idaṁ
pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya
pūrṇam evāvaśiṣyate*

The Supreme Lord, the Absolute Truth, is *pūrṇa*, or complete in Himself. And since this cosmic world is a manifestation of His potency, it also appears to be *pūrṇa*. In other words, because this material world is an emanation from the Supreme Lord, it is nondifferent from Him, exactly as the sun’s rays are nondifferent from the sun globe, which is the source of their emanation. Similarly the living beings, who are expansions of the superior, or conscious, energy of the Supreme Lord, are also nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa, although this nondifference is qualitative and not quantitative. The gold found in golden ornaments such as rings and bracelets is qualitatively identical with the gold in a mine, but the gold in the mine is quantitatively far superior to the tiny quantity of gold in a bracelet or ring. Similarly, although we are qualitatively one with God, being spiritual emanations of His unlimited potency, we are quantitatively infinitesimal and eternally subordinate to His supreme power. Therefore the Lord is called *vibhu*, or infinitely potent, and we are *aṇu*, or infinitesimal and dependent. This is further confirmed in the Vedic literature by the statement *nityo nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānām/ eko bahūnāṁ yo vidadhāti kāmān* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13). There are innumerable eternal living entities who are eternally and totally dependent upon the supreme singular living entity, the Supreme Lord. That dependence is not an illusion created by material existence, as stated by the impersonalist philosophers, but is an eternal relationship in which the Lord is eternally superior and we are eternally inferior. The Lord is eternally independent, and we are eternally dependent. The Lord is eternally absolute in Himself, and we are eternally relative to His supreme personality.

Although the Lord is infinitely greater than any other living being, or than all of them combined, every living being is qualitatively nondifferent from the Lord, because all living beings are parts and parcels emanating from Him (*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*). Therefore, in one sense, the living entity is also not different from the material cosmic manifestation, which is an inferior sister energy of the Lord. Both the living entity and the material nature are *prakṛti*, or feminine, dependent expansions of the supreme *puruṣa*. The difference is that the living entity is the superior energy of the Lord, because the living entity is conscious and eternal like the Lord, whereas material energy is the inferior energy of the Lord, lacking consciousness and eternal form.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has emphasized in this regard that the absolute substance is one and is called Paramātmā, or the Supersoul. When one has achieved but a partial vision of the Paramātmā, one’s

understanding of life is called *ātma-darśana*, or self-realization. And when even this partial understanding is lacking, one's existential condition is called *anātmā-darśana*, or ignorance of the self. In the state of partial realization of the Supersoul, without recognition of the Paramātmā's distinction from the individual soul, the living entity tends to become puffed up by his spiritual achievement, be carried away by mental concoction, and consider himself equal in all respects with God. On the other hand, the living entity situated in *anātmā-darśana*, or material ignorance, feels that he is completely different from the Supreme Lord; and since everyone in this material world is interested in himself, the living entity forgets about God, thinking that God is completely different from him and that there is therefore no substantial relationship between him and God. In this way the impersonal transcendentalists emphasize only the oneness between God and the living entity, whereas the ordinary materialists overemphasize the difference between God and the living entity. But Caitanya Mahāprabhu has clearly revealed that the Ultimate Truth is simultaneous oneness and difference (*acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*). Actually we are eternally different from God. Because the living entity and God are eternally separate individual entities, there exists the possibility of an eternal relationship. And because every living entity is qualitatively one with the Supreme Lord, that relationship constitutes the essence of the ultimate reality for every living being. As stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 20.108), *jīvera 'svarūpa' haya - kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa.'* The ultimate essential identity of every living entity is his relationship with the Supreme Lord as a servitor of the Lord.

If one can understand that he is an eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one can correctly understand that both the living entity and the material universe are identical with Kṛṣṇa, being emanations from Him, and that they are therefore nondifferent from each other. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī has stated, "The material world is a manifestation of simultaneous difference and nondifference, and it is a form of the Supreme Lord. Thus the temporary, perishable and ever-changing material world is different from Vaikuṅṭha, the eternal world."

It should be noted that in this verse the word *sad-asad-ātmakam*, or "made up of gross and subtle objects," does not refer to material and spiritual objects. This universe is stated to be composed of *sat* and *asat*, gross and subtle material objects. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, "The very subtle state within the manifest world is known as 'the unmanifest,' and the realm beyond the manifest world is called 'transcendental.' Within the coverings surrounding the manifest, in the region of the time factor, is the phase of material existence experienced by the controlling deities; in this phase exist the two functions: cause (*asat*) and effect (*sat*). In the universe, which is a third *tattva*, or reality (apart from and containing both *sat* and *asat*), and which is a form of the Supreme Lord, it is impossible to produce any contradiction to the nondual Absolute Truth." In other words, although ignorant, materialistic scientists may zealously carry out research to find a

material principle that can negate or render unnecessary the existence of God, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī clearly states that since the universe is an emanation from the Lord and therefore spiritually identical with Him, there cannot possibly exist anywhere within the universe a material law, principle or phenomenon that in any way contradicts the supremacy of the Personality of Godhead. In fact, the entire universe, along with the spiritual sky, exists as eternal testimony to the unlimited glory of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. With this understanding, the nine Yogendras were traveling about the earth in transcendental bliss.

TEXT 2.23

*avyāhateṣṭa-gatayaḥ sura-siddha-sādhya-
gandharva-yakṣa-nara-kinnara-nāga-lokān
muktāś caranti muni-cāraṇa-bhūtanātha-
vidyādhara-dvija-gavām bhuvanāni kāmam*

avyāhata - unimpeded; *iṣṭa-gatayaḥ* - in moving as they please; *sura* - of the demigods; *siddha* - perfected mystics; *sādhya* - Sādhyas; *gandharva* - heavenly musicians; *yakṣa* - associates of Kuvera; *nara* - human beings; *kinnara* - minor demigods who can change their form at will; *nāga* - and serpents; *lokān* - the worlds; *muktāḥ* - free; *caranti* - they travel; *muni* - of the sages; *cāraṇa* - angels; *bhūta-nātha* - ghostly followers of Lord Śiva; *vidyādhara* - Vidyādharas; *dvija* - *brāhmaṇas*; *gavām* - and of the cows; *bhuvanāni* - the worlds; *kāmam* - however they want.

TRANSLATION

The nine Yogendras are liberated souls who travel freely to the planets of the demigods, the perfected mystics, the Sādhyas, the heavenly musicians, the Yakṣas, the human beings, and the minor demigods such as the Kinnaras and the serpents. No mundane force can check their free movement, and exactly as they wish they can travel as well to the worlds of the sages, the angels, the ghostly followers of Lord Śiva, the Vidyādharas, the brāhmaṇas and the cows.

TEXT 2.24

*ta ekadā nimeḥ satram
upajagmur yadṛcchayā
vitāyamānam ṛṣibhir
ajanābhe mahātmanaḥ*

te - they; *ekadā* - once; *nimeḥ* - of King Nimi; *satram* - the *soma* sacrifice; *upajagmuḥ* - they approached; *yadṛcchayā* - as they wished; *vitāyamānam* - being carried out; *ṛṣibhiḥ* - by sages; *ajanābhe* - in Ajanābha (the old name for Bhārata-varṣa); *mahā-ātmanaḥ* - of the great soul.

TRANSLATION

Once in Ajanābha [the former name of the earth], they came upon the sacrificial performance of the great soul Mahārāja Nimi, which was being carried out under the direction of elevated sages.

TEXT 2.25

*tān dṛṣṭvā sūrya-saṅkāśān
mahā-bhāgavatān nṛpa
yajamāno'gnayo viprāḥ
sarva evopatasthire*

tān – them; *dṛṣṭvā* – seeing; *sūrya* – the sun; *saṅkāśān* – who rivaled in brilliance; *mahā-bhāgavatān* – the pure devotees of the Lord; *nṛpa* – O King (Vasudeva); *yajamānaḥ* – the performer of the sacrifice (Nimi Mahārāja); *agnayaḥ* – the fires; *viprāḥ* – the *brāhmaṇas*; *sarve* – everyone; *eva* – even; *upatasthire* – stood in respect.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, seeing those pure devotees of the Lord, who rival the sun in brilliance, everyone present – the performer of the sacrifice, the brāhmaṇas and even the sacrificial fires – stood in respect.

TEXT 2.26

*videhas tān abhipretya
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇān
prītaḥ sampūjayām cakre
āsana-sthān yathārhataḥ*

videhaḥ – Nimi Mahārāja; *tān* – them; *abhipretya* – recognizing; *nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇān* – as devotees whose only goal was Nārāyaṇa; *prītaḥ* – satisfied; *sampūjayām cakre* – he fully worshiped them; *āsana-sthān* – who had been seated; *yathā-rhataḥ* – as they deserved.

TRANSLATION

King Videha [Nimi] understood that the nine sages were exalted devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, overjoyed at their auspicious arrival, he offered them suitable sitting places and worshiped them in a proper way, just as one would worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

The word *yathārhataḥ* is significant here. According to Viśvanātha Cakravartī the word *yathārhataḥ* means *yathocitam*, or “according to the proper etiquette.” It is clearly mentioned here that the *nava-yogendras* are *nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇa*, exalted devotees of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the word *yathārhataḥ* indicates that the King worshiped the nine sages according to the standard Vaiṣṇava etiquette. The etiquette for worshiping exalted Vaiṣṇavas is expressed by Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura with the words *sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-sāstraiḥ*: an exalted Vaiṣṇava, being totally surrendered to the will of the Supreme Lord, is taken to be a

transparent medium for the Lord's will. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is stated that even by a moment's association with the pure devotees of the Lord one can achieve all perfection in life. Therefore, as indicated by the word *prītaḥ*, King Nimi was overjoyed by the auspicious arrival of the sages, and therefore he worshiped them just as one would worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Although impersonalist philosophers claim that every living entity is equal to God, they callously step over the heads of their so-called spiritual masters and freely speculate on the nature of the Absolute, giving their own whimsical opinions in defiance of the impersonal whims of their so-called *gurus*. In other words, although Māyāvādī impersonalists claim that everyone is God, they ultimately show an offensive mentality toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead in rejecting the reality of His eternal form and pastimes. Thus, they unwittingly belittle the eternal position of all living beings by denying their eternal personality and activities in the kingdom of God. The impersonalists, through their mental concoctions, try to minimize the position of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living entities who are part of Him, reducing them theoretically to a formless, nameless light, which by their concoction they claim to be the Absolute God. The Vaiṣṇavas, however, welcome the Supreme Personality of Godhead and easily understand that the unlimited Supreme Personality has nothing to do with the conditioned, limited, mundane personalities we find in the material world. The impersonalists arrogantly assume that there could not be any transcendental or unlimited personality beyond our present experience. But the Vaiṣṇavas intelligently understand that there are many wonderful things far beyond our limited experience. Therefore they accept the words of Kṛṣṇa, who states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.19):

*yo mām evam asammūḍho
jānāti puruṣottamam
sa sarva-vid bhajati mām
sarva-bhāvena bhārata*

“Whoever knows Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without doubting, is the knower of everything, and he therefore engages himself in full devotional service, O son of Bharata.” In this connection Śrīla Prabhupāda states, “There are many philosophical speculations about the constitutional position of the living entities and the Supreme Absolute Truth. Now in this verse the Supreme Personality of Godhead clearly explains that anyone who knows Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Person is actually the knower of everything. The imperfect knower goes on simply speculating about the Absolute Truth, but the perfect knower, without wasting his valuable time, engages directly in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the devotional service of the Supreme Lord.... It is not that one should simply speculate academically. One should submissively hear from *Bhagavad-gītā* that these living entities are always subordinate to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Anyone who is able to understand this, according to the Supreme Personality of Godhead,

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, knows the purpose of the *Vedas*; no one else knows the purpose of the *Vedas*.” Therefore, exalted devotees such as the nine Yogendras always accept the supremacy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as expressed here by the word *nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇān*.

King Nimi was a Vaiṣṇava, and therefore he worshiped the great sages with the same respect with which he would worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as shown by the word *yathārhataḥ*. Although impersonalists falsely claim that every living entity is equal to God, they cannot properly respect any living being, because of their original offense at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality. Their so-called worship, even of their own *gurus*, is ultimately self-serving and opportunistic. When an impersonalist imagines that he has become God, he has no further need for his so-called *guru*. The Vaiṣṇava, however, because he accepts the supremacy of the eternal Personality of Godhead, is ready and willing to offer eternal respect to all living beings, especially to those most fortunate living beings who have achieved shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord. A Vaiṣṇava’s worship of the Lord’s representative is not self-serving or opportunistic, but is an expression of eternal love for the Lord and His representatives, as indicated here by the word *prītaḥ*. Therefore it is clear from this verse that not only the nine exalted sons of Rṣabhadeva but also King Nimi himself were all great devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in defiance of the artificial and limited concept of impersonalism.

TEXT 2.27

*tān rocamānān sva-rucā
brahma-putropamān nava
papuraccha parama-prītaḥ
praśrayāvanato nṛpaḥ*

tān – them; *rocamānān* – glowing; *sva-rucā* – by their own effulgence; *brahma-putra-upamān* – just like the sons of Brahmā; *nava* – nine; *papuraccha* – he asked; *parama-prītaḥ* – transcendently overjoyed; *praśraya* – with humility; *avanataḥ* – bowed down; *nṛpaḥ* – the King.

TRANSLATION

Overwhelmed by transcendental joy, the King humbly bowed his head and then proceeded to question the nine sages. These nine great souls glowed with their own effulgence and thus appeared equal to the four Kumāras, the sons of Lord Brahmā.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has pointed out that the word *sva-rucā* indicates that the *nava-yogendras* glowed from their own spiritual effulgence and not due to their ornaments or any other cause. The Supreme Soul, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is the original source of all light. His brilliantly glowing body is the source of the all-pervading *brahmajyoti*, the immeasurable spiritual light that is the resting place of innumerable universes (*yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṇḍa-koṭi*). The individual soul, being part and parcel of the Lord, is also self-effulgent. In

fact, everything in the kingdom of God is self-effulgent, as described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.6):

*na tad bhāsayate sūryo
na śasāṅko na pāvakaḥ
yad gatvā na nivartante
tad dhāma paramaṁ mama*

It has already been described in many ways that the *nava-yogendras* were pure devotees of the Lord. Being completely Kṛṣṇa conscious souls, they naturally radiated the intense effulgence of the soul, as indicated here by the word *sva-rucā*. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has also pointed out that the word *brahma-putropamān*, meaning “equal to the sons of Brahmā,” indicates that the *nava-yogendras* were on the same spiritual platform as the four exalted Kumāra brothers. It has been described in the Fourth Canto that Mahārāja Pṛthu received the four Kumāras with great love and reverence, and here King Nimi is similarly receiving the nine sons of Lord Ṛṣabhadeva. Receiving exalted Vaiṣṇavas with love and reverence is standard spiritual etiquette for those who desire progress and happiness in life.

TEXT 2.28

*śrī-vidēha uvāca
manye bhagavataḥ sākṣāt
pārśadān vo madhu-dviṣaḥ
viṣṇor bhūtāni lokānām
pāvanāya caranti hi*

śrī-vidēhaḥ uvāca – King Videha said; *manye* – I consider; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Supreme Lord; *sākṣāt* – directly; *pārśadān* – personal associates; *vaḥ* – you; *madhu-dviṣaḥ* – of the enemy of Madhu; *viṣṇoḥ* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *bhūtāni* – the servants; *lokānām* – of all the worlds; *pāvanāya* – for the purification; *caranti* – they move about; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

King Videha said: I think that you must be direct associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is famous as the enemy of the demon Madhu. Indeed, the pure devotees of Lord Viṣṇu wander throughout the universe not for their personal, selfish interest, but to purify all the conditioned souls.

PURPORT

King Nimi here welcomes the great sages by glorifying their transcendental activities. It is well known that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is transcendental to the three modes of material nature, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.13): *mām ebhyaḥ param avyayam*. Similarly, His pure devotees are also on the transcendental platform. One may ask how such transcendental living beings as the associates of Lord Viṣṇu could be seen within the material world. Therefore it is stated here, *pāvanāya caranti hi*: the associates of Lord Viṣṇu travel throughout the universe to reclaim the fallen, conditioned souls on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A

representative of the governor may be seen moving within the prison house, but that does not mean that the governor's representative has become a conditioned prisoner. It is understood that he is within the prison to negotiate the possible release of those prisoners who have rectified their criminal propensity. Similarly, the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead called *parivrājakācāryas* wander throughout the universe inviting everyone to surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa and go back home, back to Godhead, for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

In the Sixth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the mercy of the associates of Lord Viṣṇu has been described in connection with the salvation of Ajāmila. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that the associates of Lord Viṣṇu are as merciful as the Lord Himself. Even though the ignorant members of human society are not interested in approaching the servants of Lord Viṣṇu, the devotees of the Lord, without any false prestige, act to liberate the conditioned souls from their perpetual misfortune.

TEXT 2.29

*durlabho mānuṣo deho
dehinām kṣaṇa-bhaṅguraḥ
tatrāpi durlabham manye
vaikuṅṭha-priya-darśanam*

durlabhaḥ – difficult to achieve; *mānuṣaḥ* – human; *dehaḥ* – body; *dehinām* – for embodied beings; *kṣaṇa-bhaṅguraḥ* – prone to be destroyed at any moment; *tatra* – in that human body; *api* – even; *durlabham* – more difficult to achieve; *manye* – I consider; *vaikuṅṭhapriya* – of those who are dear to the Supreme Lord, Vaikuṅṭha; *darśanam* – the vision.

TRANSLATION

For the conditioned souls, the human body is most difficult to achieve, and it can be lost at any moment. But I think that even those who have achieved human life rarely gain the association of pure devotees, who are dear to the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *dehinām* means *bhavo dehā bhavanti yeṣāṃ te*, “the conditioned souls, who accept innumerable material bodies.” According to some wishful thinkers a living entity in the human form of life will never be degraded to a lower form such as that of an animal or plant. But despite this wishful thinking, it is a fact that according to our activities at the present, we will be elevated or degraded by the laws of God. At the present time in human society there is no clear or precise understanding of the nature of life. Foolish scientists have invented highly sophisticated terminologies and theories to bluff innocent people into believing that life comes from chemical reactions. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda has exposed this bluff in his book *Life Comes from Life*, which points out that although scientists claim that life comes from chemicals, they cannot produce so much as an insect, even from

unlimited quantities of chemicals. Actually, life and consciousness are symptoms of the spirit soul.

In *Life Comes from Life* (page 43), Śrīla Prabhupāda has stated, “Living beings move from one bodily form to another. The forms already exist. The living entity simply transfers himself, just as a man transfers himself from one apartment to another. One apartment is first class, another is second class, and another is third class. Suppose a person comes from a lower-class apartment to a first-class apartment. The person is the same. But now, according to his capacity for payment, or *karma*, he is able to occupy a higher-class apartment. Real evolution does not mean physical development, but development of consciousness.” Within every species of life there is consciousness, and that consciousness is the symptom of the living entity, who is the superior energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Without understanding this essential point of the transmigration of the conscious living entity throughout 8,400,000 species of life, one cannot possibly understand the words *durlabho mānuṣo dehaḥ*, “the human body is very rarely achieved.”

People are now being cheated of this essential understanding. They are completely unaware of the danger of slipping back into the eight million species that lie below the human species. It is natural that a human being think in terms of progress. We want to feel that our life is progressing and that we are advancing and improving the quality of our life. Therefore, it is urgent that people be informed of the great danger of misusing the valuable human life and that they know of the great opportunity the human life affords, the opportunity to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Just as on earth different residential areas are divided into high class, middle class and low class, within the universe there are upper-class, middle-class and lower-class planets. By practice of the *yoga* system, or by meticulous execution of religious rituals, one can transfer himself to the higher planets within this universe. On the other hand, by neglecting religious principles one will degrade himself to a lower planet. But the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, declares in *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.16), *ābrahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino ’rjuna*. Thus the final conclusion is that every planet within the material universe is an unsuitable and inappropriate residence, because on each planet there are the primal defects old age and death. The Lord assures us, however, that in His transcendental abode, which lies far beyond the material cosmos, life is everlasting, blissful and absolutely cognizant. The material world is temporary, troublesome and rife with ignorance, but the spiritual world, called *Vaikuṅṭha*, is eternal, blissful and full of perfect knowledge. The highly evolved human brain is a gift given by God so that we may use our intelligence to distinguish between that which is eternal and that which is temporary. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.16):

*nāsato vidyate bhāvo
nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ*

*ubhayor api dṛṣṭo'ntas
tv anayos tattva-darśibhiḥ*

“Those who are seers of the truth have concluded that matter has no permanent existence whereas the spirit soul never ceases to exist. Learned seers have concluded this by studying the nature of both.”

Those who have accepted the Supreme Lord and His abode as the ultimate goal of life are called *vaikuṅṭha-priya*. Here King Nimi states that to have the personal association of such learned transcendentalists is certainly the perfection of human life. In this connection Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura suggests that we consider the following verse:

*nṛ-deham ādyaṁ su-labhaṁ su-durlabhaṁ
plavaṁ su-kalpaṁ guru-karṇadhāram
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritaṁ
pumān bhavābधिṁ na taret sa ātma-hā*

“[The Supreme Lord said:] The best of bodies, a human body, is a great attainment, rarely achieved, and may be compared to a boat. The *guru* is an expert captain for this boat, and I have sent favorable winds (the *Vedas*). Thus I have given all facilities for crossing over the ocean of material existence. Any human being who has achieved these excellent facilities of human life but does not cross over the material ocean is to be considered the killer of his own self.” (*Bhāg.* 11.20.17)

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, the eternal servants of the Supreme Lord, being controlled by powerful feelings of mercy, descend into the material world as Vaiṣṇavas to deliver the conditioned souls who are bound by the results of their own mundane work. Such Vaiṣṇavas also distribute their mercy to those who are laboriously searching after the impersonal Absolute. Śrī Nārada Muni has stated that without ecstatic love of Godhead such laborious, impersonal contemplation of the Absolute is certainly troublesome (*naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam*), and what to speak of the innumerable problems of ordinary gross materialistic life. We have practical experience that in the Western countries most people are working hard to get money, laboring under heavenly dreams of sense gratification. Others, having become frustrated with ordinary materialistic life, are trying to negate their personal existence and merge into the existence of God through so-called *yoga* and meditation. Both classes of unhappy people are receiving the mercy of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, putting aside their dreams of sense gratification as well as their troublesome impersonal speculation. They are learning to chant the holy names of God, dance in ecstasy, and feast on the holy food offered to the Lord. They become enlivened by the transcendental knowledge spoken by the Lord Himself in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. As the Lord states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2), *susukhaṁ kartum avyayam*. The actual process of spiritual freedom is joyful to perform and has nothing to do with fruitive activities aimed at sense gratification or with dry impersonal speculation. More and more people are taking to the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, becoming joyful, and eagerly

distributing Kṛṣṇa's mercy to others. Thus the whole world will be enlivened and inspired by the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, which is the practical demonstration of the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas.

TEXT 2.30

*ata ātyantikam kṣemam
pṛcchāmo bhavato'naghāḥ
saṁsāre'smin kṣaṇārdho'pi
sat-saṅgaḥ śevadhir nṛṇām*

ataḥ – therefore; *ātyantikam* – supreme; *kṣemam* – good; *pṛcchāmaḥ* – I am asking; *bhavataḥ* – from you; *anaghāḥ* – O sinless ones; *saṁsāre* – in the cycle of birth and death; *asmin* – this; *kṣaṇa-ardhaḥ* – lasting only half of one moment; *api* – even; *sat-saṅgaḥ* – the association of devotees of the Lord; *śevadhiḥ* – a great treasure; *nṛṇām* – for human beings.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O completely sinless ones, I ask you to kindly tell me what the supreme good is. After all, even half a moment's association with pure devotees within this world of birth and death is a priceless treasure for any man.

PURPORT

The word *śevadhiḥ*, or “a great treasure,” is significant in this verse. Just as an ordinary man is overjoyed to discover an unexpected treasure, one who is actually intelligent is overjoyed to gain the association of a pure devotee of the Lord, by which one's life can easily be perfected. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī the words *ātyantikam kṣemam*, or “the supreme good,” indicate that situation in which one cannot be touched by even the slightest fear. Now we are entangled in the cycle of birth, old age, disease and death (*saṁsāre*). Because our entire situation can be devastated in a single moment, we are constantly in fear. But the pure devotees of the Lord can teach us the practical way to free ourselves from material existence and thus to abolish all types of fear.

According to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, normal etiquette would dictate that a host immediately ask a guest who has arrived about his well-being. But such an inquiry is unsuitable to place before self-satisfied devotees of the Lord, who are themselves the bestowers of all well-being. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha, the King knew that it would be useless to ask the sages about their business affairs, since the only business of the pure devotees of the Lord is the achievement of the supreme goal of life. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, the goal of life is to free oneself from the cycle of birth and death and reinstate oneself as an eternal servant of God on the platform of spiritual bliss. Pure devotees of the Lord do not waste their time with ordinary mundane affairs. Sometimes foolish relatives of a Vaiṣṇava preacher lament that such a transcendental preacher has not used his life for material business and that so much money has therefore been lost by the practice of spiritual life. Such ignorant persons cannot imagine the unlimited

prosperity available on the spiritual platform to those who have surrendered heart and soul to the mission of the Lord. King Nimi was himself a learned Vaiṣṇava, and therefore he did not foolishly ask the sages about ordinary worldly affairs. He immediately inquired about *ātyantikam kṣemam*, the highest, most perfect goal of life.

According to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the word *anaghāḥ*, “O sinless ones,” has two meanings. *Anaghāḥ* indicates that the nine Yogendras were themselves completely free of sins. It also indicates that merely by the great fortune of seeing them and hearing from them submissively, an ordinary, sinful man could also be freed of his sins and achieve everything he desired. One might object that since the great sages had just arrived, the King should not have been so impatient as to inquire from them about the perfection of life. Perhaps the King should have waited until the sages themselves invited his inquiry. Such a hypothetical objection is answered by the words *kṣaṇārdho 'pi*. Even a single moment’s association with pure devotees, or even half a moment’s association, is sufficient to give one the perfection of life. An ordinary person who is offered a great treasure will immediately desire to claim such a treasure. Similarly, King Nimi was thinking, “Why should I consider myself fortunate enough to have such great sages stay here for a long time? Because I am an ordinary person, undoubtedly you will soon be leaving. Therefore, let me immediately take advantage of your holy association.”

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, in this world there are different varieties of mercy. But ordinary mercy cannot bring about the cessation of all unhappiness. In other words, there are many humanitarians, altruists and social reformers who certainly work for the betterment of humanity. Such persons are universally considered merciful. But in spite of their mercy, humanity continues to suffer in the grip of birth, old age, disease and death. I may distribute free food to the needy, but even after eating my merciful gift, the recipient will again become hungry, or he will suffer in some other way. In other words, by mere humanitarianism or altruism, people do not actually become free from unhappiness. Their unhappiness is merely postponed or altered. King Nimi was joyful upon seeing the *nava-yogendras* because he knew that they were eternally perfect associates of the Supreme Lord. Therefore he thought, “You are not prone to sinful activities like unfortunate mundane people such as me. Thus the words you speak carry no deception or exploitation.”

The materially conditioned souls spend their days and nights discussing various topics of sense gratification. They never find time to hear about transcendental knowledge. But if even only briefly or accidentally they hear *hari-kathā*, topics of Kṛṣṇa, in the association of pure devotees of the Lord, their propensity to suffer in material existence will slacken. When one sees liberated persons, hears about Kṛṣṇa from them, remembers their saintly behavior and so on, one’s tendency to bind himself in the illusion of sense

gratification is diminished, and he becomes eager to serve the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 2.31

*dharmān bhāgavatān brūta
yadi naḥ śrutaye kṣamam
yaiḥ prasannaḥ prapannāya
dāsyaty ātmānam apy ajaḥ*

dharmān bhāgavatān – the science of devotional service; *brūta* – please speak; *yadi* – if; *naḥ* – of us; *śrutaye* – to hear properly; *kṣamam* – there is the capacity; *yaiḥ* – by which (devotional service); *prasannaḥ* – being satisfied; *prapannāya* – to one who has taken shelter; *dāsyati* – He will give; *ātmānam* – Himself; *api* – even; *ajaḥ* – the unborn Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

Please speak about how one engages in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, if you consider me capable of properly hearing these topics. When a living entity offers loving service to the Supreme Lord, the Lord is immediately satisfied, and in return He will give even His own self to the surrendered soul.

PURPORT

Within the material world there are two classes of mundane philosophers who present their opinions about the Supreme Lord. Some so-called theologians claim that we are infinitely different from God, and therefore they tend to look upon the Lord as something far beyond our power to understand. Such extreme dualistic philosophers outwardly or officially claim to be pious and religious believers in God, but they consider God so much different from that which is within our experience that according to them there is little profit in even trying to discuss the personality or attributes of the Supreme Lord. Such outwardly faithful persons generally take to fruitive activities and gross materialistic sense gratification, being infatuated with the mundane relationships of the material world, which appear under the headings society, friendship and love.

The *advaita-vādīs*, or nondualistic philosophers, claim that there is no difference between God and the living entity and that the highest goal of life is to give up our personal existence, which is due to illusion, and merge into the impersonal Brahman effulgence, which is devoid of name, form, paraphernalia and personality. Thus neither class of speculative philosopher is able to understand the transcendental Personality of Godhead.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in His sublime teaching of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, or simultaneous oneness and difference, has clearly demonstrated that we are qualitatively one with God but quantitatively different. God is personal consciousness, and He has His personal form. Similarly we are also personal consciousness, and ultimately, when liberated, we also have eternal forms. The difference is that the eternal form and personality of the Supreme Lord contain unlimited potency and opulence whereas our potency and

opulence are infinitesimal. We are conscious of our personal body, whereas Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, is conscious of everyone's body, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*kṣetra-jñāṁ cāpi māṁ viddhi sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata*). But although God is infinitely greater than the living entity, both God and the living entities are eternal personalities with form, activities and feelings. The Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, expands Himself into innumerable living entities to enjoy *rasas*, or ecstatic relationships, with them. The living entities are part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and they are meant to serve Him with love. Although the Supreme Lord is eternally the predominator and the living entity is eternally the predominated, when the living entity surrenders unto the Lord with a sincere loving attitude, desiring to serve the Lord eternally without the slightest expectation of personal reward for such service, the Lord immediately is pleased, as expressed here by the word *prasannaḥ*. Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is so unlimitedly merciful and magnanimous that in His gratitude to such a surrendered and loving servitor, He is immediately inclined to offer anything, even Himself, to His surrendered devotee.

There are numerous practical, historical examples of this loving propensity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because of the love of Mother Yaśodā, child Kṛṣṇa, in His form as Dāmodara, surrendered Himself to His loving mother and allowed Himself to be bound with ropes as a childhood punishment. Similarly, feeling indebted to the Pāṇḍavas for their intense love for Him, Kṛṣṇa in His form as Pārtha-sārathi happily agreed to drive the chariot of Arjuna on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana is always thinking of ways to satisfy the *gopīs*, who are universally recognized as the most exalted loving devotees of the Lord. Such intense loving feelings exchanged between the Lord and His pure devotees would not be possible were the living entities not qualitatively one with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and indeed inseparable parts and parcels of the Lord. On the other hand, because both the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living entities are eternally individuals, each with his own eternal individual consciousness, such loving exchanges are a perpetual reality in the kingdom of God. In other words, absolute oneness with God and absolute difference from God are theoretical imaginations of different schools of speculative philosophy. The perfection of spiritual love, as described in this verse, is based on simultaneous oneness and difference, and this absolute reality was elaborately presented by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself in His brahminical incarnation as Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu have expounded this perfect doctrine in innumerable books, culminating in the teachings of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who has most perfectly presented this knowledge in a way that is understandable not only in India but to all the people of the world. Our present insignificant attempt is simply to complete his translation and commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and we are constantly praying for his guidance so that this work can simply be completed exactly as he would

have desired. If one can understand these teachings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu as they are being presented in Western languages, surely the Lord will be satisfied with such a sincere seeker of spiritual truth.

TEXT 2.32

*śrī-nārada uvāca
evam te niminā pṛṣṭā
vasudeva mahattamāḥ
pratipūjyābruvan pṛītyā
sa-sadasyartvijam ṛṣam*

śrī-nāradaḥ uvāca – Śrī Nārada said; *evam* – thus; *te* – they; *niminā* – by King Nimi; *pṛṣṭāḥ* – questioned; *vasudeva* – O Vasudeva; *mahat-tamāḥ* – those best of saints; *pratipūjya* – offering him words of respect in return; *abruvan* – they spoke; *pṛītyā* – affectionately; *sa-sadasya* – who was accompanied by the members of the sacrificial assembly; *ṛtvijam* – and by the priests; *ṛṣam* – to the King.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Nārada said: O Vasudeva, when Mahārāja Nimi had thus inquired from the nine Yogendras about devotional service to the Lord, those best of saintly persons sincerely thanked the King for his questions and spoke to him with affection in the presence of the members of the sacrificial assembly and the brāhmaṇa priests.

PURPORT

According to Śrīdhara Svāmī, not only the King but also the members of the assembly and the priests conducting the sacrifice were all devoted to hearing and chanting the glories of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The sages, beginning with Kavi, will now each speak in turn, answering the questions of the King.

TEXT 2.33

*śrī-kavir uvāca
manye'kutaścid-bhayam acyutasya
pādāmbujopāsanam atra nityam
udvigna-buddher asat-ātma-bhāvād
viśvātmanā yatra nivartate bhīḥ*

śrī-kaviḥ uvāca – Śrī Kavi said; *manye* – I consider; *akutaścit-bhayam* – fearlessness; *acyutasya* – of the infallible Lord; *pāda-ambuja* – of the lotus feet; *opāsanam* – the worship; *atra* – in this world; *nityam* – constantly; *udvigna-buddheḥ* – of one whose intelligence is disturbed; *asat* – that which is only temporary; *ātma-bhāvāt* – by thinking to be the self; *viśva-ātmanā* – thoroughly; *yatra* – in which (service to the Lord); *nivartate* – ceases; *bhīḥ* – fear.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Kavi said: I consider that one whose intelligence is constantly disturbed by his falsely identifying himself with the temporary

material world can achieve real freedom from fear only by worshipping the lotus feet of the infallible Supreme Lord. In such devotional service, all fear ceases entirely.

PURPORT

In the opinion of Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī the word *asad-ātma-bhāvāt* in this verse indicates that the living entity is constantly disturbed by fear because he identifies his eternal self with the temporary material body and its paraphernalia. Similarly, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated, *bhakti-pratikūla-deha-gehādiṣv āsaktim*. Because of one's attachment to one's temporary body and so-called home, family, friends and so on, one's intelligence is always disturbed by fear, and one is unable to appreciate or practice pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord. So-called religious activities executed in the bodily conception of life are always accompanied by fear and anxiety about the ultimate result. But pure devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead frees one from fear and anxiety because it is executed on the platform of *Vaikuṅṭha*, or the spiritual plane, where there is no fear or anxiety. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the process of *bhakti-yoga* is so powerful that even in the stage of *sādhana-bhakti*, in which one is practicing devotional service through rules and regulations, the neophyte can have a direct experience of fearlessness by the mercy of the Lord. As one's devotional service becomes mature, the Lord reveals Himself to the devotee, and all fear is totally vanquished forever. Every living entity has a natural propensity to serve God, but because of false identification with the temporary body one loses touch with this pure, constitutional propensity and instead inauspiciously becomes attached to temporary sense gratification in the form of body, home, family and so on. The result of such false attachment is continuing distress, which can be eradicated only by devotional service to the Supreme Lord. In this connection, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī has quoted the following verse:

*tāvad bhayaṁ draviṇa-deha-suhṛn-nimittam
śokaḥ sprhā paribhavo vipulaś ca lobhaḥ
tāvan mamety asad-avagraha ārti-mūlaṁ
yāvan na te'ngkrim abhayaṁ pravṛṇīta lokaḥ*

“O my Lord, the people of the world are embarrassed by all material anxieties – they are always afraid. They always try to protect wealth, body and friends, they are filled with lamentation and unlawful desires and paraphernalia, and they avariciously base their undertakings on the perishable conceptions of ‘I’ and ‘mine.’ As long as they do not take shelter of Your safe lotus feet, they are full of such anxieties.” (*Bhāg.* 3.9.6)

TEXT 2.34

*ye vai bhagavatā proktā
upāyā hy ātma-labdhave*

*añjaḥ puṁsām aviduṣām
viddhi bhāgavatān hi tān*

ye - which; *vai* - indeed; *bhagavatā* - by the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *proktāḥ* - spoken; *upāyāḥ* - means; *hi* - indeed; *ātma-labdhave* - for realizing the Supreme Soul; *añjaḥ* - easily; *puṁsām* - by persons; *aviduṣām* - less intelligent; *viddhi* - know; *bhāgavatān* - to be *bhāgavata-dharma*; *hi* - certainly; *tān* - these.

TRANSLATION

Even ignorant living entities can very easily come to know the Supreme Lord if they adopt those means prescribed by the Supreme Lord Himself. The process recommended by the Lord is to be known as bhāgavata-dharma, or devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

There are many Vedic scriptures, such as *Manu-saṁhitā*, that present standard injunctions for the peaceful management of human society. Such Vedic knowledge is based on the *varṇāśrama* system, which scientifically divides human society into four occupational divisions as well as four spiritual divisions. According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, however, knowledge that can bring one directly in contact with the Supreme Personality of Godhead is called *ati-rahasyam*, or the most confidential knowledge (*ati-rahasyatvāt sva-mukhenaiva bhagavatāviduṣām api puṁsām añjaḥ sukhenavātma-labdhave*).

Bhāgavata-dharma is so confidential that it is spoken by the Lord Himself. The essence of *bhāgavata-dharma* is given in *Bhagavad-gītā*, wherein Kṛṣṇa personally instructs Arjuna. Yet in the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the Lord will give instructions to Uddhava that surpass even the teachings given to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā*. As Śrīla Prabhupāda has stated, “Undoubtedly *Bhagavad-gītā* was spoken by the Lord on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra just to encourage Arjuna to fight, and yet to complete the transcendental knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord instructed Uddhava. The Lord wanted Uddhava to fulfill His mission and disseminate knowledge which He had not spoken even in *Bhagavad-gītā*.” (*Bhāg.* 3.4.32 purport) Similarly, it is understood that the knowledge that will be presented here by the nine Yogendras is not their personal concoction but is authorized knowledge originally spoken by the Lord Himself.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, the living entities, in the course of their wanderings throughout the cycle of birth and death, lose all trace of the Personality of Godhead. But when they hear the eternally auspicious topics spoken by the Supreme Lord for their benefit and understand their eternal identities as spirit souls, the realized experience of being an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa becomes the basis of *bhāgavata-dharma*. In the soul’s experience as a pure Vaiṣṇava, or servant of God, there is no consideration of being different from God or the same as God, nor is one interested in the kingdom of material sense gratification. The pure devotee simply perceives

his particular devotional service to the Supreme Lord and sees himself as an individual part and parcel of the ultimate shelter. A pure devotee experiences that his very being is tied, by ropes of loving devotion, to the ultimate shelter Himself in one of His direct personal expansions. And in such a perfect state of consciousness, the devotee can perceive the all-pervading variegated forms of the Absolute Truth.

TEXT 2.35

*yān āsthāya naro rājan
na pramādyeta karhicit
dhāvan nimīlya vā netre
na skhalen na pated iha*

yān – which (means); *āsthāya* – accepting; *naraḥ* – a man; *rājan* – O King; *na pramādyeta* – is not bewildered; *karhicit* – ever; *dhāvan* – running; *nimīlya* – closing; *vā* – or; *netre* – his eyes; *na skhalet* – will not trip; *na patet* – will not fall; *iha* – on this path.

TRANSLATION

O King, one who accepts this process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never blunder on his path in this world. Even while running with eyes closed, he will never trip or fall.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *añjaḥ* (“easily”), which is used in the previous verse, is explained in this verse. He states, *añjaḥ-padenoktaṁ su-karatvaṁ vivṛṇoti*: “By the word *añjaḥ* the ease of performing *bhakti-yoga* is established, and this will be elaborated in the present verse.” In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2) the Lord Himself states, *pratyakṣāvagamāṁ dharmyaṁ susukhaṁ kartum avyayam*: “The process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternal, and it is very joyfully and naturally performed.” Śrīla Prabhupāda comments, “The process of devotional service is a very happy one. Why? Devotional service consists of *śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ*, so one can simply hear the chanting of the glories of the Lord or can attend philosophical lectures on transcendental knowledge given by authorized *ācāryas*. Simply by sitting, one can learn; then one can eat the remnants of the food offered to God, nice palatable dishes. In every state devotional service is joyful. One can execute devotional service even in the most poverty-stricken condition. The Lord says, *patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalam*: He is ready to accept from the devotee any kind of offering, never mind what. Even a leaf, a flower, a bit of fruit or a little water, which are all available in every part of the world, can be offered by *any* person, regardless of social position, and will be accepted if offered with love. There are many instances of this in history. Simply by tasting the *tulasī* leaves offered to the lotus feet of the Lord, great sages like Sanat-kumāra became great devotees. Therefore the devotional process is very nice, and it

can be executed in a happy mood. God accepts only the love with which things are offered to Him.”

The essential point to be understood here is that when a living entity surrenders to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he tells the Lord, “My dear Lord, although I am most sinful and unqualified and for so long have been trying to forget You, now I am taking shelter at Your lotus feet. From this day on I am Yours. Whatever I possess – my body, mind, words, family, riches – I am now offering at Your lotus feet. Please do with me as You like.” The Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, has repeatedly given assurance in *Bhagavad-gītā* that He will protect and redeem such a surrendered living entity, bringing him back home, back to Godhead, for an eternal life in the Lord’s own kingdom. Thus the qualification of surrendering to the Lord is so great and spiritually potent that even if a surrendered soul is deficient in other aspects of pious life, his elevated status is protected by the Lord Himself. In other processes, however, such as *yoga*, because one depends upon his own determination and intelligence and does not actually seek shelter of the Lord, one is subject to fall at any moment, being protected only by one’s own flimsy, limited potency. Therefore, as stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.32), *āruhya kṛcchreṇa param̐ padaṁ tataḥ/ patanty adho ’nādrta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*: if one gives up the shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord and instead tries to advance in the *yoga* process by one’s own determination, or if one tries to make progress in knowledge by one’s own speculative power, surely one will eventually fall again to a mediocre material platform, having no protection other than one’s own fallible strength. Therefore the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, in their commentaries on this verse, have illustrated in various ways the vast superiority of *bhakti-yoga*, or pure devotional service. In this connection, Śrīdhara Svāmī states, *nimīlya netre dhāvann api iha eṣu bhāgavata-dharmeṣu na skhalet; nimīlanam̐ nāmājñānam̐, yathāhuḥ – ‘śruti-smṛti ubhe netre viprāṇām̐ parikīrtite/ ekena vikalāḥ kāṇo dvābhyām andhaḥ prakīrtitaḥ’ iti*. “Even if running with both eyes closed, a devotee on this path of *bhāgavata-dharma* will not stumble. ‘Closing one’s eyes’ refers to being in ignorance [of standard Vedic literatures]. As it is said, ‘The *śruti* and *smṛti* scriptures are the two eyes of the *brāhmaṇas*. Lacking one of them, a *brāhmaṇa* is half blind, and deprived of both he is considered completely blind.’”

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10–11) the Lord has clearly stated that even if a devotee is lacking in Vedic knowledge or ignorant of Vaiṣṇava literature, the Lord personally enlightens him from within his heart if the devotee is actually engaged in loving service to the Lord. In this connection, Śrīla Prabhupāda states, “When Lord Caitanya was in Benares promulgating the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, thousands of people were following Him. Prakāśānanda, a very influential and learned scholar in Benares at that time, derided Lord Caitanya for being a sentimentalist. Sometimes philosophers criticize the devotees because they think that most of the devotees are in

the darkness of ignorance and are philosophically naive sentimentalists. Actually that is not the fact. There are very, very learned scholars who have put forward the philosophy of devotion, but even if a devotee does not take advantage of their literatures or of his spiritual master, if he is sincere in his devotional service he is helped by Kṛṣṇa Himself within his heart. So the sincere devotee engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be without knowledge. The only qualification is that one carry out devotional service in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Yet this facility given by the Lord cannot justify unauthorized concoctions put forward about the process of devotional service in the name of spontaneous devotion. In this connection Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated, *bhagavat-prāpty-arthaṁ pṛthaṁ-mārga-karaṇaṁ tv ati-dūṣaṇāvaham eva*: “If one manufactures his own process of devotional service for the sake of attaining the Supreme Lord, such a concoction will cause total ruination.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura goes on to quote:

*śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi-
pañcarātra-vidhiṁ vinā
aikāntikī harer bhaktir
utpātāyaiva kalpate*

“If one’s so-called unalloyed devotion to Lord Hari does not take into account the regulations of the *śruti*, *smṛti*, *Purāṇas* and *Pañcarātra*, it is nothing more than a disturbance to society.” In other words, even if one is not learned in the Vedic literatures, if he is engaged in the loving service of the Lord he is to be accepted as a pure devotee; nonetheless, such loving devotion cannot in any way contradict the injunctions of revealed scriptures.

Such groups as the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* ignore the standard regulations of Vaiṣṇava *dharma* and engage in illicit, degraded activities, dressing as Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the name of spontaneous devotion. They claim that because such spontaneous devotion is revealed by the Lord Himself, they need not refer to standard scriptures. Similarly, all over the world there are pseudoreligionists who manufacture their own processes and claim they are receiving knowledge from the Lord Himself within their hearts. Therefore it is very important to understand, as stated here, that spontaneous revelation by the Lord within the heart is meant not to alter the eternal process of devotional service to the Lord, but to give a supplementary facility to a sincere devotee who is ignorant of revealed scriptures. In other words, the revealed scriptures describe the eternal process of service to the Lord. Since the Lord is eternal and the living entity is eternal, the process of their loving relationship is also eternal. The Lord never changes His essential nature, nor does the living entity. Therefore there is no need to change the essential process of loving service to the Lord. Special revelation by the Lord is meant to give scriptural knowledge by another means, and not to contradict scriptural knowledge.

On the other hand, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated that if a devotee is executing all the basic principles of *bhakti-yoga* and advancing in

devotional service, such a Vaiṣṇava should not be criticized for neglecting the secondary procedures. For example, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda established hundreds of spiritual communities in the Western countries for practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The devotees in these communities give up all illicit sex, gambling, intoxication and meat-eating and constantly engage in service to Kṛṣṇa. Such followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda are able to make wonderful spiritual advancement and convert many thousands of people to the process of devotional service. In fact, all the faithful members of ISKCON who follow the standard regulations remain free from material contamination and make visible progress in going back home, back to Godhead. Such members of ISKCON cannot possibly execute all the details of the *varṇāśrama-dharma* system. In fact, many Western devotees can barely pronounce Sanskrit words and are not very expert in performing elaborate sacrifices based on chanting of *mantras* and offering of oblations. But because they are executing all the essential principles of *bhakti-yoga* by giving up material sense gratification and constantly engaging in loving service to Kṛṣṇa, their position is guaranteed both in this life and in the next.

We have seen many sophisticated Sanskrit scholars and learned experts in the details of Vedic sacrifice who can hardly even follow the basic principles of human life, namely no illicit sex, no meat-eating, no gambling and no intoxication. Such brilliant scholars and ritualistic performers are generally seen to be attached to a materialistic conception of life and are fond of mental speculation. Although in *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord Himself has given perfect knowledge for all time, such so-called scholars consider themselves more intelligent than the Lord and thus speculate on the meaning of Vedic literature. Such speculation certainly constitutes a fall from perfect spiritual life, and what then is to be said of materialistic fruitive activities, which are illusory in every sense of the term. The transcendental devotees are able to remain aloof from the pollution of fruitive activity and mental speculation, and that is the essential purport of this verse.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has warned that the words *yān āsthāya* indicate that the exalted status of a Vaiṣṇava can never be accorded to one who is not following the basic regulations of *bhakti-yoga*. Nor can it apply to one who is sometimes serving Kṛṣṇa and sometimes serving the illusory energy, *māyā*, by mental speculation or fruitive activities. Śrīla

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has concluded, “In all *dharmas* other than *bhāgavata-dharma* one must consider the conditioned soul’s qualification. But a soul surrendered to the Lord is never confounded by error, even if unqualified in all other respects. His feet never stumble, and he never falls. Even though wandering in the world at whim, he always resides in an auspicious place by the influence of his unswerving worship. The unique potency of *bhagavata-dharma* does not appear in any of the other *dharmas* of the world. There is no comparison between a surrendered individual who

has taken shelter of *bhāgavata-dharma* and the practitioner of any other *dharma*.”

TEXT 2.36

*kāyena vācā manasendriyair vā
buddhyātmanā vānusṛta-svabhāvāt
karoti yad yat sakalam parasmai
nārāyaṇāyeti samarpayet tat*

kāyena – with the body; *vācā* – speech; *manasā* – mind; *indriyaiḥ* – senses; *vā* – or; *buddhyā* – with the intelligence; *ātmanā* – the purified consciousness; *vā* – or; *anusṛta* – followed; *svabhāvāt* – according to one’s conditioned nature; *karoti* – one does; *yat yat* – whatever; *sakalam* – all; *parasmai* – to the Supreme; *nārāyaṇāya iti* – thinking, “This is for Nārāyaṇa”; *samarpayet* – he should offer; *tat* – that.

TRANSLATION

In accordance with the particular nature one has acquired in conditioned life, whatever one does with body, words, mind, senses, intelligence or purified consciousness one should offer to the Supreme, thinking, “This is for the pleasure of Lord Nārāyaṇa.”

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has commented in this regard that a person who engages all the sensory activities of his body, mind, words, intelligence, ego and consciousness in the service of the Supreme Lord cannot be considered to be on the same level as a *karmī* working for his personal sense gratification. Although apparently still a conditioned soul, one who offers the fruits of all his activities to the Lord can no longer be touched by the countless miseries that arise from the reactions to materialistic activities.

Because of enmity against the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His omnipotent authority, the conditioned living entity performs activities against the order of the Lord. Yet self-realized souls continue to perform all types of work within this world to carry out the mission of the Supreme Lord. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, those *karmīs* who are sufficiently pious follow the example of the self-realized souls by trying to offer the fruits of their own duties at the lotus feet of the Lord. Although this is counted as *karma-miśrā bhakti*, or devotional service mixed with the desire to execute fruitive activities, such mixed devotional service is gradually transformed into pure devotional service. As the pious fruitive workers disengage themselves, step by step, from the bogus philosophy of “enjoyment of one’s hard-earned rewards,” pure devotional service rewards them with complete good fortune.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has commented, *ātmanā cittenāhaṅkāreṇa vā anusṛto yaḥ svabhāvas tasmāt*: although one may still be in the bodily concept of life, he should offer the fruit of his work to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Those with a primitive, materialistic concept of the Supreme Lord consider

the Lord present only in a temple or church. They make some offering to the Lord in the place of worship, but in their normal activities they claim proprietorship, not thinking that God is present everywhere and within everyone. We have practical experience of many so-called religious men who become very offended if their children try to become servants of the Supreme Lord. They feel, “God should be pleased with whatever humble offering I give Him, but my family and ordinary business affairs belong to me and are under my control.” The perception of anything as separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead or His proprietorship is called *māyā*, or illusion. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has quoted, *na kevalam vidhitaḥ kṛtam eveti niyamaḥ; svabhāvānusāri laukikam api*: “The regulation that one should serve the Supreme Lord does not refer only to prescribed religious paths, ceremonies and regulations; rather, all the activities one performs in this world according to one’s personal nature should be dedicated to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

The words *karoti yad yat sakalam parasmai nārāyaṇāyeti samarpayet tat* in this verse are very significant. A similar verse is found in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.27):

*yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi
yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya
tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam*

“O son of Kuntī, all that you do, all that you eat, all that you offer and give away, and all the austerities that you perform should be done as an offering unto Me.” The objection may be raised, Since our ordinary activities are performed with a material body and material mind, not by the spirit soul, how can such activities be offered to the Supreme Lord, who is completely transcendental to the material world? How can such activities be considered spiritual? In answer to this it is stated in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (3.8.8):

*varṇāśramācāra-vatā
puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā
nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*

One who wants to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, must accept the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma* and worship the Lord through the execution of his prescribed duties. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.13) the Supreme Lord has personally taken credit for establishing the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*: *cātur-varṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭaṁ guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ*. Therefore if one offers his work within the *varṇāśrama-dharma* system to the Supreme Lord, such work is counted as devotional service. According to one’s *svabhāva*, or nature, one may work as an intellectual or priest, as an administrator or military man, as an agriculturist or mercantile man, or as a laborer or craftsman. And while working, everyone should meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, thinking, *yat sakalam parasmai nārāyaṇāya*: “I am working for the Supreme Lord. Whatever result comes

from my work, I shall accept the bare minimum for my personal maintenance, and the rest I shall offer for the glorification of Lord Nārāyaṇa.” Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has pointed out, *kāminām tu sarvathaiva na duṣkarmārpaṇam*: one cannot offer *duṣkarma*, or sinful, wicked activities, to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The four pillars of sinful life are illicit sex, meat-eating, gambling and intoxication. Such activities are never acceptable as offerings to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The example may be given that although in a free society each person is allowed to choose his own occupation, even a democratic government will not allow a citizen to choose the occupation of thief or murderer. In the same way, according to the laws of God one is invited to work according to his own nature in the *varṇāśrama* system, but one is forbidden to adopt a criminal life of sinful activities violating the laws of God.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given a nice description of how one should offer one’s ordinary activities to the Supreme Lord. He says that an ordinary sense gratifier begins his activities in the morning by passing stool and urine, cleaning his mouth, brushing his teeth, bathing, meeting his friends and family members and discussing with them the day’s business. In this way one has so many activities during the day, and a sense gratifier executes all these activities for his personal material enjoyment. A *karmī*, on the other hand, working under the jurisdiction of the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas*, will perform the same activities for the pleasure of the demigods and his forefathers. Thus, according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a devotee of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa, should similarly perform all of his daily activities for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. In this way everything we do throughout the day will become *bhakty-aṅga*, or a supplementary aspect of our devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

It should be understood that as long as one identifies oneself in terms of the *varṇāśrama-dharma* system rather than as part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa one is still on the platform of *ahaṅkāra*, or false ego, because the *varṇāśrama* system is designed according to the modes of nature acquired by the living entity through his material body. But the *ācāryas* have emphasized in their commentaries on this verse that such a false ego, by which one identifies oneself as a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, *śūdra*, *sannyāsī*, *gṛhastha* and so on, should also be offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, when one becomes very much attracted to hearing and chanting about the Supreme Lord and not merely offering Him the fruits of one’s work, one has attained the stage called *svarūpa-siddhā bhakti*, or the stage in which actual devotion becomes visible. The example may be given that although any good citizen will pay his taxes to the government, he may not necessarily love the government or its leaders. Similarly a pious living entity can understand that he is working under the laws of God, and therefore in accordance with Vedic injunctions or the injunctions of other scriptures he offers a portion of his assets to the Supreme Lord in religious ceremonies. But when such a pious person actually

becomes attached to chanting and hearing about the personal qualities of the Lord and when love thus becomes visible, he is considered to be reaching the mature stage of life. In this regard, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted several verses that very nicely show the development of love for Godhead. *Anena durvāsanā-duḥkha-darśanena sa karuṇā-mayaḥ karuṇām karotu:* “May the merciful Lord show mercy on me by demonstrating the misery created by sinful desires.” *Yā prītir avivekānām visayeṣv anapāyini/ tvām anusmarataḥ sā me hṛdayān nāpasarpatu:* “Unintelligent persons have unflinching affection for the objects of sense gratification. Similarly, may I always remember You, so that that same attachment, applied to You, never leaves my heart.” (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 1.20.19) *Yuvatīnām yathā yūni yūnām ca yuvatau yathā/ mano 'bhiramate tadvan mano me ramatām tvayi:* “As the minds of young girls take pleasure in thinking of a young boy and those of young boys take pleasure in thinking of a young girl, may my mind take pleasure in You.” *Mama sukarmaṇi duṣkarmaṇi ca yad rāga-sāmānyam, tad sarvato-bhāvena bhagavad-viṣayam eva bhavatu:* “Whatever attraction I have for pious or sinful activities, let that attraction be wholeheartedly invested in You.”

TEXT 2.37

*bhayam dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet tam
bhaktyaikayeśam guru-devatātmā*

bhayam – fear; *dvitīya* – in something seeming to be other than the Lord; *abhiniveśataḥ* – because of absorption; *syāt* – it will arise; *īśāt* – from the Supreme Lord; *apetasya* – for one who has turned away; *viparyayaḥ* – misidentification; *asmṛtiḥ* – forgetfulness; *tat* – of the Lord; *māyayā* – by the illusory energy; *ataḥ* – therefore; *budhaḥ* – an intelligent person; *ābhajet* – should worship fully; *tam* – Him; *bhaktyā* – with devotion; *ekayā* – unalloyed; *īśam* – the Lord; *guru-devatā-ātmā* – one who sees his own spiritual master as his lord and very soul.

TRANSLATION

Fear arises when a living entity misidentifies himself as the material body because of absorption in the external, illusory energy of the Lord. When the living entity thus turns away from the Supreme Lord, he also forgets his own constitutional position as a servant of the Lord. This bewildering, fearful condition is effected by the potency for illusion, called māyā. Therefore, an intelligent person should engage unflinchingly in the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord, under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, whom he should accept as his worshipable deity and as his very life and soul.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī the objection may be raised that since fear is caused by ignorance, it can be dispelled by knowledge and there is no need to worship the Supreme Lord. The living entity falsely identifies with his material body, family, society and so on, and he simply has to give up this false identification. Then what will *māyā* be able to do?

In reply to this argument, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has quoted the following verse from *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14):

*daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī
mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etāṁ taranti te*

“This divine energy of Mine consisting of the three modes of material nature is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it.” The living entity, called *jīva-tattva*, is one of the potencies of the Supreme Lord, but the constitutional position of the living entity is *taṭa-stha*, or marginal. Being minute, every living entity is eternally dependent upon the supreme living entity, Kṛṣṇa. This is confirmed in the Vedic literature as follows: *nityo nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānāṁ/ eko bahūnāṁ yo vidadhāti kāmān*. “Among all the eternally conscious beings there is one supreme eternal living being who is supplying the needs of all the innumerable others.” (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.1.12) Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has stated, *ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa, āra saba bhṛtya*: “Kṛṣṇa is the only independent controller; all other living entities depend upon Him.” (*Cc. Ādi* 5.142) Just as the finger is part and parcel of the body and therefore must always be engaged in bodily service, we as parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa (*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*) have the eternal duty (*sanātana-dharma*) of engaging in the unalloyed service of the Lord.

The potency of the Lord that enlightens us in the Lord’s service is called *cit-śakti*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments that when the living entity develops a spirit of independence he is forced to come to the material world, where he enters into various types of petty and undesirable behavior that create a fearful situation for him. The *bahiraṅgā-śakti*, the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord, covers all trace of the *cit-śakti* and imposes one material body after another upon the living entity for his gross sinful enjoyment. As further punishment, the living entity who has given up his loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa loses all power to perceive the eternal, blissful form of the Supreme Lord, who is his actual shelter. Instead the living entity becomes attached to many temporary, phantasmagorical forms, such as his personal body, the bodies of his family members and friends, his nation, his city, with its buildings and cars, and innumerable types of ephemeral material scenery. In such a state of gross ignorance the idea of returning to one’s original identity no longer even crosses the mind.

By the laws of God the three modes of material nature are constantly in conflict, as stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. This conflict is described in many

places in the *Bhāgavatam* as *guṇa-vyatikaram*. When the living entity is bewildered by the interactions of the modes of material nature, he comes to the conclusion of relativity and assumes that God and worship of God are simply by-products of the relative, contradictory interactions of nature's modes. In the name of anthropological, sociological or psychological perspective, the living entity falls deeper and deeper into the darkness of materialistic ignorance, dedicating himself to mundane piety, economic development, sense gratification, or speculation in which he regards the Absolute as lacking variety and personality, which he assumes to be products of the interactions of nature's modes.

The illusory potency of the Supreme Lord is *duratyayā*; it is impossible to escape without the direct mercy of Kṛṣṇa (*mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te*). The example may be given that when the sun is covered by clouds, no man-made apparatus can remove them from the sky, but the sun itself, which created the clouds, can immediately burn away the cloudy covering and reveal itself. Similarly, when we become covered by the illusory potency of the Lord we identify with our temporary material body, and thus we are always in fear and anxiety. But when we surrender to the Lord Himself, He can immediately free us from this illusion. The material world is *padam padam yad vipadam*; it is dangerous at every step. When a living entity understands that he is not the material body but an eternal servant of God, his fear is vanquished. As stated by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, *atra bhaktaiḥ saṁsāra-bandhān na bhavatyam sa hi bhaktau pravartamānasya svata evāpayāti*: "In this *bhāgavata-dharma* devotees have no need to fear the bondage of material existence. That fear goes away of its own accord for one who engages in devotional service."

It is important to make clear that *bhayaṁ*, or fear, cannot ultimately be vanquished simply by impersonal self-realization as expressed by the words *aham brahmāsmi*, "I am spirit soul." In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.12) Nārada Muni says to Vyāsadeva, *naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam na śobhate*: mere *naiṣkarmyam*, or cessation of material activities and repudiation of the bodily concept of life, cannot ultimately save one. The living entity must find a superior shelter on the spiritual platform; otherwise he will come back to the fearful situation of material existence. That is stated in *śāstra*: *āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ patanty adho 'nāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ* (*Bhāg.* 10.2.32). Although one may with great labor and effort struggle up to the Brahman platform (*kleśo 'dhikataras teṣāṁ avyaktāsakta-cetasām*), if he does not find a suitable shelter he will come back to the material platform. His so-called liberation is *vimukta-māna*, liberation by imagination.

The living entity is by nature pleasure-seeking, *ānanda-maya*. Now we are suffering because we are falsely seeking pleasure on the material platform and as a result we are becoming entangled in the painful complexities of material existence. But if we try to give up the pleasure-seeking propensity altogether, we shall eventually become frustrated and return to the platform

of material pleasure-seeking. Although there is eternal existence on the Brahman platform of impersonal realization, there is no *ānanda*. Variety is the mother of enjoyment. In the Vaikuṅṭha planets there is actual, spiritual *ānanda*. Kṛṣṇa is there in His ecstatic, spiritual form, surrounded by His blissful associates, all of them eternally full of bliss and knowledge. They have nothing to do with material existence. In the spiritual planets even the scenery and birds and animals are fully conscious of Kṛṣṇa and are absorbed in transcendental bliss. *Yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramaṁ mama* (Bg. 15.6). One who goes to the blissful, spiritual planet of Kṛṣṇa will be fully satisfied and never come back to the material platform. Therefore Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has said, *kiṁ cātra bhaktaiḥ saṁsāra-bandhān na bhetaḥ*. Only the *bhakta* actually becomes free from fear. In this connection Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has emphasized the necessity of accepting a bona fide spiritual master who is *vrajendranandana-preṣṭha*, the dearest servitor of the son of Nanda Mahārāja, Kṛṣṇa. The bona fide spiritual master is completely free from envy of other living entities, and therefore he freely distributes knowledge of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When the living entities who are inimical to the service of the Lord somehow hear this knowledge submissively, they become free from the illusory potency of the Lord, which has covered them and thrown them into various miserable species of life. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, by the mercy of the spiritual master the faithful disciple gradually realizes the transcendental position of Lord Nārāyaṇa, who is served with great awe and reverence by hundreds and thousands of goddesses of fortune. As the disciple's transcendental knowledge gradually increases, even the *paramaiśvarya*, or supreme opulence, of the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha becomes pale in the light of the beauty of Govinda, Kṛṣṇa. Govinda has inconceivable potency to enchant and give pleasure, and by the mercy of the spiritual master the disciple gradually develops his own blissful relationship (*rasa*) with Govinda. Having understood the blissful pastimes of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Sītā-Rāma, Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa and finally Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, the purified living entity is given the unique privilege of participating directly in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa, who becomes his only object and shelter.

TEXT 2.38

*avidyamāno'py avabhāti hi dvayo
dhyātur dhiyā svapna-manorathau yathā
tat karma-saṅkalpa-vikalpakam mano
budho nirundhyād abhayaṁ tataḥ syāt*

avidyamānaḥ – not present in reality; *api* – although; *avabhāti* – is manifest; *hi* – indeed; *dvayaḥ* – duality; *dhyātuḥ* – of the person experiencing; *dhiyā* – by the intelligence; *svapna* – a dream; *manaḥ-rathau* – or the conceiving of a desire; *yathā* – as; *tat* – therefore; *karma* – of material activities; *saṅkalpa-vikalpakam* – having the functions of forming positive and negative desires;

manaḥ – the mind; *budhaḥ* – an intelligent person; *nirundhyāt* – should bring under control; *abhayam* – fearlessness; *tataḥ* – in this way; *syāt* – there may be.

TRANSLATION

Although the duality of the material world does not ultimately exist, the conditioned soul experiences it as real under the influence of his own conditioned intelligence. This imaginary experience of a world separate from Kṛṣṇa can be compared to the acts of dreaming and desiring. When the conditioned soul dreams at night of something desirable or horrible, or when he daydreams of what he would like to have or avoid, he creates a reality that has no existence beyond his own imagination. The tendency of the mind is to accept and reject various activities based on sense gratification. Therefore an intelligent person should control the mind, restricting it from the illusion of seeing things separate from Kṛṣṇa, and when the mind is thus controlled he will experience actual fearlessness.

PURPORT

Although the conditioned mind is bewildered by the objects of sense gratification offered by *māyā*, illusion, if one takes to the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord such material sense gratification gradually dissipates, for it is merely a mental concoction of the conditioned soul. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has emphasized by the words *avyabhicāriṇī bhakti* that one cannot dissipate the illusion of material sense gratification unless one takes to the unalloyed devotional service of the Lord. As Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has stated:

*anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-
śīlanam bhaktir uttamā*

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11)

Unalloyed devotional service cannot be mixed with material sense gratification or mental speculation. The servant must act only for the satisfaction of the master. Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*. One must see only Kṛṣṇa everywhere and must act exclusively for the satisfaction of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the eternal master of every living entity.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted several verses from the *Hari-vaṁśa* illustrating that the living entity bewildered by identifying with his material body, home, family, friends and so on and thus entangled in the cycle of birth and death accepts phantasmagoria as reality. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, *śravaṇa-kīrtanādi-lakṣaṇa-mātratvaṁ yato na vyāhanyeta*: if one seriously desires to vanquish the duality of material illusion, one must adopt the process of chanting and hearing the glories of the Supreme Lord. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu also cited the following Vedic reference:

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

(Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa)

According to Vedic literatures the living entities of this Kali-yuga are very feeble in their power to understand spiritual knowledge (*mandāḥ sumanda-matayo manda-bhāgyā hy upadrutāḥ*). Their minds are always disturbed, and they are lazy and misguided by so many bogus leaders. They are further described in the *Bhāgavatam* as *niḥsattvān* (impatient and impious), *durmedhān* (possessed of weak intelligence) and *hrasitāyuṣaḥ* (very short lived). Therefore one who seriously wants to overcome the ignorance of material life must surrender to the process of chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – as well as reciting and rendering submissive aural reception to the transcendental literatures presented by the Lord, such as *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. It should be understood that the living entity is completely spiritual and never actually becomes mixed with material energy (*asaṅgo hy ayaṁ puruṣaḥ*). According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, *tasmin śuddhe 'pi kalpyate*: although the living entity is *śuddha*, pure spirit soul, he imagines that he is a material creation and thus entangles himself in the network of illusion called *dehāpatya-kalatrādi*.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has used the word *mānasa-pratyakṣa* to describe the experience of material life. *Mānasa-pratyakṣa* means “that which is experienced only within the mind.” The actual *pratyakṣa* is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2):

*rāja-vidyā rāja-guhyam
pavitram idam uttamam
pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyam
susukham kartum avyayam*

When one submissively hears the instructions given by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā*, which constitute the king of all knowledge (*rāja-vidyā*) and the most confidential of all information (*rāja-guhyam*), by associating with such spotless spiritual knowledge (*pavitram idam uttamam*) one can directly experience one’s eternal nature (*pratyakṣāvagamam*). By experiencing one’s eternal nature, one becomes thoroughly religious (*dharmyam*), blissful (*susukham*) and eternally engaged in the devotional service of the Lord (*kartum avyayam*).

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has quoted the following *śruti-mantra* in this connection: *vijita-hṛṣīka-vāyubhir adānta-manas turagam*. “By the very senses and life air one has conquered, the uncurbed mind will again drag one away.” According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura the meaning of this verse is *samavahāya guroś caraṇam*: if one rejects the lotus feet of one’s spiritual master, all of one’s previous spiritual advancement becomes

null and void. This has already been indicated in the previous verse by the words *guru-devatātmā*. Unless one accepts a bona fide spiritual master in the authorized *paramparā* as one's worshipable deity and life and soul, there is no question of overcoming the duality of material life.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has made the following comments on this verse. "Control of the mind is a result of living a life of devotional service to the Lord. By the influence of fixed devotional service, the accepting and rejecting mind can stop its thirst for sensory enjoyment apart from Kṛṣṇa. In transcendental Kṛṣṇa consciousness there is no contradiction, pettiness or lack of ecstasy. In other words, it is not like a material object, which always proves temporary and constantly miserable. Having forgotten Kṛṣṇa, the conditioned living entity is suffering the misdirection and perversion of his own so-called intelligence. The living entities are fragmental parts of the supreme shelter, Kṛṣṇa, but have fallen from Kṛṣṇa's kingdom of spiritual pastimes. Because of forgetting the Supreme Lord, they become prone to sinful life and turn their attention to dangerous material objects, which fill them with constant fear. If one desires to subdue the mind, which is constantly engaged in the duality of mental concoction, one must take to the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa."

TEXT 2.39

*śṛṇvan su-bhadrāṇi rathāṅga-pāṇeḥ
janmāni karmāṇi ca yāni loke
gītāni nāmāni tad-arthakāni
gāyan vilajjo vicared asaṅgaḥ*

śṛṇvan - hearing; *su-bhadrāṇi* - all-auspicious; *ratha-aṅga-pāṇeḥ* - of the Supreme Lord, who holds a chariot wheel in His hand (in His pastime of fighting with grandfather Bhīṣma); *janmāni* - the appearances; *karmāṇi* - activities; *ca* - and; *yāni* - which; *loke* - in this world; *gītāni* - are chanted; *nāmāni* - names; *tad-arthakāni* - signifying these appearances and activities; *gāyan* - singing; *vilajjaḥ* - free from embarrassment; *vicaret* - one should wander; *asaṅgaḥ* - without material association.

TRANSLATION

An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation and should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The holy names of Kṛṣṇa are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world.

PURPORT

Since the holy names, forms and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are unlimited, no one can hear or chant about all of them.

Therefore the word *loke* indicates that one should chant the holy names of the Lord that are well known on this particular planet. Within this world, Lord Rāma and Lord Kṛṣṇa are very famous. Their books, *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, are studied and relished all over the world. Similarly, Caitanya Mahāprabhu is gradually becoming famous all over the world, as He Himself predicted. *Pṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma/ sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*: “In every town and village on this earth the glories of My name will be chanted.” Therefore in conformity with the authorized statement of this verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement emphasizes the *mahā-mantra* – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – along with the Pañca-tattva *mahā-mantra*: *śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*.

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, this blissful process of chanting the holy names of the Lord without any material conception is called *sugamaṁ mārgam*, a very enjoyable path. Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa has described the process of *bhakti-yoga* as *susukhaṁ kartum*, very joyfully performed, and Śrīla Locana dāsa Ṭhākura has sung, *saba avatāra sāra śiromaṇi kevala ānanda-kāṇḍa*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s process for worshiping Kṛṣṇa is *kevala ānanda-kāṇḍa*, simply joyful. In this connection Śrīla Prabhupāda has stated that people in any part of the world can assemble, chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, read from authorized books such as *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, and accept *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* sumptuously, just as Caitanya Mahāprabhu did in Navadvīpa.

To be successful in this program, however, Locana dāsa Ṭhākura has warned, *viṣaya chāḍiyā*: one must give up material sense gratification. If one indulges in material sense gratification, surely he will be in the bodily concept of life. One who is in the bodily concept of life will undoubtedly have a materialistic understanding of the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, by considering the Lord’s pastimes mundane, one will come within the category of Māyāvāda, or impersonalism, in which one considers the transcendental body of the Lord to be a creation of material nature.

Therefore the word *asaṅgaḥ* in this verse is very significant. One must chant the holy name of the Lord without mental speculation. One must accept Lord Kṛṣṇa as He presents Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā*, wherein He states that He alone is Puruṣottama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and that His transcendental form is eternal (*ajo ’pi sann avyayātmā*).

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has emphasized, *yāni śāstra-dvārā sat-paramparā-dvārā ca loke gītāni janmāni karmāṇi ca, tāni śṛṇvan gāyaṁś ca*: if one wants to be successful in chanting and hearing the holy name of the Lord, one must adopt the process as it is coming down in the *sat-paramparā*, the transcendental disciplic succession. And the *sat-paramparā* can be identified by reference to bona fide Vedic scriptures. Contrary to the opinion of uninformed critics, the followers of Kṛṣṇa consciousness are not mindless or fanatical. They intelligently follow the system of checks and balances called

guru, sādhu and *śāstra*. That is, one must accept a bona fide spiritual master, who must in turn be confirmed by the opinion of great saintly persons and revealed scriptures. If one accepts a bona fide spiritual master, follows the example of great saintly persons and becomes conversant with authorized literature such as *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, one's program of chanting the holy names of the Lord and hearing about the Lord's pastimes will be completely successful. As Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.9):

*janma karma ca me divyam
evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so'ṛjuna*

“One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in the material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated that throughout the world the Supreme Lord is known by many names, some of them expressed in vernacular language, but any name used to indicate the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is one without a second, beyond the influence of material nature, can be accepted as a holy name of God, according to this verse. That is indicated by the word *loke*.

One should not misinterpret the word *vicaret*, “one should wander,” to mean that while chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa one may go anywhere or engage in any activity without discrimination. Therefore it is stated, *vicared asaṅgaḥ*: one may wander freely, but at the same time one must strictly avoid the association of those who are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness or who are engaged in sinful life. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has stated, *asat-saṅga-tyāga - ei vaiṣṇava ācāra* (Cc. *Madhya* 22.87): a Vaiṣṇava is known by his complete avoidance of all mundane association. If in the course of traveling and chanting the glories of the Lord a Vaiṣṇava preacher finds a submissive nondevotee who is willing to hear about Kṛṣṇa, the preacher will always give his merciful association to such a person. But a Vaiṣṇava should strictly avoid those who are not interested in hearing about Kṛṣṇa.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, those who do not engage in hearing the astonishing pastimes and holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and who do not relish the Lord's pastimes are simply executing mundane, illusory activities or indulging in false, materialistic renunciation. Frustrated living entities sometimes take to dry impersonalism and avoid the descriptions of the Supreme Lord's eternal name, form, qualities, entourage and pastimes. But if one gains the association of a pure devotee, one gives up the path of dry speculative argument and becomes situated on the actual Vedic path of devotional service to the Lord.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura says that the word *dvaita*, or “duality,” expresses the false understanding that some object has a substantial existence independent of Kṛṣṇa. The Māyāvāda conception of

advaita, which lacks any spiritual distinctions, is simply another manifestation of the mind's function of acceptance and rejection. The eternal appearance and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead never contradict the concept of *advaya-jñāna*, or transcendental knowledge beyond duality.

TEXT 2.40

*evam-vrataḥ sva-priya-nāma-kīrtyā
jātānurāgo druta-citta uccaiḥ
hasaty atho roditi rauti gāyaty
unmāda-van nṛtyati loka-bāhyaḥ*

evam-vrataḥ - when one thus engages in the vow to chant and dance; *sva* - own; *priya* - very dear; *nāma* - holy name; *kīrtya* - by chanting; *jāta* - in this way develops; *anurāgaḥ* - attachment; *druta-cittaḥ* - with a melted heart; *uccaiḥ* - loudly; *hasati* - laughs; *atho* - also; *roditi* - cries; *rauti* - becomes agitated; *gāyati* - chants; *unmāda-vat* - like a madman; *nṛtyati* - dancing; *loka-bāhyaḥ* - without caring for outsiders.

TRANSLATION

By chanting the holy name of the Supreme Lord, one comes to the stage of love of Godhead. Then the devotee is fixed in his vow as an eternal servant of the Lord, and he gradually becomes very much attached to a particular name and form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As his heart melts with ecstatic love, he laughs very loudly or cries or shouts. Sometimes he sings and dances like a madman, for he is indifferent to public opinion.

PURPORT

In this verse, pure love of God is being described. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has described this spiritual situation as *samprāpta-prema-lakṣana-bhakti-yogasya saṁsāra-dharmātītāṁ gatim*, or the perfectional stage of life in which one's devotional service to the Supreme Lord is enriched by ecstatic love. At that time, one's spiritual duties are entirely beyond the scope of worldly affairs.

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi 7.78)*, there is the following statement by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

*dhairya dharite nāri, hailāma unmatta
hāsi, kāndi, nāci, gāi, yaiche mada-matta*

"While chanting the holy name of the Lord in pure ecstasy, I lose myself, and thus I laugh, cry, dance and sing just like a madman." Caitanya Mahāprabhu immediately approached His spiritual master to ask him why He had apparently become mad by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. His *guru* replied:

*kṛṣṇa-nāma-mahā-mantrera ei ta' svabhāva
yei jape, tāra kṛṣṇe upajaye bhāva*

"It is the nature of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* that anyone who chants it immediately develops his loving ecstasy for Kṛṣṇa." (Cc. Ādi 7.83) In this

connection Śrīla Prabhupāda has commented, “These symptoms are very prominently manifest in the body of a pure devotee. Sometimes when our students of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement chant and dance, even in India people are astonished to see how these foreigners have learned to chant and dance in this ecstatic fashion. As explained by Caitanya Mahāprabhu, however, actually this is not due to practice, for without extra endeavor these symptoms become manifest in anyone who sincerely chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.”

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has warned us in this regard about the ungodly *sahajiyās* who imitate the pastimes of the Supreme Lord in an unauthorized way, neglecting the standard injunctions of Vedic scriptures, foolishly trying to take the position of Kṛṣṇa as Puruṣottama, and thus making a cheap farce of the exalted pastimes of the Lord. Their so-called ecstatic symptoms like crying, shivering and falling on the ground are not to be confused with the advanced features of devotional service described by Śrīdhara Svāmī as *samprāpta-prema-lakṣaṇa-bhakti-yoga*. Śrīla Prabhupāda comments in this regard, “One who has attained this *bhāva* stage is no longer under the clutches of the illusory energy.” Similarly, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja states:

*pañcama puruṣārtha - premānandāmṛta-sindhu
mokṣādi ānanda yāra nahe eka bindu*

“For a devotee who has actually developed *bhāva* [love of Godhead], the pleasure derived from *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* appears like a drop in the presence of the sea.” (Cc. Ādi 7.85) As already stated in the previous verse of this chapter, *gāyan vilajjo vicared asaṅgaḥ*: one exhibits the ecstatic symptoms of love of Godhead when he is *asaṅga*, free from all attachment to material sense gratification.

The word *loka-bāhyaḥ* in this verse indicates that a pure devotee on the platform of *prema*, love of Godhead, is not at all concerned with ridicule, praise, respect or criticism from ordinary people in the bodily concept of life. Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and when He reveals Himself to a surrendered servant, all doubt and speculation about the nature of the Absolute are vanquished forever.

In this connection Śrīpāda Madhvācārya has quoted a verse from the *Varāha Purāṇa*:

*kecid unmāda-vad bhaktā
bāhya-liṅga-pradarśakāḥ
kecid āntara-bhaktāḥ syuḥ
kecid caivobhayātmakāḥ
mukha-prasādād dārḍhyāc ca
bhaktir jñeyā na cānyataḥ*

“Some devotees of the Lord exhibit external symptoms, acting like madmen, others are introspective devotees, and still others partake of both natures. It is by one’s steadfastness and by the merciful vibrations emanating from one’s mouth that one’s devotion can be judged, not otherwise.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given a very nice example to illustrate ecstatic laughing and other symptoms of love of Godhead: ““Oh, that thief Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yaśodā, has entered the house to steal the fresh butter. Grab Him! Keep Him away!’ Hearing these menacing words spoken by the elderly *gopī* Jaratī, Kṛṣṇa immediately prepares to leave the house. The devotee to whom this transcendental pastime is revealed laughs in ecstasy. But suddenly he can no longer see Kṛṣṇa. He then cries in great lamentation, ‘Oh! I achieved the greatest fortune in the world, and now it has suddenly slipped from my hands!’ Thus the devotee cries loudly, ‘O my Lord! Where are You? Give me Your answer!’ The Lord answers, ‘My dear devotee, I heard your loud complaint, and so I have again come before you.’ Upon seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa again, the devotee begins to sing, ‘Today my life has become perfect.’ Thus overwhelmed with transcendental bliss, he begins to dance like a madman.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura also notes that the word *druta-cittaḥ* or “with a melted heart,” indicates that one’s heart, melted by the fire of anxiety to see the Lord, becomes like Jambūnadī, a river of roseapple juice. The *ācārya* further points out, *nāma-kīrtanasya sarvotkarṣam*: the present and previous verse clearly distinguish the exalted position of *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*, chanting and hearing the name and glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Caitanya Mahāprabhu also emphasized this by quoting:

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatiḥ anyathā*

“In this Age of Kali there is no alternative, there is no alternative, there is no alternative for spiritual progress but the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord.” In his purports to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 7.76), Śrīla Prabhupāda has given an elaborate explanation of this verse.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura recommends that we study the following verse in this connection:

*parivadatu jano yathā tathā vā
nanu mukharo na vyaṁ vicārayāmaḥ
hari-rasa-madirā-madāti-mattā
bhuvī viluṭhāmo naṭāmo nirviśāmaḥ*

“Let the garrulous populace say whatever they like; we shall pay them no regard. Thoroughly maddened by the ecstasy of the intoxicating beverage of love for Kṛṣṇa, we shall enjoy life running about, rolling on the ground and dancing in ecstasy.” (*Padyāvalī* 73)

TEXT 2.41

*khaṁ vāyum agniṁ salilaṁ mahīṁ ca
jyotīṁṣi sattvāni diśo drumādīn*

*sarit-samudrāṁś ca hareḥ śarīram
yat kim ca bhūtam praṇamed ananyaḥ*

kham - ether; *vāyum* - air; *agnim* - fire; *salilam* - water; *mahīm* - earth; *ca* - and; *jyotīṁśi* - the sun, moon and other celestial luminaries; *sattvāni* - all living beings; *diśaḥ* - the directions; *druma-ādīn* - trees and other immovable creatures; *sarit* - the rivers; *samudrān* - and oceans; *ca* - also; *hareḥ* - of the Supreme Lord, Hari; *śarīram* - the body; *yat kim ca* - whatever; *bhūtam* - in created existence; *praṇamet* - one should bow to; *ananyaḥ* - thinking nothing to be separate from the Lord.

TRANSLATION

A devotee should not see anything as being separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Ether, fire, air, water, earth, the sun and other luminaries, all living beings, the directions, trees and other plants, the rivers and oceans - whatever a devotee experiences he should consider to be an expansion of Kṛṣṇa. Thus seeing everything that exists within creation as the body of the Supreme Lord, Hari, the devotee should offer his sincere respects to the entire expansion of the Lord's body.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has given this example from the *Purāṇas*: *yat paśyati, tat tv anurāgātīśayena "jagad dhana-mayaṁ lubdhāḥ kāmukāḥ kāmīnī-mayam" iti-vat hareḥ śarīram*. "Because of a greedy person's obsession with money, wherever he goes he sees an opportunity for acquiring wealth. Similarly a very lusty man notices women everywhere." In the same way, a pure devotee should see the transcendental form of the Lord within everything, since everything is an expansion of the Lord. It is our practical experience that a greedy man will see money everywhere. If he goes to the forest he will immediately consider whether it would be profitable to purchase the forest land and sell the trees to a paper mill. Similarly, if a lusty man goes to the same forest he will look everywhere for beautiful women tourists who might happen to be there. And if a devotee goes to the same forest he will see Kṛṣṇa there, knowing correctly that the entire forest, as well as the sky canopy above, is the inferior energy of the Lord. Kṛṣṇa is supremely sacred, being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and since everything that exists expands directly or indirectly from the body of the Lord, everything is sacred when seen through the eyes of a self-realized person. Therefore as stated in this verse, *praṇamet*: one should offer one's sincere respects to everything. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has mentioned that we should see the personal form of Kṛṣṇa everywhere.

This verse does not approve of the impersonal, atheistic philosophy that everything is God. In this regard, Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted from the *Hari-vaṁśa*:

*sarvaṁ harer vaśatvena
śarīram tasya bhaṇyate
ananyādhipatitvāc ca*

*tad ananyam udīryate
na cāpy abhedo jagatām
viṣṇoḥ pūrṇa-guṇasya tu*

“Because everything is under the control of the Supreme Lord, Hari, everything is considered to be His body. He is the original source and master of everything, and therefore nothing should be seen as different from Him. Nonetheless, one should not foolishly conclude that there is absolutely no difference between the material universe and Lord Viṣṇu, who is full of His own unique spiritual qualities.”

The example is often given of the sun and the sun’s rays. The sunshine is nothing but an expansion of the sun globe, and therefore there is no qualitative difference between the sun and its rays. But although the sunshine is situated everywhere and although everything is a transformation of the sun’s energy, the sun globe itself, the source of the sunshine, is not everywhere, but is situated in a particular place in the vast sky and has its own specific form.

If we penetrate further into the sun globe we shall find the sun-god, Vivasvān. Although pseudointellectuals of the modern age who are incapable of even counting the hairs on their own heads will consider the sun-god a mythological figure, it is actually the foolish mythology of modern men to think that such a sophisticated apparatus as the sun, which provides heat and light for the entire universe, can function without intelligent administration. Transformations of solar energy make life possible on earth, and thus the earth can be understood to consist of an endless variety of secondary manifestations of all-pervading solar energy.

So within the sun planet is the personality Vivasvān, the chief administrator of the solar functions; the sun globe itself is localized; and the sun’s rays expand everywhere. Similarly Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śyāmasundara, is the original Personality of Godhead (*bhagavān svayam*); He expands Himself as the localized Supersoul (Paramātmā) in everyone’s heart; and finally He expands His potency by His personal bodily glow, the all-pervading spiritual effulgence called the *brahmajyoti*. The entire material manifestation floats within the rays of this *brahmajyoti*. Just as all life on earth is a transformation of the all-pervading rays of the sun, the entire cosmic manifestation is a transformation of the spiritual rays of the *brahmajyoti*. As stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.40):

*yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṅḍa-koṭi-
koṭiṣv aśeṣa-vasudhādi vibhūti-bhinnam
tad brahma niṣkalam anantam aśeṣa-bhūtaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

“I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is endowed with great power. The glowing effulgence of His transcendental form is the impersonal Brahman, which is absolute, complete and unlimited and which displays the varieties of countless planets, with their different opulences, in millions and millions of universes.” Therefore, the *brahmajyoti* is the spiritual light that

emanates directly from the body of the Lord. This universe is a transformation of that spiritual energy, and therefore everything that exists is in one sense connected directly with the personal body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

It is emphasized here that we should offer respect to everything that exists, recognizing it to be the energy of the Lord. The example may be given that if a man is important his property is also important. The president of a country is the most important person in the country, and therefore everyone must respect his property. Similarly, everything that exists is an expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and should be respected accordingly. If we fail to see everything that exists as the energy of the Lord, we risk the danger of drifting into the Māyāvāda philosophy, which according to Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the most deadly poison for one trying to advance in actual spiritual life. *Māyāvādi-bhāṣya śunile haya sarva-nāśa* (Cc. *Madhya* 6.169). If we try to understand Kṛṣṇa alone, without the expansion of His potency, we shall not understand such statements in *Bhagavad-gītā* as *vāsudevaḥ sarvam* and *aham sarvasya prabhavaḥ*.

As already explained in this chapter, *bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syāt*: fear or illusion arises from thinking that there is something not dependent upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Now, in this verse, the specific process for overcoming this fearful illusion is given. One must train one's mind to see everything that exists as an expansion of the potency of the Supreme Lord. By offering respects to everything and meditating upon everything as part of the body of the Lord, one will become free from fear. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.29), *suhṛdaṁ sarva-bhūtānām*: Kṛṣṇa is the well-wishing friend of every living being. As soon as one understands that everything that exists is under the powerful control of one's most beloved friend, one comes to the stage in which the whole universe becomes a blissful abode (*viśvaṁ pūrṇa-sukhāyate*), because he sees Kṛṣṇa everywhere.

If Kṛṣṇa's personality were not the source of everything and if everything were not connected to Kṛṣṇa, one might be proper in concluding that Kṛṣṇa's personality is a material manifestation of some impersonal truth. As stated in *Vedānta-sūtra*, *janmādy asya yataḥ*: the Absolute Truth is that from which everything emanates. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa says, *aham sarvasya prabhavaḥ*: "I am the source of everything." If we see anything totally disconnected from the personal body of Kṛṣṇa, we may doubt whether Kṛṣṇa's personality is actually the absolute source described in *Vedānta-sūtra*. As soon as one feels this way, he becomes fearful and should be understood to be under the control of the Lord's illusory energy.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has warned us that if we do not see everything as a manifestation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we shall become victims of *phalgu-vairāgya*, or immature renunciation.

Whatever we see as disconnected from Kṛṣṇa will have in our mind no relationship to Kṛṣṇa's service. But if we see everything as connected to Kṛṣṇa, we shall use everything for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction. This is called *yukta-*

vairāgya. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, “One who has experienced his own true identity understands that all things exist as paraphernalia for giving ecstatic pleasure to the Supreme Lord. Thus one becomes free from the separatist vision in which one sees the world as existing for one’s own enjoyment. In the transcendental state, whatever a devotee sees reminds him of Kṛṣṇa, and thus his transcendental knowledge and bliss increase.” Because the impersonalist philosophers fail to see everything as belonging to the personal form of Kṛṣṇa, they reject this world as having no true existence (*jagan mithyā*). But since the material world is an emanation from the supreme reality, Kṛṣṇa, it does in fact exist. Its nonexistence is simply a creation of the imagination, and one cannot possibly act on such an imaginary platform. Therefore, having proposed an illusory theory and being unable actually to live on such a platform, the impersonalist comes back to the material platform for altruistic or gross sense gratificatory activities. Since the impersonalist does not accept the personal proprietorship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he does not know how or for whom to engage the things of this world, and since it is impossible to reject this world totally while living within it, he runs the risk of again becoming entangled in material fruitive activities. Therefore as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.5), *kleśo ’dhikataras teṣām*: the impersonal path of imaginary philosophy is very painful to follow.

The conclusion is that this verse is spoken to help the devotee of the Supreme Lord advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It can be understood from the previous verses of this chapter that the ultimate goal is pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. If one falsely interprets this verse to sanction the imaginary Māyāvāda philosophy that everything is God, one will simply become bewildered and fall from the path of spiritual advancement.

TEXT 2.42

*bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus
tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiḥ kṣud-apāyo’nu-ghāsam*

bhaktiḥ – devotion; *para-īśa* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *anubhavaḥ* – direct perception; *viraktiḥ* – detachment; *anyatra* – from everything else; *ca* – and; *eṣaḥ* – this; *trikaḥ* – group of three; *eka-kālah* – simultaneously; *prapadyamānasya* – for one in the process of taking shelter of the Supreme Lord; *yathā* – in the same way as; *āśnataḥ* – for one engaged in eating; *syuḥ* – they occur; *tuṣṭiḥ* – satisfaction; *puṣṭiḥ* – nourishment; *kṣud-apāyaḥ* – eradication of hunger; *anu-ghāsam* – increasingly with each morsel.

TRANSLATION

Devotion, direct experience of the Supreme Lord, and detachment from other things - these three occur simultaneously for one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the same way that pleasure, nourishment and relief from hunger come

simultaneously and increasingly, with each bite, for a person engaged in eating.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has explained this analogy as follows: *Bhakti*, or devotion, may be compared to *tuṣṭi* (satisfaction) because they both take the form of pleasure. *Pareśānubhava* (experience of the Supreme Lord) and *puṣṭi* (nourishment) are analogous because both sustain one's life. Finally, *virakti* (detachment) and *kṣud-apāya* (cessation of hunger) may be compared because both free one from further hankering so that one may experience *śānti*, or peace.

A person who is eating not only becomes uninterested in other activities but increasingly becomes uninterested in the food itself, according to his satisfaction. On the other hand, according to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, although one who is experiencing the blissful Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, becomes uninterested in anything other than Kṛṣṇa, his attachment to Kṛṣṇa increases at every moment. Therefore it is to be understood that the transcendental beauty and qualities of the Supreme Lord are not material, since one never becomes satiated by relishing the bliss of the Supreme Lord.

The word *viraktiḥ* is very significant in this verse. *Virakti* means "detachment," whereas *tyāga* means "renunciation." According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the word *renunciation* can be used in a situation in which one considers giving up an enjoyable object. But by considering everything to be potential paraphernalia in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, as described in the previous verse, one need not give thought to renunciation, for one uses everything in the proper way in the service of the Lord. *Yukta-vairāgyam ucyate*.

The very pleasant analogy of a good meal is given in this verse. A hungry man busily consuming a sumptuous plate of food is not interested in anything else happening around him. In fact, he considers any other topic or activity a disturbance to his concentration on the delicious meal. Similarly, as one advances in Kṛṣṇa consciousness one considers anything unrelated to the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa an obnoxious disturbance. Such concentrated love of Godhead has been described in the Second Canto of the *Bhāgavatam* by the words *tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param* (*Bhāg.* 2.3.10).

One should not make an artificial show of renouncing the material world; rather, one should systematically train the mind to see everything as an expansion of the opulence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Just as a hungry materialistic man, upon seeing sumptuous food, immediately desires to put it in his mouth, an advanced devotee of Kṛṣṇa, upon seeing a material object, immediately becomes eager to use it for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. Without the spontaneous hunger to engage everything in the service of Kṛṣṇa and to dive deeper and deeper into the ocean of love of Kṛṣṇa, so-called realization of God or loose talk about so-called religious life is irrelevant to the actual experience of entering the kingdom of God.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the path of *bhakti-yoga* is so joyful and practical that even in the stage of *sādhana-bhakti*, in which one follows rules and regulations without an advanced understanding, one can perceive the ultimate result. As stated by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.187):

*īhā yasya harer dāsye
karmaṇā manasā girā
nikhilāsv apy avasthāsu
jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate*

As soon as one surrenders to the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa (*prapadyamānasya*), giving up all other activities (*viraktir anyatra ca*), one is immediately to be considered a liberated soul (*jīvan-muktaḥ*). The Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, is so merciful that when a living entity understands that the personality Kṛṣṇa is the source of everything and surrenders to the Lord, Kṛṣṇa personally takes charge of him and reveals to him within his heart that he is under the Lord's full protection. Thus devotion, direct experience of the Personality of Godhead, and detachment from other objects become manifest even in the beginning stage of *bhakti-yoga*, since *bhakti-yoga* begins at the point of liberation. Other processes have as their final goal salvation or liberation, but according to *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.66):

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

If one surrenders to Kṛṣṇa one is immediately liberated and thus begins his career as a transcendental devotee with complete confidence in the Lord's protection.

TEXT 2.43

*ity acyutāṅghriṁ bhajato'nuvṛtṭyā
bhaktir viraktir bhagavat-prabodhaḥ
bhavanti vai bhāgavatasya rājan
tataḥ parām śāntim upaiti sākṣāt*

iti – thus; *acyuta* – of the infallible Supreme Lord; *aṅghrim* – the feet; *bhajataḥ* – for one who is worshiping; *anuvṛtṭyā* – by constant practice; *bhaktiḥ* – devotion; *viraktiḥ* – detachment; *bhagavat-prabodhaḥ* – knowledge of the Personality of Godhead; *bhavanti* – they manifest; *vai* – indeed; *bhāgavatasya* – for the devotee; *rājan* – O King Nimi; *tataḥ* – then; *parām śāntim* – supreme peace; *upaiti* – he attains; *sākṣāt* – directly.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, the devotee who worships the lotus feet of the infallible Personality of Godhead with constant endeavor thus achieves unflinching devotion, detachment and experienced knowledge of the Personality of Godhead. In this way the successful devotee of the Lord achieves supreme spiritual peace.

PURPORT

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.71):

*vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān
pumāṁś carati niḥspṛhaḥ
nirmamo nirahaṅkāraḥ
sa śāntim adhigacchati*

“A person who has given up all desires for sense gratification, who lives free from desires, who has given up all sense of proprietorship and who is devoid of false ego – he alone can attain real peace.” Śrīla Prabhupāda comments, “To become desireless means not to desire anything for sense gratification. In other words, desire for becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious is actually desirelessness.” There is a similar statement in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 19.149):

*kṛṣṇa-bhakta – niṣkāma, ataeva ‘śānta’
bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kāmī – sakali ‘aśānta’*

“Because a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is desireless, he is peaceful. Fruitive workers desire material enjoyment, *jñānīs* desire liberation, and *yogīs* desire material opulence; therefore they are all lusty and cannot be peaceful.” Generally there are three classes of living entities afflicted with selfish desire. These are the *bhukti-kāmī*, *mukti-kāmī* and *siddhi-kāmī*. *Bhukti-kāmī* refers to those ordinary persons who desire money and everything money can buy. Such a primitive mentality is based on the desire to enjoy money, sex and social prestige. When a living being becomes frustrated with this hallucination, he takes to the path of speculative philosophy and analytically tries to track down the source of illusion. Such a person is called *mukti-kāmī* because he desires to negate material illusion and merge into an impersonal spiritual state, free from anxiety. The *mukti-kāmī* is also motivated by personal desire, although the desire is somewhat more elevated. Similarly the *siddhi-kāmī*, or the mystic *yogī* who desires the spectacular powers of mystic *yoga*, such as reaching one’s hand across the world or making oneself smaller than the smallest or lighter than the lightest, is also infected by material or selfish desire. Therefore it is said, *sakali ‘aśānta.’* If one has any personal desire, whether it be material, philosophical or mystic, he will be *aśānta*, or ultimately frustrated, because he will see himself as the central object of satisfaction. This egocentric concept is in itself illusory and therefore ultimately frustrating.

On the other hand, *kṛṣṇa-bhakta niṣkāma, ataeva ‘śānta’*: a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is *niṣkāma*; he has no personal desire. His only desire is to please Kṛṣṇa. Lord Śiva himself has praised this outstanding quality of the pure devotees of the Lord by stating:

*nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve
na kutaścana bibhyati
svargāpavarga-narakeṣv
api tulyārtha-darśinaḥ*

“A person who is devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, is not afraid of anything. Elevation to the heavenly kingdom, condemnation to hell and liberation from material bondage all appear the same to a devotee.” (*Bhāg.* 6.17.28) Although the impersonalist philosopher proposes that everything is one, the devotee of the Lord is actually *tulyārtha-darśī*, or empowered with the vision of oneness. The devotee sees everything as the potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and therefore desires to engage everything in the service of the Lord, for the Lord’s satisfaction. Since the devotee does not see anything as *dvitīya*, or outside the scope of the Lord’s potency, he is happy in any situation. Having no personal desire, the devotee of Kṛṣṇa is actually *śānta*, or peaceful, because he has achieved the perfection of life, love of Kṛṣṇa. He is actually situated in his eternal constitutional position under the direct shelter and protection of the omnipotent Parameśvara, Kṛṣṇa.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, this verse ends the answer given by the first of the nine Yogendras, Kavi, to Mahārāja Nimi’s first question, “What is the highest good?”

TEXT 2.44

śrī-rājavāca
atha bhāgavatam brūta
yad-dharmo yādṛśo nṛṇām
yathācarati yad brūte
yair liṅgair bhagavat-priyaḥ

śrī-rājā uvāca – the King spoke; *atha* – next; *bhāgavatam* – about the devotee of the Personality of Godhead; *brūta* – please tell me; *yad-dharmaḥ* – having what duties; *yādṛśaḥ* – having what nature; *nṛṇām* – among men; *yathā* – how; *ācarati* – he behaves; *yad* – what; *brūte* – he speaks; *yaiḥ* – by which; *liṅgaiḥ* – visible symptoms; *bhagavat-priyaḥ* – (he is known as) one dear to the Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Nimi said: Now please tell me in greater detail about the devotees of the Supreme Lord. What are the natural symptoms by which I can distinguish between the most advanced devotees, those on the middle level and those who are neophytes? What are the typical religious activities of a Vaiṣṇava, and how does he speak? Specifically, please describe those symptoms and characteristics by which Vaiṣṇavas become dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

The great sage Kavi has informed King Nimi about the general external symptoms of a devotee of the Lord, namely his appearance, personal qualities and activities. But now King Nimi asks how to make further distinctions among the servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead so

that the first-class, second-class and lower-class Vaiṣṇavas can be clearly identified.

According to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, *kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta*: “One should mentally honor any devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa.” (*Upadeśāmṛta* 5) Any living entity who is faithfully chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is to be considered a Vaiṣṇava and at least within the mind is to be offered respect. But for practical advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness one should associate at least with a second-class devotee. And if one can receive the mercy of a first-class devotee of the Lord, one’s perfection is very easily guaranteed. Thus Nimi Mahārāja is humbly inquiring, “What are the character, behavior and speech of devotees?” The King wants to know the particular symptoms of body, mind and speech by which the different categories *uttama-adhikārī*, *madhyama-adhikārī* and *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* are clearly identified. In response to the King’s inquiry, another of the *nava-yogendras*, namely Havir, will give a further elaboration of the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 2.45

*śrī-havir uvāca
sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed
bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanaḥ
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātmany
eṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ*

śrī-haviḥ uvāca – Śrī Havir said; *sarva-bhūteṣu* – in all objects (in matter, spirit, and combinations of matter and spirit); *yaḥ* – anyone who; *paśyet* – sees; *bhagavat-bhāvam* – the ability to be engaged in the service of the Lord; *ātmanaḥ* – of the supreme spirit soul, or the transcendence beyond the material concept of life; *bhūtāni* – all beings; *bhagavati* – in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ātmani* – the basic principle of all existence; *eṣaḥ* – this; *bhāgavata-uttamaḥ* – a person advanced in devotional service.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Havir said: The most advanced devotee sees within everything the soul of all souls, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Consequently he sees everything in relation to the Supreme Lord and understands that everything that exists is eternally situated within the Lord.

PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.30) the Lord says:

*yo mām paśyati sarvatra
sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati
tasyāhaṁ na praṇaśyāmi
sa ca me na praṇaśyati*

“For one who sees Me everywhere and sees everything in Me, I am never lost, nor is he ever lost to Me.” Śrīla Prabhupāda comments, “A person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness certainly sees Lord Kṛṣṇa everywhere, and he sees everything in Kṛṣṇa. Such a person may appear to see all separate manifestations of the material nature, but in each and every instance he is conscious of Kṛṣṇa, knowing that everything is the manifestation of Kṛṣṇa’s energy. Nothing can exist without Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of everything – this is the basic principle of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

The qualification for seeing Kṛṣṇa everywhere is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.38):

*premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena
santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti
yaṁ śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

“I worship the primeval Lord, Govinda, who is always seen by the devotee whose eyes are anointed with the pulp of love. He is seen in His eternal form of Śyāmasundara, situated within the heart of the devotee.” A devotee of the

highest level of spiritual qualification is glorified for the expansiveness of his spiritual vision. For example, when the stalwart demon Hiraṇyakaśipu questioned his self-realized son Prahlāda Mahārāja as to the whereabouts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Prahlāda, being a *mahā-bhāgavata*, or pure devotee, answered straightforwardly that the Supreme Lord is everywhere. The demoniac father then asked if God was in the pillar of the palace. When Prahlāda answered yes, Hiraṇyakaśipu, being a bona fide demon, struck the pillar with his sword, trying to kill God, or at least disprove His existence. Then Lord Nṛsimhadeva, the most ferocious form of the Supreme Lord, immediately appeared and finished forever the illicit program of Hiraṇyakaśipu. Thus Prahlāda Mahārāja can be accepted as an *uttama-adhikārī* devotee.

A pure devotee is completely free from the tendency to enjoy things separately from the Lord's service. He does not see anything in the universe as unfavorable, because he sees everything as the expanded potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such a devotee's purpose in existing is to give pleasure somehow or other to the Supreme Lord. Thus everything that a pure devotee experiences, moment by moment, increases his ecstatic loving desire to satisfy the transcendental senses of the Lord.

The three modes of material nature torment the conditioned soul, who absorbs his mind in the separated, material energy of the Lord. The function of this separated energy, *bhinnā prakṛti*, is to take the living entity away from the reality, which is that everything is within Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa is within everything. Being covered by gross ignorance, the bewildered conditioned soul believes that only the objects of his own limited vision actually exist. Sometimes such foolish persons speculate that if a tree falls in a forest with no one to hear it, there will actually be no sound. The conditioned souls do not consider that since the Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervading, there is no question of no one's hearing; the Lord always hears. As stated in the Thirteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.14), *sarvataḥ śrutimal loke*: the Supreme Lord hears everything. He is *upadraṣṭā*, the witness of everything (Bg. 13.23).

In this verse the word *bhāgavatottamaḥ*, "the most advanced devotee," indicates that there are those who are not gross materialists but who are not the highest devotees. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, those who cannot properly distinguish between devotees and nondevotees and who therefore never worship the pure devotees of the Lord are to be known as *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*, devotees on the lowest stage of devotional service. Such *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* engage in worship of the Supreme Lord, especially in the temple, but are indifferent to the Lord's devotees. Thus they misunderstand this statement by Lord Śiva in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*ārādhānāṁ sarveṣāṁ
viṣṇor ārādhanaṁ param
tasmād parataraṁ devi
tadyānāṁ samarcanam*

“O Devī, the most exalted system of worship is the worship of Lord Viṣṇu. Greater than that is the worship of *tadīya*, or anything belonging to Viṣṇu.” Śrīla Prabhupāda comments on this verse, “Śrī Viṣṇu is *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*. Similarly the most confidential servant of Kṛṣṇa, the spiritual master, and all devotees of Viṣṇu are *tadīya*. The *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, *guru*, Vaiṣṇavas and things used by them must be considered *tadīya*, and without a doubt worshipable by all living beings.” (Cc. *Madhya* 12.38 purport)

Typically the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* is eager to engage his materialistic qualifications in the service of the Lord, mistaking such material expertise to be the sign of advanced devotion. But by continuing to serve the Supreme Lord and the devotees engaged in propagating the Lord’s mission, the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* also advances in his realization and comes to the stage of dedicating his activities to helping more advanced Vaiṣṇavas. Even such *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* can help ordinary living entities by their association, since at least the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* have faith that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because of this faith, the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* gradually becomes inimical to those who are opposed to the Lord. As he gradually becomes more and more inimical to those who hate the supremacy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and becomes more attracted to friendship with other faithful servants of the Lord, the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* approaches the second-class stage, called *madhyama*. In the *madhyama* stage the Vaiṣṇava sees the Lord as the cause of all causes and the chief goal of everyone’s loving propensity. He sees the Vaiṣṇavas as his only friends within this morbid world and is eager to bring innocent people within the shelter of Vaiṣṇava society. Also, a *madhyama-adhikārī* strictly avoids associating with the self-proclaimed enemies of God. When such an intermediate qualification becomes mature, the concept of supreme qualification begins to present itself; that is, one comes to the stage of *uttama-adhikārī*.

A *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī guru*, one who is simply attached to performing religious ceremonies and worshiping the Deity, without appreciation for other Vaiṣṇavas, especially those who are preaching the message of the Lord, will especially appeal to persons interested in the dry cultivation of knowledge. As a living entity develops mundane piety, he proudly devotes himself to regulated work and nobly tries to detach himself from the fruits of his work. Through such regulated detached work, knowledge or wisdom gradually arises. As knowledge or wisdom becomes prominent, the pious materialist becomes attracted to altruistic and charitable work and gives up gross sinful activities. If he is fortunate, he then becomes favorable to the transcendental devotional service of the Lord. Desiring a mere intellectual understanding of devotional service, such a pious materialist may seek shelter at the feet of a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. If able to advance to the *madhyama* qualification, he then becomes attracted to a Vaiṣṇava actively engaged in preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And when fully mature on the platform of intermediate devotion, he becomes attracted to the *mahā-bhāgavata* level and is awarded a glimpse of the exalted position of the *mahā-bhāgavata* spiritual master by

the grace of Kṛṣṇa within his heart. If one gradually goes on in the devotional service of the Lord, one becomes established as a *paramahansa mahā-bhāgavata*. At this stage all of his actions, movements and engagements in preaching are dedicated solely to the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa. The illusory potency, *māyā*, has no power to throw or cover such a purified living entity. In *Upadeśāmṛta* (5) Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has described this stage of life as *bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-nindādi-sūnya-hṛdam*.

A *mahā-bhāgavata*, being empowered by the Supreme Lord, Yogeśvara, is endowed with the supernatural power to inspire and give success to the *madhyama-adhikārī* who follows in his footsteps and to elevate a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* gradually to the intermediate platform. Such devotional power springs automatically from the ocean of mercy found within the heart of a pure devotee. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura points out that a *mahā-bhāgavata* has no desire to inflict punishment on the enemies of the Lord. Rather, he engages the *madhyama-adhikārīs* and *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* in preaching work to purify the polluted mentality of the inimical souls, who are falsely imagining the material world to be separate from Kṛṣṇa.

There are unfortunate living entities who are unable to understand the glory of a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* within the realm of devotional service, have no praise for the more advanced state of intermediate devotion and cannot even begin to understand the most exalted stage, that of the *uttama-adhikārī*. Such unfortunate souls, attracted to impersonal Māyāvāda speculation, follow faithfully in the footsteps of Kāmsa, Agha, Baka and Pūtanā and are thus killed by Śrī Hari. In this way the community of sense gratifiers remains uninterested in service at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, and according to the individual perverted vision of so-called self-interest, each materialist chooses his own misfortune in the form of repeated birth and death in various types of material bodies. There are 8,400,000 species of material forms, and the materialistic living entities select the particular flavors of birth, old age, disease and death they wish to inflict upon themselves under the hallucinations of so-called material progress.

The analogy is given that a lusty man, being agitated by sexual desire, sees the whole world as filled with sensuous women. In a similar way, a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa sees Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere, although it may be temporarily covered. Thus one sees the world just as one sees himself (*ātmavan manyate jagat*). On this basis one may argue that the vision of the *mahā-bhāgavata* is also illusioned, since the *Bhāgavatam* has already stated throughout that those conditioned by the three modes of material nature are not at all Kṛṣṇa conscious but in fact are inimical to Kṛṣṇa. But although the conditioned living entity may appear inimical to the Lord, the eternal, unalterable fact is that every living being is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa.

Although one's ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa may now be covered by the influence of *māyā*, by the causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the conditioned soul will gradually be promoted to the stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

In fact, everyone is suffering the pangs of separation from Kṛṣṇa. Because the conditioned soul imagines that he has no eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, he is unable to ascertain that all his miseries are due to this separation. This is *māyā*, or “that which is not.” Actually, to think that misery arises from anything other than separation from Kṛṣṇa is to be in illusion. So when a pure devotee sees living entities suffering within this world, he correctly feels that just as he is suffering because of separation from Kṛṣṇa, all other living beings are also suffering from separation from Kṛṣṇa. The difference is that a pure devotee correctly ascertains the cause of his heartbreak whereas the conditioned soul, bewildered by *māyā*, is unable to understand his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa and the unlimited pain arising from neglect of that relationship.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted the following verses, which illustrate the ecstatic feelings of the topmost devotees of the Lord. In the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.35.9) the goddesses of Vraja speak as follows:

*vana-latās tarava ātmani viṣṇuṁ
vyañjayantya iva puṣpa-phalādhyāḥ
praṇata-bhāra-viṭapā madhu-dhārāḥ
prema-hṛṣṭa-tanavo vavṛṣuḥ sma*

“The creepers and trees of the forest, their branches weighed down by rich coverings of flowers and fruits, seemed to manifest Lord Viṣṇu within their hearts. Exhibiting eruptions of ecstatic love upon their bodies, they poured down rains of honey.” Elsewhere in the Tenth Canto (*Bhāg.* 10.21.15) it is said:

*nadyas tadā tad upadhārya mukunda-gītam
āvarta-lakṣita-mano-bhava-bhagna-vegāḥ
āliṅgana-sthagitam ūrmi-bhujair murārer
gṛhṇanti pāda-yugalaṁ kamalopahārāḥ*

“Hearing the song of Lord Mukunda’s flute, the rivers then stopped their currents, although the minds of the rivers could still be ascertained from the presence of whirlpools. With the arms of their waves the rivers seized the two lotus feet of Murāri, taking help from the lotus plants, and thus He became trapped in their embrace.” And in the last chapter of the Tenth Canto (10.90.15), the queens of Dvārakā pray:

*kurari vilapasi tvaṁ vīta-nidrā na śeṣe
svapiti jagati rātryām īśvaro gupta-bodhaḥ
vayam iva sakhi kaccid gāḍha-nirviddha-cetā
nalina-nayana-hāsodāra-līlekṣitena*

“Dear *kurarī*, now it is very late at night. Everyone is sleeping. The whole world is now calm and peaceful. At this time, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is sleeping, although His knowledge is undisturbed by any circumstance. Then why are you not sleeping? Why are you lamenting like this throughout the whole night? Dear friend, is it that you are also attracted by the lotus eyes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and by His sweet smiling and attractive words, exactly as we are? Do those dealings of the

Supreme Personality of Godhead pinch your heart as they do ours?” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has also given mother Yaśodā as an example of an *uttama-adhikārī*, for mother Yaśodā actually saw all living beings within the mouth of Kṛṣṇa during the Lord’s Vṛndāvana *līlā*.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura also points out in his commentary, *atra paśyed iti tathā darśana-yogyataiva vivakṣitā, na tu tathā darśanasya sārva-kālikatā*. “In this verse the word *paśyet*, or ‘one must see,’ does not mean that at every moment one is visualizing the form of Kṛṣṇa; rather, it means that one has reached the exalted platform of devotional service on which he is fit to see or is capable of seeing Kṛṣṇa’s form.” If only those who constantly see the form of Kṛṣṇa are to be considered *uttama-adhikārīs*, then Nārada, Vyāsa and Śukadeva cannot be considered topmost devotees, since they do not always see the Lord everywhere. Of course, Nārada, Vyāsa and Śukadeva are considered to be on the highest standard of pure devotional service, and therefore the real qualification is *tad-dīrkṣādhikya*, or having an overwhelming desire to see the Lord. Therefore the statement of *Bhagavad-gītā* that a devotee should see Kṛṣṇa everywhere (*yo mām paśyati sarvatra*) can be understood in terms of the example of a lusty man’s thinking that the world is full of beautiful women. Similarly, one should become transcendently so desirous of seeing the Lord that one can perceive within the entire universe nothing but Kṛṣṇa and His potency. *Vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*. In Śrīla Prabhupāda’s correspondence in 1969 with Professor J. F. Staal of the University of California, Śrīla Prabhupāda claimed that all of his disciples who were strictly following the intense program of Kṛṣṇa consciousness were in fact *sudurlabha-mahātmās* who were seeing *vāsudevaḥ sarvam*. In other words, if one is constantly engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness with an intense desire to please the Lord and one day gain His association, it is to be understood that in one’s life there is nothing but Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has warned us, however, that a mere theoretical or academic understanding that Kṛṣṇa is everything does not qualify one as a first-class devotee. One must actually have developed love for Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it can be practically understood that anyone who enthusiastically adopts the Kṛṣṇa consciousness program and eagerly participates in the preaching activities of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is acting on the platform of a *madhyama-adhikārī* devotee. When such a devotee becomes overwhelmed by his desire to serve Kṛṣṇa and associate with the Lord, so much so that he is not attracted to anything else within the universe, he should be understood to be an *uttama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava, as mentioned in this verse.

TEXT 2.46

*īsvare tad-adhīneṣu
bālīṣeṣu dviṣatsu ca
prema-maitrī-kṛpopekṣā
yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ*

īśvare – unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tat-adhīneṣu* – to persons who have taken fully to Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *bālīṣeṣu* – unto the neophytes or the ignorant; *dviṣatsu* – to persons envious of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa’s devotees; *ca* – and; *prema* – love; *maitrī* – friendship; *kṛpā* – mercy; *upekṣāḥ* – negligence; *yaḥ* – anyone who; *karoti* – does; *saḥ* – he; *madhyamaḥ* – a second-class devotee.

TRANSLATION

An intermediate or second-class devotee, called madhyama-adhikārī, offers his love to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is a sincere friend to all the devotees of the Lord, shows mercy to ignorant people who are innocent and disregards those who are envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, every living entity within the material world is eternally a minute fragmental portion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ* (Bg. 15.7). But because of the influence of *māyā* the puffed-up conditioned souls become inimical to the service of the Lord and the Lord’s devotees, choose leaders among the materialistic sense gratifiers, and thus engage busily in a useless society of the cheaters and the cheated, a society of the blind leading the blind into a ditch. Although the community of Vaiṣṇavas is sincerely eager to serve the conditioned souls by bringing them back to their constitutional position, by *māyā*’s influence the materialistic living entity becomes hardhearted and rejects the mercy of the Lord’s devotees.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, although a second-class devotee is eager to preach to the innocent conditioned souls, he should avoid the atheistic class of men so that he will not become disturbed or polluted by their association. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has confirmed that a Vaiṣṇava should be indifferent to those who are envious of the Supreme Lord. It is practically seen that when such persons are informed of the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they attempt to ridicule the Supreme Lord, thus further deteriorating their polluted existence. In this connection Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has quoted from the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.20.36):

*gīrayo mumucus toyam
kvacin na mumucuḥ śivam
yathā jñānāmṛtaḥ kāle
jñānino dadate na vā*

“Sometimes in autumn the water falls down from the tops of the hills to supply clean water, and sometimes the water stops. Similarly, sometimes great saintly persons distribute clear knowledge, and sometimes they are silent.”

In this regard, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has mentioned that although the first-class devotee of the Lord may at times exhibit apparent hatred toward the demons because of entering the mood of the Lord’s pastimes, the

intermediate devotees should avoid such feelings. Furthermore, the intermediate devotee should not in any way associate with the powerful atheistic class of men, because there is danger that his mind will become bewildered by such association. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, if a Vaiṣṇava preacher encounters one who is envious of him, the preacher should remain far away from such an envious person. But the Vaiṣṇava preacher may meditate upon ways to save the envious class of men. Such meditation is called *sad-ācāra*, or saintly behavior. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has mentioned Prahāda Mahārāja as an example of a saintly person. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.9.43) there is the following statement by Prahāda:

*naivodvije para duratyaya-vaitaraṇyās
tvad-vīrya-gāyana-mahāmṛta-magna-cittaḥ
śoce tato vimukha-cetasa indriyārtha-
māyā-sukhāya bharam udvahato vimūḍhān*

“O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thought of Your glories and activities. My concern is only for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies and countries. I am simply concerned with love for them.” Although a Vaiṣṇava preacher constantly meditates on the welfare of all living entities, he will not associate with those who are unreceptive to the message of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. In this regard Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states that even Bharata Mahārāja, Vyāsadeva and Śukadeva Gosvāmī do not exhibit their mercy indiscriminately.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has given an elaborate explanation to prove that the discrimination employed by a *madhyama-adhikārī* preacher does not at all show a lack of mercy. He states that *upekṣā*, or neglect, as mentioned in this verse, is the proper medicine for those who are inimical to the Supreme Lord and His devotees. Indifference from the preacher checks feelings of hostility on both sides. Although there is a Vedic injunction that one should cut out the tongue of a person who offends the Supreme Lord and His devotees, in this age it is best simply to avoid potential offenders and thus prevent them from committing further sinful activities against the Vaiṣṇavas. It is the duty of a Vaiṣṇava preacher to point out the futility of any process besides surrendering to the Supreme Lord. An envious person, however, will resent such strong preaching by a Vaiṣṇava and disrespect him, considering the devotee to be unnecessarily criticizing others. Such a person, who cannot appreciate the mercy of Vaiṣṇavas, should be neglected. Otherwise, according to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, his cheating mentality will increase day by day.

Those who are not attracted to the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and who disrespect the faithful servants of Lord Caitanya, considering their strong statements about the *saṅkīrtana* movement to be obstacles to their own worship of the Lord, will never be able to fix their

minds on Kṛṣṇa, but will gradually fall down from the path of devotion by confusing the external activities of the material world with the actual worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Such bewilderment has been expressed by the words *bhayaṁ dvitīyābhīniveśataḥ syāt*.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has strongly rejected those foolish persons who, under a plea of mercy and equal vision, perceive that a faithless person is also a devotee of the Supreme Lord and who thus try to thrust the *hari-nāma*, or holy name of God, upon such offensive people. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta has stated, “When childish people think themselves *mahā-bhāgavatas* and act in defiance of the Vaiṣṇava spiritual master, such behavior simply holds them back from receiving the mercy of the Vaiṣṇava *guru*. Bewildered by false ego, these self-proclaimed devotees gradually become fit to be ignored by pure devotees on the intermediate platform and are cheated of the mercy that comes from the devotees’ satisfaction. Thus they become *asādhū* by constantly committing offenses against the devotees who preach the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Pure devotees, therefore, in all circumstances display indifference to those who falsely imagine themselves to be *viśuddha-bhaktas*, or pure devotees of the Lord. This indifference is an excellent manifestation of their mercy.” In other words, those who criticize the Vaiṣṇava preachers on the second-class platform for discriminating between those who are fit to receive the Lord’s mercy and those who are simply envious are misunderstanding the mission of the Lord. Kṛṣṇa Himself states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.8):

*paritrāṇāya sādhūnām
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya
sambhavāmi yuge yuge*

“To deliver the pious and to annihilate the miscreants, as well as to reestablish the principles of religion, I Myself appear millennium after millennium.” Even such a great Vaiṣṇava as Śukadeva Gosvāmī, one of the twelve *mahājanas* in this universe, expressed his contempt for the evil Kāṁsa.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has pointed out that even though the *mahā-bhāgavata* devotee may act on the second-class platform for preaching, his rejection of the envious living entities does not obstruct his vision of the Lord as all-pervading. Rather, when a first-class devotee or even a second-class devotee rejects the atheistic class of men, he is expressing the mission of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A first-class or second-class Vaiṣṇava never actually becomes envious of another living entity, but out of intense love for the Supreme Lord he becomes angry when the Lord is offended. Also, understanding the Lord’s mission, he discriminates according to the position of a particular living entity. To consider such a Vaiṣṇava preacher an ordinary, envious person, or to consider him sectarian because of his proclamation of pure devotional service as the most exalted of all methods of spiritual advancement, reflects a materialistic vision called *vaiṣṇave jāti-*

buddhiḥ or *guruṣu nara-matiḥ*. Such an offense drags the offender down to a hellish condition of life by the laws of nature.

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, although a *mahā-bhāgavata* sees every living entity as a pure spirit soul, such a *mahā-bhāgavata* still experiences special ecstasies and other symptoms upon meeting another Vaiṣṇava. This is not contradictory to his vision as a topmost devotee; rather, it is a symptom of his love for Kṛṣṇa. A pure devotee sees every living entity as part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa and therefore expresses his love for Kṛṣṇa through love for all the expansions and creations of Kṛṣṇa. Still, such a *mahā-bhāgavata* feels special ecstatic love upon seeing another living entity directly pleasing the senses of the Supreme Lord. Such feelings are manifest in the statement of Lord Śiva to the Pracetās:

*kṣaṇārdhenāpi tulaye
na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ*

“If one by chance associates with a devotee, even for a fraction of a moment, he no longer is subject to attraction by the results of *karma* or *jñāna*. What interest then can he have in the benedictions of the demigods, who are subject to the laws of birth and death?” (*Bhāg.* 4.24.57) Similarly, Lord Śiva also stated:

*atha bhāgavatā yūyaṁ
priyāḥ stha bhagavān yathā
na mad bhāgavatānām ca
preyān anyo'sti karhicit*

“You are all devotees of the Lord, and as such I appreciate that you are as respectable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. I know that in this way the devotees also respect me and that I am dear to them. Thus no one can be as dear to the devotees as I am.” (*Bhāg.* 4.24.30) Similarly, in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.7.11) Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī is mentioned as *nityaṁ viṣṇu-jana-priyaḥ*, especially dear to the pure devotees of the Lord.

The wonderful loving dealings between Vaiṣṇavas on the topmost platform are demonstrated in the pastimes of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. In other words, although a Vaiṣṇava sees every living entity as part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, he must discriminate in his external behavior so as not to interfere with the original purpose of the Lord’s creation, which is to reform the living entities so that they can gradually come back home, back to Godhead. A pure devotee does not foolishly pretend equal vision and approach envious persons; rather, he respects the mission of the Lord, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.11) by the words *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham*.

On the other hand, if it is the Lord’s desire, a pure devotee can offer his respects to all living beings. For example, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mentions that Uddhava and other pure devotees of the Lord were always prepared to offer

respectful obeisances even to such persons as Duryodhana. *Madhyama-adhikārīs*, however, should not imitate such *uttama-adhikārī* behavior. In this connection, the distinction between *madhyama-adhikārī* and *uttama-adhikārī* is stated by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura as follows: *atra sarva-bhūteṣu bhagavad-darśana-yogyatā yasya kadācid api na dr̥ṣṭā*. A *madhyama-adhikārī* cannot at any time perceive the presence of the Supreme Lord within all living beings, whereas an *uttama-adhikārī*, however he acts on the second-class platform to carry out the Lord's mission, is aware that every living entity is ultimately a forgetful Kṛṣṇa conscious living entity. Therefore, although a devotee may externally engage four different types of behavior, as mentioned in this verse – namely, worship of the Lord, friendship with the devotees, preaching to the innocent and rejection of the demons – he is not necessarily on the second-class platform, since an *uttama-adhikārī* also may exhibit these symptoms to carry out the Lord's mission. In this regard, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura mentions that it is the duty of the *madhyama-adhikārī* to extend himself as the right hand of the *uttama-adhikārī*, vowing to work for the benefit of others and offering to help in distributing love of Kṛṣṇa.

Finally, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has given a nice explanation of the difference between *arcana* and *bhajana*. *Arcana* refers to the platform of *sādhana-bhakti*, in which one serves the Lord to carry out the rules and regulations of the process. One who has achieved the shelter of the Lord's holy name and is totally engaged in the attempt to serve the Lord should be considered to be on the platform of *bhajana*, even though his external activities may sometimes be less strict than those of the neophyte engaged in *arcana*. This apparent lack of strictness, however, refers to laxity not in the basic principles of sane behavior and renunciation of sense gratification, but rather in the details of Vaiṣṇava ceremonies.

TEXT 2.47

*arcāyām eva haraye
pūjām yaḥ śraddhayehate
na tad-bhakteṣu cānyeṣu
sa bhaktaḥ prākṛtaḥ smṛtaḥ*

arcāyām – Deity; *eva* – certainly; *haraye* – to Lord Hari; *pūjām* – worship; *yaḥ* – who; *śraddhayā* – faithfully; *ihate* – engages; *na* – not; *tat* – of Kṛṣṇa; *bhakteṣu* – toward the devotees; *ca* – and; *anyeṣu* – toward people in general; *saḥ* – he; *bhaktaḥ prākṛtaḥ* – materialistic devotee; *smṛtaḥ* – is called.

TRANSLATION

A devotee who faithfully engages in the worship of the Deity in the temple but does not behave properly toward other devotees or people in general is called a prākṛta-bhakta, a materialistic devotee, and is considered to be in the lowest position.

PURPORT

Śrīla Madhvācārya comments that one in the lowest stage of devotional service faithfully worships the Deity in the temple but is not aware that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is actually all-pervading. This same mentality can be seen in the Western countries, where people commit all types of sinful activities in their homes and in the street but then piously go to a church and pray to God for mercy. Actually, God is in our home, God is in the street, God is in our office, God is in the forest, God is everywhere, and therefore God should be worshiped everywhere by the process of devotional service at His lotus feet. As stated in verse 41 of this chapter:

*khaṁ vāyum agniṁ salilaṁ mahīṁ ca
jyotīṁṣi sattvāni diśo drumādīn
sarit-samudrāṁś ca hareḥ śārīraṁ
yat kiṁ ca bhūtaṁ praṇamed ananyaḥ*

“A devotee should not see anything as being separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Ether, fire, air, water, earth, the sun and other luminaries, all living beings, the directions, trees and other plants, the rivers and oceans – whatever a devotee experiences he should consider to be an expansion of Kṛṣṇa. Thus seeing everything that exists within creation as the body of the Supreme Lord, Hari, the devotee should offer his sincere respects to the entire expansion of the Lord’s body.” This is the vision of the *mahā-bhāgavata* devotee of the Lord.

Śrīla Madhvācārya states that a *madhyama-adhikārī*, a devotee in the intermediate stage, sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the cause of all causes and therefore offers his love to the Lord. Such a devotee is a sincere friend of other devotees, is merciful to the ignorant and avoids the atheists. Nonetheless, *tad-vaśatvaṁ na jānāti sarvasya jagato 'pi tu:* his realization of the all-pervading feature of the Supreme Lord is imperfect. Although he does have a general sense that everyone is ultimately meant to be a devotee of the Supreme Lord and he tries to use everything in the service of Kṛṣṇa, aware that everything belongs to the Lord, he may be bewildered by association with atheistic men.

Śrīla Madhvācārya states, *arcāyām eva saṁsthitam/ viṣṇuṁ jñātvā tad-anyatra naiva jānāti yaḥ pumān.* A *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* has no idea that the Supreme Lord has the power to exist outside a church or temple.

Furthermore, being puffed up by his own ceremonial worship (*ātmano bhakti-darpataḥ*), a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* cannot imagine that anyone is more pious or religious than he, and he is not even aware that other devotees are more advanced. Thus he cannot understand the *madhyama* or *uttama* standard of devotional service, and sometimes, because of his false pride, he criticizes the more advanced devotees of the Lord, neglects them or simply has no understanding of their exalted position as preachers or completely self-realized souls.

Another symptom of the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* is that he is infatuated by the material qualifications of so-called great materialistic persons. Having a

bodily concept of life himself, he is attracted by material opulence and thus minimizes the position of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu. Such a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, therefore, is disturbed if a second-class devotee criticizes the nondevotees of the Lord. In the name of compassion or kindness, a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* approves of the nondevotional activities of such materialistic men. Because the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* is ignorant of the higher realms of devotional service and the unlimited transcendental bliss of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he sees devotional service merely as the religious aspect of life but thinks that life has many enjoyable and worthwhile nondevotional aspects. Therefore he becomes angry when second-class devotees, who are experiencing that Kṛṣṇa is everything, criticize the nondevotees. Madhvācārya says that such a person, because of his rudimentary faith in Kṛṣṇa, is considered a devotee, but he is *bhaktādhama*, a devotee on the lowest standard. If such materialistic devotees follow the rules and regulations of Deity worship, they will gradually be elevated to a higher standard and eventually become pure devotees of the Lord, unless they commit offenses against other devotees, in which case their advancement will be checked.

Śrīla Madhvācārya states, *tad-bhaktānām upekṣakāḥ kuryur viṣṇāv api dveṣam*. Those who neglect or show indifference to the devotees of the Lord are to be considered offenders at the lotus feet of Viṣṇu. Similarly, those who disrespect the demigods will become bereft of devotional service and be forced to rotate again and again within *samsāra*, the cycle of birth and death. *Pūjyā devās tataḥ sadā*: the demigods are always to be offered respect, since they are devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If someone is envious of the demigods, he is to be considered envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, one who offers sincere respect to the demigods is considered to be respecting the will of the Supreme Lord. A Vaiṣṇava does not foolishly think that there are many gods. He knows that there is one Supreme Personality of Godhead. But as stated many times in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the Lord has a mission within this material world, which is to reform the conditioned living entities through the cruel laws of nature. In the Lord's mission within this world, the demigods are to be considered limbs of the Lord's body. It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.20):

*kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ
prapadyante'nya-devatāḥ
taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya
prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā*

“Those whose minds are distorted by material desires surrender unto demigods and follow the particular rules and regulations of worship according to their own natures.” But there are many examples of devotees who worshiped the demigods to get benedictions for serving Lord Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs* worshiped the demigods to achieve Kṛṣṇa, and similarly Rukmiṇīdevī, on the day of her marriage, engaged in such demigod worship, her only goal being Kṛṣṇa. Even today the preachers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement cultivate important people with all kindness and diplomacy so

that such wealthy or influential people will engage their resources in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa to glorify Kṛṣṇa all over the world. Similarly, offering all respects to the demigods so that they will give facility for the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa is not against the *bhakti-mārga*, although nowadays such demigod worship has also deteriorated. Therefore, Caitanya Mahāprabhu has recommended *hari-nāma saṅkīrtana*, chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, as the only realistic process for this age. Nonetheless, a devotee of the Lord should not misinterpret *Bhagavad-gītā*'s injunctions against demigod worship as a license to offend the demigods, who are bona fide Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Madhvācārya notes,

*viṣṇor upekṣakam sarve
vidviṣanty adhikam surāḥ
pataty avasyam tamasi
hariṇā taiś ca pātitaḥ*

“All the demigods are extremely inimical to one who does not respect Lord Viṣṇu. Such a person is pushed into the darkest regions by the Lord, as well as by the demigods.” From this statement by Śrīla Madhvācārya, the devotional sentiments of the demigods can be understood. It is stated that in the supreme liberation achieved by an *uttama-adhikārī*, the most exalted devotee of the Lord, the devotee enjoys transcendental bliss in the direct association of the Supreme Lord and the demigods.

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, since a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* who cannot properly respect other devotees will certainly fail to offer respects to ordinary living entities who are not even devotees, a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* is useless for practical preaching work unless he comes to a higher platform of understanding. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says, *iyam ca śraddhā na śāstrārthāvadhāraṇa-jātā*. Because the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*'s faith is not actually based on the statements of Vedic literature, he cannot understand the exalted position of the Supreme Personality of Godhead within everyone's heart. Therefore he cannot actually manifest love of Godhead, nor can he understand the exalted position of the devotees of the Lord. Kṛṣṇa is so glorious that Kṛṣṇa's intimate associates must also be glorious. But this is unknown to a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. Similarly, the essential qualification of a Vaiṣṇava, which is to offer all respects to others (*amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*), is also conspicuous by its absence in a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. If such a person, however, has faith in the Vedic literatures and tries to understand the statements of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he will gradually be elevated to the second- and first-class stages of devotional service.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* should very seriously engage in regulated worship of the Deity. The Deity is a particular incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa can present Himself before the worshiper in five different manifestations, namely His original form as Kṛṣṇa (*para*), His quadruple expansions (*vyūha*),

His pastime incarnations (*vaibhava*), the Supersoul (*antaryāmī*) and the Deity (*arcā*). Within the Deity form (*arcā*) is the Supersoul, who in turn is included within the Lord's pastime forms (*vaibhava*). The Supreme Lord's *vaibhava-prakāśa* is an emanation from the *catur-vyūha*. This quadruple expansion of the Lord is situated within the supreme truth, Vāsudeva, who Himself is situated within the *svayaṁ-prakāśa-tattva*. This *svayaṁ-prakāśa* consists of expansions of the ultimate *svayaṁ-rūpa-tattva*, the original form of Kṛṣṇa within Goloka Vṛndāvana in the spiritual sky. This hierarchy of the expansions of the Supreme Lord in the spiritual world is realized even within the material world in terms of one's eagerness to render service to the Lord. A beginner in the lowest stage of devotional service should try to dedicate all his activities to the satisfaction of the Lord and cultivate the worship of Kṛṣṇa in the temple.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, all the plenary expansions of the Supreme Lord mentioned above descend into this world and enter within the Deity, who exhibits the function of the Supersoul by accompanying the daily life of the Vaiṣṇava. Although the *vaibhava*, or pastime expansions, of the Lord incarnate at specific times (*rāmādi-mūrtiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan*), the Supersoul and Deity forms are constantly available for the spiritual advancement of the devotees in this world. As one comes to the *madhyama-adhikārī* platform, one is able to understand the expansions of the Supreme Lord, whereas the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī's* entire knowledge of the Lord is limited to the Deity. Nonetheless, Kṛṣṇa is so kind that to encourage even the lowest class of Vaiṣṇavas He condenses all of His various forms into the Deity so that by worshiping the Deity the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* devotee is worshiping all the forms of the Lord. As the devotee makes advancement, he can understand these forms as they appear in their own way, both within this world and in the spiritual sky.

As long as one remains on the third-class platform, one has no transcendental appreciation of the blissful reality of the Supreme Lord's paraphernalia and entourage. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was very pleased with King Pratāparudra when the King, upon receiving an outer cloth from the Lord, immediately installed it as a Deity and began to worship it as being as good as the Lord Himself. Lord Śiva himself has stated, *tasmād parataraṁ devi tadīyānāṁ samarcanam*. Worship of the paraphernalia, entourage or devotees of the Lord is even better than worship of the Lord, because the Lord is more pleased by worship of His devotees and entourage than by worship of Himself personally.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the inability of the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* to appreciate the Lord's devotees, entourage and paraphernalia indicates that such a materialistic Vaiṣṇava is still affected by the speculative understanding of the *karma-vādīs* and *Māyāvādīs*, those who are dedicated to sense gratification and impersonal speculation about the Absolute. Śrīla Prabhupāda often said that only the impersonalist desires to see Kṛṣṇa alone; we desire to see Kṛṣṇa with His cows, His friends, His

parents, His *gopīs*, His flute, jewelry, forest scenery and so on. Kṛṣṇa is gorgeous in the setting of Vṛndāvana. It is in the land of Vṛndāvana that Lord Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by so many beautiful associates, manifests His exalted indescribable beauty. Similarly, the unique mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is exhibited in the activities of His pure devotees who selflessly travel around the universe distributing the dust particles from Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet on the heads of the conditioned souls. One who is uninterested in the Lord's paraphernalia, entourage and devotees has a stunted conception of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This must be due to contamination from the impersonal and sensuous understandings of life.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura states that after hundreds of lifetimes of faithfully worshiping the Deity of Lord Vāsudeva with external paraphernalia, one realizes the true nature of His transcendental name and *mantras*, and the bondage of one's materialistic mentality slackens. In this way, as a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* gradually comes to perceive the mental activities of a devotee and tries seriously to advance to a higher stage, his materialistic conceptions will go away of their own accord. He then exhibits loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and makes friendship with the devotees who are the dearest sons of the Lord, and by appreciating the universal quality of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa he becomes very much eager to engage other innocent people in the service of the Lord. Further, as he begins to make significant advancement he becomes inimical to anything or anyone that hinders the progress of his devotional life, and thus he avoids atheistic people who cannot benefit by good instruction. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, founded by His Divine Grace Oṃ Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivṛājakācārya 108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, is so nice that anyone who helps this society immediately engages in preaching work for the Lord. Thus there is great facility for the members of this society to come quickly to the second-class stage of devotional service. If in the name of Kṛṣṇa consciousness one gives up preaching and instead becomes interested simply in collecting funds for maintenance, he is showing a type of envy of other living entities. This is a symptom of the third-class platform. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, verses 45 through 47 constitute the answer to King Nimi's two questions "What is the nature of devotional service to the Lord?" and "What are the specific duties of the Vaiṣṇavas?"

TEXT 2.48

*grhītvāpīndriyair arthān
yo na dveṣṭi na hrṣyati
viṣṇor māyām idaṁ paśyan
sa vai bhāgavatottamaḥ*

grhītvā – accepting; *api* – even though; *indriyaiḥ* – with his senses; *arthān* – objects of the senses; *yaḥ* – who; *na dveṣṭi* – does not hate; *na hrṣyati* – does not rejoice; *viṣṇoḥ* – of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu; *māyām* – the illusory

potency; *idam* – this material universe; *paśyan* – seeing as; *saḥ* – he; *vai* – indeed; *bhāgavata-uttamaḥ* – a first-class devotee.

TRANSLATION

Even while engaging his senses in contact with their objects, one who sees this whole world as the energy of Lord Viṣṇu is neither repelled nor elated. He is indeed the greatest among devotees.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the position of the *uttama-adhikārī*, or first-class devotee of the Lord, is so worshipable that additional symptoms are now given in eight verses. It should be understood that unless one comes in contact with the lotus feet of a pure devotee of the Lord, the path of freedom from material illusion is very difficult to understand. In the fifth verse of *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has stated, *śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā*: “One should associate with and faithfully serve that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others.” Śrīla Prabhupāda comments, “In this verse Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī advises the devotee to be intelligent enough to distinguish between the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, *madhyama-adhikārī* and *uttama-adhikārī*. A neophyte Vaiṣṇava or a Vaiṣṇava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance. Therefore a disciple should be careful to accept an *uttama-adhikārī* as a spiritual master.” Therefore additional symptoms will now be given so that the conditioned soul who desires to go back home, back to Godhead, can properly identify the bona fide spiritual master.

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, associating with a pure devotee of the Lord is so important that now that the various categories of devotional service have been defined, eight additional verses are given concerning the qualifications of a pure devotee, so that students of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will make no mistake in this connection. Similarly, in the Second Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* Arjuna asked Kṛṣṇa about the symptoms of a completely Kṛṣṇa conscious person, and Kṛṣṇa elaborately explained the symptoms of one who is *prajñā pratiṣṭhitā*, or established in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The particular qualification mentioned in this verse is *viṣṇor māyām idam paśyan*: one should see the entire material universe as a product of the illusory energy of the Lord. There is no question of lamenting or rejoicing for that which is the property of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Within this world one generally laments upon losing something desirable and rejoices upon acquiring the object of his wish. But since a pure devotee has no personal desire whatsoever (*kṛṣṇa-bhakta niṣkāma – ataeva ‘śānta’*), there is no question of gain or loss. As the Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.54):

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā
na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*

“One who is transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments nor desires to have anything; he is equally disposed to every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me.” Similarly, Lord Śiva says to his wife, Pārvatī, while glorifying the character of King Citraketu,

*nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve
na kutaścana bibhyati
svargāpavarga-narakeṣv
apī tulyārtha-darśinaḥ*

“Devotees solely engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, never fear any condition of life. For them the heavenly planets, liberation and the hellish planets are all the same, for such devotees are interested only in the service of the Lord.” (*Bhāg.* 6.17.28) This state of complete satisfaction in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa is not a mental concoction achieved by artificial meditation, but is a result of having experienced the superior nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is a reservoir of transcendental bliss. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.59), *rasa-varjam raso 'py asya param dṛṣṭvā nivartate*. When impersonalists and voidists artificially try to push material things out of their minds, they undergo great hardships and ordeals in their artificial meditation.

*kleśo'dhikataras teṣām
avyaktāsakta-cetasām
avyaktā hi gatir duḥkham
dehavadbhir avāpyate*

(Bg. 12.5)

According to Lord Kṛṣṇa, it is only with great inconvenience and suffering that one can achieve impersonal liberation, because every living being is eternally a person, being part and parcel of the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa. The concept of giving up one's personal identity is a reaction to the terrible frustration of material egotism. It is not a positive program. If one is suffering unbearable pain in his hand, he may agree to have the hand amputated, but the real solution is to remove the infection so that the healthy hand may become a source of pleasure. Similarly ego, or the sense that “I am,” is a source of unlimited happiness when we understand what we are, namely servants of Kṛṣṇa. Impersonal meditation is dry and troublesome. A pure devotee realizes that he is an eternal person, part and parcel of the Supreme Person, Lord Kṛṣṇa, and that he has the privilege as the son of God to participate in the ecstatic eternal pastimes of the Supreme Lord, loving Kṛṣṇa and playing with Him forever. For such a devotee the pale material nature, which is but a perverted reflection of the spiritual world, becomes totally unattractive. Therefore, one who is completely attached to Kṛṣṇa and

uninterested in the manifestations of *māyā* can be considered *bhāgavatottamaḥ*, a pure devotee of the Lord, as described in a previous verse (*bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir anyatra ca*).

Śrīla Madhvācārya has stated, *viṣṇor māyām viṣṇv-icchādhīnām*: “The words *viṣṇor māyām* in this verse indicate that the illusory energy always remains dependent upon the will of Lord Viṣṇu.” Similarly the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.44) says, *sṛṣṭi-sthiti-pralaya-sādhana-śaktir ekā chāyeva yasya bhuvanāni bibharti durgā*. *Māyā* is like a shadow of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who serves Him in the creation, maintenance and annihilation of this world. Just as a shadow has no independent power of movement but follows the substance that casts the shadow, the illusory energy of the Lord has no independent power, but bewilders the living entities according to the Lord’s desire. One of Kṛṣṇa’s opulences is that He is supremely detached; when a living entity wants to forget Him, Kṛṣṇa immediately employs His illusory energy to facilitate the foolishness of the conditioned soul.

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī the words *grhītvāpīndriyair arthān* indicate that the pure devotee of the Lord does not cease acting within this world; rather, he uses his senses in the service of the Lord of the senses, Hṛṣīkeśa. *Hṛṣīkeṇa hṛṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has stated that if one gives up those material things which are favorable for serving Kṛṣṇa, considering them material and therefore an impediment to his spiritual advancement, his renunciation is merely *phalgu-vairāgya*, or immature and imperfect renunciation. On the other hand, one who accepts all material things for the service of Kṛṣṇa without any personal desire for sense gratification is actually renounced (*yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate*).

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has warned in his commentary on this verse that by envying any of the three classes of devotees – *uttama-adhikārī*, *madhyama-adhikārī* or *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* – one falls down to the platform of impersonalism and loses all power to benefit others or even himself. Therefore those who are trying to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not endanger their transcendental experience by unnecessarily criticizing other Vaiṣṇavas. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, if one engages in *phalgu-vairāgya*, or renouncing material things that are favorable to the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one runs the risk of being polluted by impersonal philosophy. On the other hand, by sticking to the principle of *yukta-vairāgya*, engaging everything for Kṛṣṇa without personal desire, one can remain aloof from the danger of material sense gratification and gradually come to the *mahā-bhāgavata* platform, as mentioned in this verse.

TEXT 2.49

*dehendriya-prāṇa-mano-dhiyām yo
janmāpyaya-kṣud-bhaya-tarṣa-kṛcchraiḥ
saṁsāra-dharmair avimuhyamānaḥ
smṛtyā harer bhāgavata-pradhānaḥ*

deha – of the body; *indriya* – senses; *prāṇa* – life air; *manaḥ* – mind; *dhiyām* – and intelligence; *yaḥ* – who; *janma* – by birth; *apyaya* – diminution; *kṣut* – hunger; *bhaya* – fear; *tarṣa* – thirst; *kṛcchraiḥ* – and the pain of exertion; *saṁsāra* – of material life; *dharmaiḥ* – by the inseparable features; *avimuhyamānaḥ* – not bewildered; *smṛtyā* – because of remembrance; *hareḥ* – of Lord Hari; *bhāgavata-pradhānaḥ* – the foremost of devotees.

TRANSLATION

Within the material world, one’s material body is always subject to birth and decay. Similarly, the life air [prāṇa] is harassed by hunger and thirst, the mind is always anxious, the intelligence hankers for that which cannot be obtained, and all of the senses are ultimately exhausted by constant struggle in the material nature. A person who is not bewildered by the inevitable miseries of material existence, and who remains aloof from them simply by remembering the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is to be considered bhāgavata-pradhāna, the foremost devotee of the Lord.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Madhvācārya there are three classes of intelligent living beings within this world, namely the demigods, ordinary human beings, and demons. A living being endowed with all auspicious qualities – in other words, a highly advanced devotee of the Lord – either on the earth or in the higher planetary systems is called a *deva*, or demigod. Ordinary human beings generally have good and bad qualities, and according to this mixture they enjoy and suffer on the earth. But those who are distinguished by their absence of good qualities and who are always inimical to pious life and the devotional service of the Lord are called *asuras*, or demons.

Of these three classes, the ordinary human beings and demons are terribly afflicted by birth, death and hunger, whereas the godly persons, the demigods, are aloof from such bodily distress. The demigods remain aloof from such distress because they are enjoying the results of their pious activities; by the laws of *karma*, they are unaware of the gross suffering of the material world. As the Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.20):

*traī-vidyā māṁ soma-pāḥ pūta-pāpā
yajñair iṣṭvā svar-gatiṁ prārthyante
te puṇyam āsādyā surendra-lokam
aśnanti divyān divi deva-bhogān*

“Those who study the *Vedas* and drink the *soma* juice, seeking the heavenly planets, worship Me indirectly. They take birth on the planet of Indra, where they enjoy godly delights.” But the next verse of *Bhagavad-gītā* says that when one uses up the results of these pious activities, one has to forfeit his status as a demigod, along with the pleasure of the heavenly kingdom, and return to earth as a *nara*, or ordinary human being (*kṣīṇe puṇye martya-lokaṁ viśanti*). In fact the laws of nature are so subtle that one may not even return to earth as a human, but may take birth as an insect or tree, depending on the particular configuration of his *karma*.

The pure devotee of the Lord, however, does not experience material misery, because he has given up the bodily concept of life and identifies himself correctly as an eternal servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. As stated by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2), *susukham kartum avyayam*. Even in the stage of regulative practice, the process of *bhakti-yoga* is very joyful. Similarly, Locana dāsa Ṭhākura, a near contemporary of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, said, *saba avatāra sāra śīromaṇi kevala ānanda-kāṇḍa*. Although there are various *kāṇḍas*, or divisions, of Vedic discipline, such as *karma-kāṇḍa* (fruitive ceremonies) and *jñāna-kāṇḍa* (regulated speculation), Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *hari-nāma saṅkīrtana* movement is *kevala ānanda-kāṇḍa*, the pathway of pure bliss. Simply by chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, eating the remnants of sumptuous food offered to the Supreme Lord and hearing the enchanting pastimes of the Personality of Godhead, one merges into an ocean of bliss called Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Fortunately this blissful ocean is the eternal situation of every living entity, provided he gives up all of his bogus concepts of life. One should not identify himself as a gross material body, nor as a fickle mind, nor as speculative intelligence, nor should one foolishly identify himself with the so-called void of Buddhist imagination. Nor should one even identify himself with the ocean of impersonal spiritual life called the *brahmajyoti*, which illuminates the great outdoors of the spiritual sky beyond the covered universe. One should rather identify himself correctly as an eternal individual servant of the supreme individual Personality of Godhead. By this simple admission of one's constitutional position and by sincere engagement in the service of the lotus feet of the Lord, one is quickly promoted to direct participation in the eternal pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, just as Arjuna got the opportunity to play with Kṛṣṇa as a soldier on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has given an elaborate description of the process by which material miseries arise. When a conditioned soul of demoniac mentality identifies himself with the gross material body, he undergoes miseries of constant drowsiness and unquenchable sexual desires that burn all mental peace and serenity to ashes. When a demoniac person identifies himself with *prāṇa*, the life air, he suffers from hunger, and by identifying himself with the mind he suffers panic, fear, and hankering that ends in disappointment. When he identifies himself with intelligence, he suffers profound existential bitterness and frustration deep within his heart. When he identifies himself with the false ego, he feels inferiority, thinking, "I am so low." And when he identifies himself with the process of consciousness, he is haunted by memories of the past. When a demon tries to impose himself as the ruler of all living beings, all of these miseries expand simultaneously. According to Śrīpāda Madhvācārya, sinful life is the demoniac standard for happiness. We can observe that in demoniac societies the dark, late hours of night are considered most appropriate for recreational activity. When a demon hears that someone is rising at four o'clock in the morning to take

advantage of the godly early-morning hours, he is astonished and bewildered. Therefore it is said in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.69):

*yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām
tasyām jāgati saṁyamī
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni
sā niśā paśyato muneḥ*

“What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage.” Śrīla Prabhupāda has commented, “There are two classes of intelligent men. The one is intelligent in material activities for sense gratification, and the other is introspective and awake to the cultivation of self-realization.” Thus the more one can increase illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling, the more one advances his prestige in a demoniac society, whereas in a godly society based on Kṛṣṇa consciousness these things are abolished completely. Similarly, as one becomes blissfully attached to the holy name and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, one becomes more and more alienated from the demoniac society.

The demons are self-proclaimed enemies of the Supreme Lord, and they mock His kingdom. Thus they are described by Śrīla Madhvācārya as *adhogateḥ*, or those who have purchased their tickets to the darkest regions of hell. On the other hand, if one is undisturbed by the miseries of material life, he is on the same spiritual level as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.15):

*yaṁ hi na vyathayanty ete
puruṣaṁ puruṣarṣabha
sama-duḥkha-sukhaṁ dhīraṁ
so'mṛtatvāya kalpate*

“O best among men [Arjuna], the person who is not disturbed by happiness and distress and is steady in both is certainly eligible for liberation.” One can come to this transcendental stage only by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the words of Śrī Madhvācārya, *sampūrṇānugrahād viṣṇoḥ*.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has described the process by which one becomes an *uttama-adhikārī*. If one is fortunate, he gradually becomes disgusted with the limited vision and activities of the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* and learns to appreciate the expanded vision of the *madhyama-adhikārī*, who is able to recognize that every living entity should become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa and that one achieves the perfection of life by following in the footsteps of an *uttama-adhikārī* devotee of the Lord. As one's devotional service gradually intensifies and one repeatedly bathes in dust from the lotus feet of a pure devotee, the harassment of birth, death, hunger, thirst, fear and so on gradually cease disturbing the mind. As stated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.114):

*alabdhe vā vinaṣṭe vā
bhakṣyācchādāna-sādhane*

*aviklava-matir bhūtvā
harim eva dhiyā smaret*

“Even if a devotee is frustrated in his attempt to eat properly or clothe himself properly, he should not allow this material failure to disturb his mind; rather, he should use his intelligence to remember his master, Lord Kṛṣṇa, and thus remain undisturbed.” As one becomes mature in this process of remembering Kṛṣṇa in all circumstances, he is awarded the title *mahā-bhāgavata*.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta gives the example that just as a child’s ball may be fastened to the end of a rope so that it cannot bounce away, a devotee who surrenders to Kṛṣṇa becomes tied to the rope of Vedic injunctions and is never lost in worldly affairs. In this connection Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has quoted from the *Ṛg Veda* (1.156.3) as follows: *om āsya jānanto nāma cid vivaktan mahas te viṣṇo su-matim bhajāmahe om tat sat*. “O Viṣṇu, Your name is completely transcendental. Thus it is self-manifest. Indeed, even without properly understanding the glories of chanting Your holy name, if we vibrate Your name with at least a small understanding of its glories – that is, if we simply repeat the syllables of Your holy name – gradually we shall understand it.” The supreme entity indicated by the *praṇava om* is *sat*, or self-revealing. Therefore, even if one is disturbed by fear or envy, the transcendental form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead will become manifest to one who continues to chant the Lord’s holy name. Further evidence is given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.2.14):

*sāṅketyam pārihāsyam vā
stobham helanam eva vā
vaikuṅṭha-nāma-grahaṇam
aśeṣāgha-haram viduḥ*

“One who chants the holy name of the Lord is immediately freed from the reactions of unlimited sins, even if he chants indirectly (to indicate something else), jokingly, for musical entertainment, or even neglectfully. This is accepted by all the learned scholars of the scriptures.”

TEXT 2.50

*na kāma-karma-bījānām
yasya cetasi sambhavaḥ
vāsudevaika-nilayaḥ
sa vai bhāgavatottamaḥ*

na – never; *kāma* – of lust; *karma* – fruitive work; *bījānām* – or of material hankerings, which are the seeds of fruitive activity; *yasya* – of whom; *cetasi* – in the mind; *sambhavaḥ* – chance to arise; *vāsudeva-eka-nilayaḥ* – one for whom the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva, is the only shelter; *saḥ* – he; *vai* – indeed; *bhāgavata-uttamaḥ* – is a first-class devotee.

TRANSLATION

One who has taken exclusive shelter of the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva, becomes free from fruitive activities, which are based on material lust. In fact, one who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord is freed from even the desire to enjoy material sense gratification. Plans for enjoying sex life, social prestige and money cannot develop within his mind. Thus he is considered bhāgavatottama, a pure devotee of the Lord on the highest platform.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, this verse describes the behavior of a devotee of the Lord. The activities of a pure devotee are devoid of material envy, false elation, delusion and lust. According to the Vaiṣṇava commentators, the word *bijānām* in this verse refers to *vāsanāḥ*, or deeply rooted desires, which gradually fructify in the form of activities, for which the living entity becomes subject to reactions. Thus the compound word *kāma-karma-bijānām* indicates the deep-rooted desire to lord it over the material world through the enjoyment of sexual pleasure and the expansions of sexual pleasure mentioned in the *Bhāgavatam* (5.5.8) as *gṛha-kṣetra-sutāpta-vittaiḥ*, that is, a beautiful residential building and ample land for producing sumptuous food to fill the belly, as well as children, friends, social contacts and a large bank balance. All of these material items are essential for completely forgetting that one is an eternal servant of the Supreme Lord. Therefore as stated in the *Bhāgavatam*, *janasya moho 'yam ahaṁ mameti*: intoxicated by these objects of material illusion, the conditioned soul becomes madly convinced that he is the center of the universe and that everything in existence has been created only for his personal sense gratification. Whoever obstructs such illusory enjoyment becomes immediately his enemy and subject to be killed.

Because of this bodily concept of life and the shackles of illusion, the whole world is being violently shaken by conflict arising from envy and lust. The only possible solution is to accept the leadership of the Lord's pure devotees, who are described here. A popular expression used to justify democratic government is "Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Such homilies may be valid on the material platform, but it is specifically mentioned here that a pure devotee of the Lord who has completely taken shelter of the Lord's lotus feet cannot even consider taking part in material envy and sense gratification. His mind remains perpetually clear and sober, and he is always aware of the ultimate good of every living entity. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is strenuously endeavoring to inform the earth's suffering living entities of the serious need for a brain in human society. A brain racked by fever cannot give proper direction, and if the so-called thinkers of society are burning with selfish desires, they are no better than feverish, delirious brains. Delirious governments are gradually destroying all traces of happiness in human society. Therefore it is the duty of Vaiṣṇava

preachers to act on the platform of *bhāgavatottama* so that they can give clear guidance to humanity, without being corrupted or even slightly attracted by the material opulence that may be offered to a saintly person. All intelligent human beings who are unable to take directly to the process of *bhakti-yoga* should at least be sufficiently educated to recognize the first-class devotee of the Lord and accept his guidance. In this way human society can be very nicely organized so that not only all human beings but even the animals, birds and trees can make advancement in life and gradually go back home, back to Godhead, for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has emphasized that those seriously interested in achieving the perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness must live in a community of Vaiṣṇavas. Śrīla Prabhupāda has also mentioned several times in his literature that it is not possible to achieve the stage of perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness unless one accepts the shelter of the pure devotees by living in the Kṛṣṇa conscious communities being established all over the world by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has emphasized that this does not mean that spiritual life is restricted only to those celibate students who can live within a temple compound. Devotees in the *gṛhastha* order, that of spiritual family life, can also take shelter of the Vaiṣṇava community by regularly attending temple functions. Those who are living in family life should daily see the Deity of the Supreme Lord, chant His holy names in His personal presence, accept the remnants of food offered to the Deity and hear learned discourses on *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Any householder who regularly takes advantage of these spiritual facilities and follows the regulative principles of spiritual life, namely no meat-eating, no illicit sex, no gambling and no intoxication, is to be considered a bona fide member of the Vaiṣṇava community. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, those who remain inimical to the devotional service of the Lord are to be considered lifeless puppets in the hands of the illusory energy of the Lord.

TEXT 2.51

*na yasya janma-karmabhyām
na varṇāśrama-jātibhiḥ
sajjate'sminn ahaṁ-bhāvo
dehe vai sa hareḥ priyaḥ*

na – there is not; *yasya* – of whom; *janma* – by good birth; *karmabhyām* – or meritorious acts; *na* – not; *varṇa-āśrama* – by adherence to rules of occupational or religious duty; *jātibhiḥ* – or by belonging to a certain class of society; *sajjate* – attaches itself; *asmin* – in this (body); *ahaṁ-bhāvaḥ* – egotistic sentiment; *dehe* – in the body; *vai* – indeed; *saḥ* – he; *hareḥ* – to Lord Hari; *priyaḥ* – is dear.

TRANSLATION

Birth in an aristocratic family and the execution of austere and pious activities certainly cause one to take pride in himself.

Similarly, if one enjoys a prestigious position within society because his parents are highly respected members of the varṇāśrama social system, one becomes even more infatuated with himself. But if despite these excellent material qualifications one does not feel even a tinge of pride within himself, he is to be considered the dearmost servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *janma* (“good birth”) refers to such classes as the *mūrdhāvasiktas* (children of *brāhmaṇa* fathers and *kṣatriya* mothers) and *ambaṣṭhas* (children of *brāhmaṇa* fathers and *vaiśya* mothers), both of which are considered *anuloma* since the father comes from a higher caste. Marriages in which the mother comes from a higher class than the father are called *pratiloma*. In any case, one who becomes proud of his so-called prestigious birth is certainly in the bodily concept of life. Birth in any material body is a serious problem, which one should solve by surrendering to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One can thereby release himself from the golden shackles of a so-called aristocratic material body.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* think that *karma-miśra bhakti*, or devotional service mixed with material endeavor, is the ultimate in spiritual life. They become attached to verses such as this:

*varṇāśramācāra-vatā
puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā
nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, is worshiped by the proper execution of prescribed duties in the system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. There is no other way to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One must be situated in the institution of the four *varṇas* and *āśramas*.” (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 3.8.9) Thus they think that material work in which a portion of the fruits are offered to God forms the highest platform of human life. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, there are several *smṛti* literatures that have encouraged such mixed devotional service. Such books are taken by materialistic devotees as facility for offending the holy name of the Lord because of egotistic attachment to the material body. Thus one thinks that a prestigious position in the *varṇāśrama* system according to birth and so-called pious activities is a prerequisite for becoming successful in life. But those who have actually taken shelter of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa never boast about their birth in the material world, nor do they pride themselves on their so-called expertise in material work. As long as one’s mentality is encumbered by the material designations of the *varṇāśrama* system, one has very little chance of becoming free from material bondage and establishing himself as dear to the Lord. In this regard, Caitanya Mahāprabhu emphatically declared that He could not identify Himself with any

varṇāśrama designation, such as that of a great intellectual or priest, a courageous warrior in the Lord’s army, a brilliant businessman making money for the Lord, or the hardest worker for the Lord. Nor could Caitanya Mahāprabhu identify Himself as a stalwart *brahmacārī*, a noble householder or an exalted *sannyāsī*. These designations reflect the material pride that can infiltrate the execution of devotional service. Although a devotee may carry out the standard duties of *varṇāśrama*, his only designation is *gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*, the eternal servant of the servant of the Lord, the master of the *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, when a devotee understands that the process of *bhakti-yoga* is complete in itself and he becomes absorbed in hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord, the supremely merciful Personality of Godhead affectionately lifts such a first-class devotee onto His own lap. The Supreme Lord can be pleased only by unalloyed devotion, and not by any arrangement of the gross body, composed of five material elements, or the subtle body, composed of innumerable speculations and bogus pride. In other words, Lord Kṛṣṇa can never be pleased by one’s so-called aristocratic body, which is due to be devoured by worms or vultures. If one becomes proud of his material birth and so-called pious activities, by such false pride one gradually develops the impersonal mentality of merely renouncing the fruit of work or else the *karmī* mentality of enjoying the fruits of work. Neither the *karmīs* nor the *jñānī* speculators are aware that the fruit of work actually belongs to Kṛṣṇa. The conclusion is that one should carefully give up all false pride and always remember that he is a humble servant of Kṛṣṇa. As stated by Caitanya Mahāprabhu, *amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*.

TEXT 2.52

*na yasya svaḥ para iti
vitteṣv ātmani vā bhidā
sarva-bhūta-samaḥ śāntaḥ
sa vai bhāgavatottamaḥ*

na - there is not; *yasya* - of whom; *svaḥ paraḥ iti* - “mine” and “someone else’s”; *vitteṣu* - about his property; *ātmani* - about his body; *vā* - or; *bhidā* - by thinking in terms of duality; *sarva-bhūta* - to all living beings; *samaḥ* - equal; *śāntaḥ* - peaceful; *saḥ* - he; *vai* - indeed; *bhāgavata-uttamaḥ* - the best of devotees.

TRANSLATION

When a devotee gives up the selfish conception by which one thinks “This is my property, and that is his,” and when he is no longer concerned with the pleasures of his own material body or indifferent to the discomforts of others, he becomes fully peaceful and satisfied. He considers himself simply one among all the living beings who are equally part and parcel of the Supreme Personality

of Godhead. Such a satisfied Vaiṣṇava is considered to be at the highest standard of devotional service.

PURPORT

The vision described by the phrase *sarva-bhūta-samaḥ*, “seeing all living entities equally,” does not include one’s vision of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this connection Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted from the *Harīvaṁśa* as follows:

*na kvāpi jīvaṁ viṣṇutve
samsṛtau mokṣa eva ca*

“Under no circumstance should one consider the living entity equal to Lord Viṣṇu, either in conditional life or in liberation.” The impersonal speculative philosophers are fond of imagining that although in our present illusion we appear to be individual entities, at liberation we shall all merge into God and be God. Such wishful thinkers cannot reasonably explain how the omnipotent God could arrive at the embarrassing position of having to enter a *yoga* studio, pay weekly fees, press His nose and chant *mantras* to regain His divinity. As stated in the *Vedas*, *nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*. The individuality or plurality of living entities is not a product of material existence. The word *nityānām*, denoting the plurality of eternal entities, clearly indicates that the living entities are eternally individual parts and parcels of the Lord, who is the singular unique entity described here as *ekaḥ*. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (1.21) Arjuna said to Kṛṣṇa, *ratham sthāpaya me ’cyuta*: “My dear Acyuta, please place my chariot between the armies.” This body is also *ratha*, a vehicle, and therefore the best policy is to request the infallible Lord to take charge of our conditioned body and guide us on the path back to the kingdom of God. The word *acyuta* means “the infallible” or “one who never falls.” Learned or sane human beings will not entertain the silly notion that the omnipotent, omniscient God has slipped and fallen because of *māyā*. No amount of wishful thinking can erase our eternal servitorship at the lotus feet of the Lord.

This fact is stated by the Lord Himself in the *Varāha Purāṇa*:

*naivaṁ tvayānumantavyaṁ
jīvātmāham iti kvacit
sarvair guṇair su-sampannaṁ
daivaṁ mām jñātum arhasi*

“You should never think Me one of the ordinary living entities in the *jīva* category. In fact I am the reservoir of all opulences and godly qualities, and therefore you should understand that I am the Supreme Lord.”

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, this verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* does not forbid using a particular object in the Lord’s service, since a devotee is free to use anything favorable for serving Lord Kṛṣṇa. This acceptance of favorable objects in the service of Kṛṣṇa is called *yukta-vairāgya*. As stated by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, *nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe*: one should be attached for Kṛṣṇa’s sake, never for one’s own sake. If one interprets this verse to indicate that one should not exercise

control over any material object, even if it is favorable for serving Kṛṣṇa, one falls into the bad understanding called *phalgu-vairāgya*, or immature renunciation. Great kings such as Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and Mahārāja Parīkṣit engaged the entire earth, and other Vaiṣṇavas have engaged the entire universe in the service of Kṛṣṇa. But they completely gave up the sense of their personal proprietorship. That is the point made in this verse. Just as one becomes very much concerned about any pain in one's own body, one should be concerned with bringing the conditioned souls to the platform of devotional service so that all of their suffering will be banished forever. That is the actual purport of not distinguishing between one body and another.

TEXT 2.53

*tri-bhuvana-vibhava-hetave'py akunṭha-
smṛtir ajitātma-surādibhir vimṛgyāt
na calati bhagavat-padāravindāl*

lava-nimiṣārdham api yaḥ sa vaiṣṇavāgryaḥ

tri-bhuvana - of the three worlds comprising the material universe; *vibhava-hetave* - for the sake of the opulences; *api* - even; *akunṭha-smṛtiḥ* - whose remembrance is undisturbed; *ajita-ātma* - of whom the unconquerable Lord is the very soul; *sura-ādibhiḥ* - by the demigods and others; *vimṛgyāt* - which are sought; *na calati* - he does not go away; *bhagavat* - of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pada-aravindāt* - from the lotus feet; *lava* - of eight forty-fifths of one second; *nimiṣa* - or of three times that; *ardham* - one half; *api* - even; *yaḥ* - who; *saḥ* - he; *vaiṣṇava-agryaḥ* - the foremost of devotees of Lord Viṣṇu.

TRANSLATION

The lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are sought even by the greatest of demigods, such as Brahmā and Śiva, who have all accepted the Supreme Personality of Godhead as their life and soul. A pure devotee of the Lord can never forget those lotus feet in any circumstance. He will not give up his shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord for a single moment - indeed, not for half a moment - even in exchange for the benediction of ruling and enjoying the opulence of the entire universe. Such a devotee of the Lord is to be considered the best of the Vaiṣṇavas.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī one may ask, "If one were able to gain the opulence of the entire universe in exchange for leaving the Lord's lotus feet for just half a moment, what would be the harm in leaving the Lord's lotus feet for such an insignificant amount of time?" The answer is given by the word *akunṭha-smṛti*. It is simply impossible for a pure devotee to forget the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, since everything that exists is in fact an expansion of the Supreme Lord. Since nothing is separate from the Supreme Lord, a pure devotee of the Lord cannot think of anything but the Lord. Nor can a pure devotee contemplate ruling or enjoying universal

opulence; even if given all the opulence of the universe, he would immediately offer it at the lotus feet of the Lord and return to his position of a humble servant of the Lord.

The words *ajitātma-surādibhir vimṛgyāt* are very significant in this verse. The lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa are so opulent that even the lords of all material opulence, namely Brahmā and Śiva, as well as the other demigods, are always searching for a glimpse of the Lord's lotus feet. The word *vimṛgyāt* indicates that the demigods are not actually able to see the lotus feet of the Lord, but are endeavoring to see them. An example of this is given in the Tenth Canto when Lord Brahmā offers prayers to Viṣṇu, begging the Lord to rectify the disturbances on the earth.

A similar verse is found elsewhere in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.14.14):

*na pārameṣṭhyam na mahendra-dhiṣṇyam
na sārvabhaumam na rasādhipatyam
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavam vā
mayy arpitātmecchati mad vinānyat*

“The devotee who has offered his soul to Me does not want anything if it is separate from Me – not the position of the supreme demigod of the universe, Brahmā, nor that of Lord Indra, nor kingship over the entire earth or over the lower planetary systems, nor the mystic perfections of *yoga*, nor even freedom from the cycle of rebirth.”

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the word *ajitātmā* can also be taken to mean *ajitendriyāḥ*, or “those whose senses are uncontrolled.” Although the demigods are all to be respected as devotees of Lord Viṣṇu, the absence of gross material discomfort in the higher planetary systems makes them tend to become affected by the bodily concept of life, and sometimes they experience some spiritual difficulty due to the gorgeous material facilities available to them. Such disturbances, however, cannot exist within the mind of a pure devotee of the Lord, as indicated in this verse by the word *akuṅṭha-smṛti*. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, we can understand from this verse that since none of the material facilities available in any of the universal planetary systems can distract a pure devotee of the Lord, such a devotee can never possibly fall or become inimical to the Lord's service.

TEXT 2.54

*bhagavata uru-vikramāṅghri-śākhā-
nakha-maṇi-candrikayā nirasta-tāpe
hṛdi katham upasīdatām punaḥ sa
prabhavati candra ivodite'rka-tāpaḥ*

bhagavataḥ – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *uru-vikrama* – which have performed great heroic deeds; *aṅghri* – of the lotus feet; *śākhā* – of the toes; *nakha* – of the nails; *maṇi* – which are like jewels; *candrikayā* – by the moonshine; *nirasta-tāpe* – when the pain has been removed; *hṛdi* – in the hearts; *katham* – how indeed; *upasīdatām* – of those who are worshipping;

punaḥ – again; *saḥ* – that pain; *prabhavati* – can have its effect; *candre* – when the moon; *iva* – just as; *udite* – risen; *arka* – of the sun; *tāpaḥ* – the burning heat.

TRANSLATION

How can the fire of material suffering continue to burn the hearts of those who worship the Supreme Lord? The Lord’s lotus feet have performed innumerable heroic deeds, and the beautiful nails on His toes resemble valuable jewels. The effulgence emanating from those nails resembles cooling moonshine, for it instantly relieves the suffering within the heart of the pure devotee, just as the appearance of the moon’s cooling light relieves the burning heat of the sun.

PURPORT

When the moon rises, the expansion of its rays drives away the distress of the sun’s fierce heat. Similarly, the cooling rays emanating from the lotus nails of the Personality of Godhead’s lotus feet vanquish all distress for the Lord’s pure devotee. According to the Vaiṣṇava commentators it is to be understood from this verse that material lust, exemplified by uncontrolled sexual desire, is exactly like a blazing fire. The flames of this fire burn to ashes the peace and happiness of the conditioned soul, who perpetually wanders in 8,400,000 species of life, vainly struggling to extinguish this intolerable fire. The pure devotees of the Lord place the Lord’s cooling, jewellike lotus feet within their hearts, and thus all of the pain and suffering of material existence are extinguished.

The word *uru-vikramāṅghri* indicates that the Lord’s lotus feet are quite heroic. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is famous for His incarnation as Vāmana, the dwarf *brāhmaṇa*, who extended His beautiful toes up to the outer limits of the universe and perforated the universal shell, thus bringing the waters of the holy Ganges into the universe. Similarly, when Kṛṣṇa was entering the city of Mathurā to challenge the demoniac King Kāmsa and His entrance was impeded by a ferocious elephant named Kuvalayāpīḍa, Lord Kṛṣṇa kicked the elephant to death and peacefully entered the city gates. Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet are so exalted that the Vedic literatures state that the entire material manifestation rests beneath His lotus feet: *samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ mahat padam puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ* (*Bhāg.* 10.14.58).

TEXT 2.55

*visṛjati hṛdayam na yasya sākṣād
dharir avāśābhīhito’py aghaughā-nāśaḥ
praṇaya-rasanayā dhṛtāṅghri-padmaḥ
sa bhavati bhāgavata-pradhāna uktaḥ*

visṛjati – He leaves; *hṛdayam* – the heart; *na* – never; *yasya* – of whom; *sākṣāt* – Himself; *hariḥ* – Lord Hari; *avāśa* – accidentally; *abhihitaḥ* – called; *api* – even though; *agha* – of sins; *ogha* – heaps; *nāśaḥ* – who destroys; *praṇaya* – of love; *rasanayā* – by ropes; *dhṛta* – held; *āṅghri-padmaḥ* – His

lotus feet; *saḥ* – he; *bhavati* – is; *bhāgavata-pradhānaḥ* – the foremost devotee; *uktaḥ* – called.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is so kind to the conditioned souls that if they call upon Him by speaking His holy name, even unintentionally or unwillingly, the Lord is inclined to destroy innumerable sinful reactions in their hearts. Therefore, when a devotee who has taken shelter of the Lord’s lotus feet chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa with genuine love, the Supreme Personality of Godhead can never give up the heart of such a devotee. One who has thus captured the Supreme Lord within his heart is to be known as bhāgavata-pradhāna, the most exalted devotee of the Lord.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the essence of a pure devotee’s qualifications is given in this verse. A pure devotee is one who has attracted the Lord by his love so that the Lord cannot give up the devotee’s heart. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the word *sākṣāt* in this verse indicates that a pure devotee has realized knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, having given his heart to the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, who is all-attractive in six opulences, including beauty. A pure devotee can never be attracted by the fleshy bags of women’s breasts or by the hallucinations of so-called society, friendship and love within the material world. Therefore his clean heart becomes a suitable abode for the Supreme Lord. A gentleman will live only in a clean place. He will not live in a polluted, contaminated place. Educated people in the Western countries are now greatly protesting the pollution of water and air by urban industrial enterprises. People are demanding the right to live in a clean place. Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme gentleman, and therefore He will not live in a polluted heart, nor will He appear within the polluted mind of a conditioned soul. When a devotee surrenders to Lord Kṛṣṇa and becomes a lover of the Lord by direct realization of Kṛṣṇa’s all-attractive nature, the Lord makes His residence in the clean heart and mind of such a pure devotee.

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, *ya etādṛśa-praṇayavāms tenānena tu sarvadā paramāvaśenaiva kīrtiyamānaḥ sutarām evam evāghaughā-nāśaḥ syāt*. If a devotee is absorbed in the loving transcendental service of Kṛṣṇa, directly or indirectly he is always glorifying the Lord by transcendental loving service. Therefore, even if he chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa with improper attention due to being absorbed in the Lord’s service, the mercy of the Lord purifies his heart of all sinful reactions. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.1.11):

*etan nirvidyamānānām
icchatām akuto-bhayam
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītaṁ
harer nāmānukīrtanam*

“O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.” Therefore if one who has not come to the platform of loving devotional service chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, he will also be gradually freed from all sinful reactions. In the Sixth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in the purports to the history of Ajāmila, Śrīla Prabhupāda has elaborately explained the holy name’s potency to purify even an ordinary person.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has nicely explained the process of bringing the Supreme Lord under control. Mother Yaśodā bound the child Kṛṣṇa to a grinding mortar with a rope. Kṛṣṇa, being attracted by the inconceivable love of His devotees, allowed Himself to be bound. Therefore, although Lord Kṛṣṇa binds all the conditioned souls by the chains of His illusory potency, *māyā*, if those same conditioned souls become pure devotees of the Lord they can in turn bind Kṛṣṇa by the chains of love of God. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, all the world’s inauspicious conditions due to sinful activities can be immediately eradicated by the chanting of the Lord’s holy name. The Supreme Personality of Godhead never leaves the hearts of those who give up all sinful behavior and chant His holy name. Even if such chanting is not yet perfect, devotees who always remain in the Lord’s service will gradually come to the stage of *prema-niṣṭhā*, or steady love of Godhead. Then they are to be considered *mahā-bhāgavatas*, or pure devotees of the Lord.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Second Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Mahārāja Nimi Meets the Nine Yogendras.”

CHAPTER THREE

Liberation from the Illusory Energy

In answer to four questions spoken by Mahārāja Nimi, this chapter describes the nature and activities of the illusory potency (*māyā*), the method of becoming free from *māyā*'s insurmountable grip, the transcendental situation of the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa, and the process of *karma-yoga*, by which one becomes free from all material activities.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original cause of all causes, created the five material elements, from which the material bodies of the conditioned souls are created so that the conditioned souls may cultivate either sense gratification or ultimate liberation. Appearing as the Supersoul, the Supreme Lord enters the material bodies of the created beings and activates the eleven senses of the conditioned souls. The conditioned soul misidentifies the created material body with his actual self and thus engages in various fruitive activities. Impelled by the reactions of his own activities, he repeatedly takes birth in various species of life and thus suffers greatly until the time of the cosmic annihilation. When the annihilation is imminent, the soul of the universal form withdraws the entire material creation within Himself, and then He Himself enters into the original cause of all causes. In this way the Lord empowers His illusory potency, consisting of the three modes of material nature, for the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material universe.

Accepting the roles of male and female in this material world, the conditioned souls unite in sexual relationships. Although these souls constantly make material endeavors to eliminate their unhappiness and unlimitedly increase their pleasure, they inevitably achieve exactly the opposite result.

Permanent happiness cannot be found in this world – either on the earthly planets or on the heavenly planets, which one can attain in the next life after performing ritualistic ceremonies and sacrifices. Both on earth and in heaven the living entity is harassed by the envy and rivalry of others.

Therefore any person who seriously desires to find permanent relief from the sufferings of material existence should take shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master. The qualification of the bona fide *guru* is that he has realized the conclusions of the Vedic scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.

Accepting the bona fide spiritual master as one's life and soul, the submissive disciple should learn from him the process of pure devotional service, which satisfies the Supreme Lord. By thus following the path of devotional service, the disciple gradually develops all good qualities.

One should hear, glorify and meditate upon the wonderful transcendental activities, appearance, qualities and holy names of the Lord. Whatever one finds pleasing or enjoyable he should immediately offer to the Supreme Lord; even his wife, children, home and very life air should all be offered at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should serve others

and also accept instructions from others. Especially, one should serve and learn from those who are pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

By chanting the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the association of devotees, one becomes satisfied and happy and develops a loving friendship with the devotees. In this way one becomes able to give up material sense gratification, which is the cause of all suffering. When a devotee attains the stage of pure love of Godhead, the hairs of his body stand on end, and he manifests various ecstatic symptoms; he personally meets the Supreme Lord and becomes full of transcendental bliss. By learning the science of devotional service and practically engaging in the devotional service of the Lord, the devotee comes to the stage of love of Godhead. When completely devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, the devotee easily crosses over the illusory energy, *māyā*, which is extremely difficult to cross.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe, yet He has no prior cause. Situated within the temporary and constantly changing material world, the Supreme Lord remains eternal and unchanging. He cannot be understood by the unaided mind or senses, and He is transcendental to the manifestation of the material world, which takes place as the subtle cause and material effect visible in the appearance of gross material objects. Although He is originally one, by expanding His illusory potency (*māyā*) He appears in many different forms. He is always free from birth, growth, decay and death, and He is the Supersoul, the all-pervading witness who perceives the mentalities of all living entities. He is the Supreme Brahman and is known as Nārāyaṇa. When one seriously engages in devotional service to the lotus feet of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the impure desires lodged within one's heart as a result of one's previous work within the three modes of material nature are destroyed. When the heart is thus purified, one can directly perceive both the Supreme Lord and one's self as transcendental entities.

Through authorized study of the transcendental Vedic literature, one can properly understand the meaning of prescribed duties, nonperformance of such duties, and forbidden activities. This difficult subject matter can never be understood by mundane speculation. Vedic injunctions indirectly lead one to the path of ultimate liberation by first prescribing fruitive religious activities, just as a father promises his child candy so that the child will take his medicine. If an ignorant person who has not conquered the material senses does not perform the Vedic injunctions, he will certainly engage in sinful and irreligious activities. Thus his reward will be repeated birth and death. On the other hand, if one executes the regulated activities prescribed in the *Vedas*, without attachment, and offers the result of such work to the Supreme Lord, one attains perfect freedom from the bondage of material work. The material fruitive results offered in the revealed scriptures are not the actual goal of Vedic knowledge, but are meant for stimulating the

interest of the performer. If a conditioned soul worships the Supreme Lord Hari by following the regulations found in Vedic literatures such as the *tantras*, he will quickly become free from the bondage of false ego. When a devotee obtains the mercy of his spiritual master, who reveals to him the injunctions of Vedic scriptures, he worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form he finds most attractive. In this way the devotee quickly becomes liberated from all material bondage.

TEXT 3.1

śrī-rājovāca
parasya viṣṇor īśasya
māyinām api mohinīm
māyām veditum icchāmo
bhagavanto bruvantu naḥ

śrī-rājā uvāca - the King said; *parasya* - of the Supreme; *viṣṇoḥ* - Viṣṇu; *īśasya* - the Lord; *māyinām* - for the possessors of great mystic power; *api* - even; *mohinīm* - which is bewildering; *māyām* - the illusory potency; *veditum* - to understand; *icchāmaḥ* - we desire; *bhagavantaḥ* - my lords; *bruvantu* - please tell this; *naḥ* - to us.

TRANSLATION

King Nimi said: Now we wish to learn about the illusory potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Viṣṇu, which bewilders even great mystics. My lords, please speak to us about this subject.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, in this chapter various saintly sons of Rṣabhadeva will speak about the illusory energy (*māyā*), the means for crossing beyond it, the characteristics of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and prescribed duties for human beings. The forty-eighth verse of the previous chapter stated, *viṣṇor māyām idaṁ paśyan*: “A devotee of Kṛṣṇa should see the entire universe to be the illusory potency of the Lord.” Therefore King Nimi is now pursuing this subject matter by requesting more detailed information from the saintly Yogendras.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, and the human beings of the earth are all driven by their particular desires for material sense gratification. Thus they direct their senses toward research for material knowledge. The subtle celestial senses of the demigods and the gross senses of human beings are all busy in ascertaining the measurements of material sense objects. To understand fully the actual nature of *māyā*, the illusory potency, which causes the conditioned souls to become averse to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and surrender to bewildering material manifestations, King Nimi is inquiring from another of the nine Yogendras, Śrī Antarīkṣa.

TEXT 3.2

*nānutrpye juṣan yuṣmad-
vaco hari-kathāmṛtam
saṁsāra-tāpa-nistapto
martyas tat-tāpa-bheṣajam*

na anutrpye – I am not yet satiated; *juṣan* – engaging; *yuṣmat* – your; *vacaḥ* – in the words; *hari-kathā* – of the topics of the Supreme Lord, Hari; *amṛtam* – the nectar; *saṁsāra* – of material existence; *tāpa* – by the misery; *nistaptaḥ* – tormented; *martyaḥ* – a mortal human; *tat-tāpa* – of that pain; *bheṣajam* – the medical treatment.

TRANSLATION

Although I am drinking the nectar of your statements about the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, my thirst is not yet satiated. Such nectarean descriptions of the Lord and His devotees are the actual medicine for conditioned souls like me, who are tormented by the threefold miseries of material existence.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, one may argue that since the symptoms of a pure devotee of the Lord have already been elaborately described, one can perfect his life by advancing to the platform mentioned in the previous verse, and there is no need for further questions. But *hari-kathāmṛtam*, topics about the Lord and His devotees, are so pleasing and beautiful that one cannot give up hearing them, even after spiritual liberation. Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in this connection, has quoted the following verse:

*ātmārāmāś ca munayo
nirgranthā apy urukrame
kurvanty ahaitukīṁ bhaktim
ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ*

“Those who are self-satisfied and unattracted by external, material desires are also attracted to the loving service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose qualities are transcendental and whose activities are wonderful. Hari, the Personality of Godhead, is called Kṛṣṇa because He has such transcendently attractive features.” (*Bhāg.* 1.7.10) Material medicine is not desirable once a disease has been cured, but on the absolute platform the means and the end are not different. So chanting and hearing the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa are both the means and the end of transcendental bliss.

King Nimi said to the sages, “You are all great saintly persons absorbed in love of Godhead. Therefore although you will speak about *māyā*, or illusion, the conclusion will undoubtedly be Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Please don’t think that you have already explained everything to me. The intoxicating nectar of your instructions has left me more eager than ever to hear about the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

King Nimi was also a great devotee of the Lord, otherwise there would have been no question of his personally conversing with such exalted living entities as the nine Yogendras. But as a humble Vaiṣṇava he considered himself an ordinary conditioned soul covered by material designations. Thus

he showed his eagerness to understand the actual nature of *māyā* in order to be safe from her future attempts to place him in the burning fire of material existence.

TEXT 3.3

śrī-antarīkṣa uvāca
ebhir bhūtāni bhūtātmā
mahā-bhūtair mahā-bhuja
sasarjoccāvacāny ādyaḥ
sva-mātrātma-prasiddhaye

śrī-antarīkṣaḥ uvāca – Śrī Antarīkṣa said; *ebhiḥ* – by these (material elements); *bhūtāni* – creatures; *bhūta-ātmā* – the Soul of all creation; *mahā-bhūtair* – by the elements of the *mahat-tattva*; *mahā-bhuja* – O mighty-armed King; *sasarja* – He created; *ucca-avacāni* – both high and low; *ādyaḥ* – the original person; *sva* – of His own parts and parcels; *mātrā* – the sense gratification; *ātma* – and the self-realization; *prasiddhaye* – for facilitating.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Antarīkṣa said: O mighty-armed King, by activating the material elements, the primeval Soul of all creation has sent forth all living beings in higher and lower species so that these conditioned souls can cultivate either sense gratification or ultimate liberation, according to their desire.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the illusory energy (*māyā*) is explained in this verse through a description of her potencies, namely the modes of material nature. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa has described *māyā* as *guṇamayī*, “consisting of the material modes of nature.” The material modes of nature are alluded to in this verse by the word *uccāvacāni*, “high and low species of life.” Various species of life become manifest, as do varieties of beauty, ugliness, strength, weakness and other characteristics within a particular species, according to the proportionate development of the modes of nature. As confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.22), *kāraṇaṁ guṇa-saṅgo 'sya sad-asad-yoni-janmasu*: “This is due to the living being’s association with material nature in good and evil species.” Similarly we find this statement:

ūrdhvaṁ gacchanti sattva-sthā
madhye tiṣṭhanti rājasāḥ
jaghanya-guṇa-vṛtti-sthā
adho gacchanti tāmasāḥ

“Those situated in the mode of goodness gradually go upward to the higher planets, those in the mode of passion live on the earthly planets, and those in the mode of ignorance go down to the hellish worlds.” (Bg. 14.18)
The three general divisions of material life are called *deva*, *tiryak* and *nara* – that is, demigods, subhuman creatures and human beings. In the various species of life there are various facilities for material sense gratification.

Different species are distinguished by differently formed senses, such as the genitals, nostrils, tongue, ears and eyes. Pigeons, for example, are given the facility for almost unlimited sex. Bears have an ample opportunity for sleeping. Tigers and lions exhibit the propensities for fighting and meat-eating, horses are distinguished by their legs for swift running, vultures and eagles have keen eyesight, and so on. The human being is distinguished by his large brain, which is meant for understanding God.

The phrase *sva-mātrātma-prasiddhaye* is very significant in this verse. The word *sva* indicates possession. All living beings belong to the Supreme Lord (*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*). Therefore according to this verse they have two options - *mātrā-prasiddhaye* and *ātma-prasiddhaye*. *Mātrā* refers to the material senses, and *prasiddhaye* refers to effective accomplishment. Therefore *mātrā-prasiddhaye* means “efficiently engaging in sense gratification.”

On the other hand, *ātma-prasiddhaye* refers to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. There are two categories of *ātmā* - the *jīvātmā*, or ordinary living entity, who is dependent, and the *Paramātmā*, the supreme living entity, who is independent. Some living entities desire to understand both categories of *ātmā*, and in this verse the word *ātma-prasiddhaye* indicates that the material world is created to give those living entities the opportunity to achieve such an understanding and thus return to the kingdom of God, where life is eternal and full of bliss and knowledge.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī confirms this by quoting a verse from the *veda-stuti* of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.87.2):

*buddhīndriya-manaḥ-prāṇān
janānām asṛjat prabhuḥ
mātrārtham ca bhavārtham ca
ātmane'kalpanāya ca*

“The Lord created the intelligence, senses, mind and vital air of the living beings for sense gratification, for performing sacrifices to attain higher births, and ultimately for offering sacrifices to the Supreme Soul.”

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the actual purpose of the Lord’s creation is only one: to facilitate the advancement of devotional service to the Lord Himself. Although it is stated that the Lord facilitates sense gratification, it should be understood that the Supreme Personality of Godhead does not ultimately condone the foolishness of the conditioned souls. The Lord facilitates sense gratification (*mātrā-prasiddhaye*) so that the living entities will gradually understand the futility of trying to enjoy without Him. Every living entity is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. In the Vedic literature the Lord gives a regulative program so that the living beings can gradually exhaust their tendencies to be foolish and learn the value of surrender unto Him. The Lord is undoubtedly the reservoir of all beauty, bliss and satisfaction, and it is the duty of every living entity to engage in the loving service of the Lord. Although there are apparently two purposes for creation, it should be understood that ultimately the purpose is one. The arrangement for sense

gratification is ultimately meant to bring the living entities to the single purpose of going back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 3.4

*evam sṛṣṭāni bhūtāni
praviṣṭaḥ pañca-dhātubhiḥ
ekadhā daśadhātmānam
vibhajan juṣate guṇān*

evam – in the manner just described; *sṛṣṭāni* – created; *bhūtāni* – the living beings; *praviṣṭaḥ* – having entered; *pañca-dhātubhiḥ* – (created) by the five gross elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether); *ekadhā* – onefold (as the overseer of the mind); *daśadhā* – tenfold (as the overseer of the five senses of perception and five organs of action); *ātmānam* – Himself; *vibhajan* – dividing; *juṣate* – He engages (He causes the individual soul to engage); *guṇān* – with the material modes.

TRANSLATION

The Supersoul enters the material bodies of the created beings, activates the mind and senses, and thus causes the conditioned souls to approach the three modes of material nature for sense gratification.

PURPORT

The following is a summary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's commentary on this verse.

The one Supersoul enters the gross material elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether) and uses the activated material mind to subtly divide the sensory activities of the conditioned souls among the five knowledge-acquiring senses (the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin) and, by a further gross division, the five working senses (the hands, legs, speech, genitals and anus). Because liberated souls have a strong tendency to serve the Lord, they are not attracted by the dualities of material good and evil. They derive their pleasure through devotion and love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who eternally enjoys His own transcendental pastimes beyond the material manifestation.

When the conditioned souls forget their loving relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they develop illicit desires. Therefore, unable to serve the form, taste, fragrance and other aspects of Lord Viṣṇu, these souls become bound to the bitter fruits of fruitive activities. But if their love of Godhead is somehow or other awakened, the conditioned souls can dovetail all their sensory activities in the service of the Lord's transcendental pastimes.

Actually, all materialistic activities are most undesirable. But the conditioned soul, under the influence of illusion, sees apparent distinctions between good and bad, pleasing and displeasing, and so on. The Lord, the Supersoul, having entered the collective and individual consciousness of the living entities, knows the heart of everyone. Therefore when a sincere soul aspires

for spiritual perfection, the Lord frees him from material bondage and arouses his propensity to serve the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha. Love of Godhead flourishes in the variegated flavors of transcendental enjoyment. In ignorance, however, the conditioned soul considers himself the proper object of service and thus misunderstands the entire existential situation.

TEXT 3.5

*guṇair guṇān sa bhuñjāna
ātma-pradyotitaiḥ prabhuḥ
manyamāna idaṁ sṛṣṭam
ātmānam iha sajjate*

guṇaiḥ - with the modes (the senses); *guṇān* - the modes (the objects of the senses); *saḥ* - he (the individual living being); *bhuñjānaḥ* - enjoying; *ātma* - by the Supreme Soul; *pradyotitaiḥ* - enlivened; *prabhuḥ* - the master; *manyamānaḥ* - thinking; *idaṁ* - this; *sṛṣṭam* - created (body); *ātmānam* - as his own self; *iha* - in this; *sajjate* - he becomes entangled.

TRANSLATION

The individual living being, the master of the material body, uses his material senses, which have been activated by the Supersoul, to try to enjoy sense objects composed of the three modes of nature. Thus he misidentifies the created material body with the unborn eternal self and becomes entangled in the illusory energy of the Lord.

PURPORT

In this verse the living entity is called *prabhuḥ*, or “master,” because he is a minute part and parcel of the supreme master, Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.8) the Lord has described the living entity as *īśvaraḥ*, “the controller.”

*śarīraṁ yad avāpnoti
yac cāpy utkrāmatīśvaraḥ
gṛhītvaitāni saṁyāti
vāyur gandhān ivāśayāt*

“The living entity in the material world carries his various conceptions of life from one body to another as the air carries aromas.” Śrīla Prabhupāda has commented in his purport, “Here the living entity is described as *īśvaraḥ*, the controller of his own body. If he likes, he can change his body to a higher grade, and if he likes he can move to a lower class. Minute independence is there. The change his body undergoes depends upon him.” This statement confirms the words *sva-mātrā* and *ātma-prasiddhaye* in text 3 of this chapter. If the Supreme Lord were to interfere with the minute independence of the living entity, there would be no question of the living entity’s engaging in the loving service of the Lord, since love implies a spontaneous free choice by the lover. Here the word *prabhuḥ* indicates that just as a child, having received a toy car from his father, pedals on the sidewalk, imitating the father, who drives an actual car, the living entity pedals around the material

universe in the innumerable material bodies selected for him by the Supreme Lord from an assortment of 8,400,000 species. Thus the living entity, infatuated with the false ego of the material body, creates a fearful situation in which he undergoes repeated birth and death, as described in the statement *bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syāt* (*Bhāg.* 11.2.37). Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has given another explanation for this verse. If the word *prabhuḥ* is taken to mean the Supreme Lord, the word *guṇaiḥ* can be understood to mean “good qualities,” since *guṇa* can refer to the material modes of nature or to admirable qualities (as in the verse *yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ*). This verse would then mean that the Lord, by His transcendental qualities (*guṇaiḥ*), such as mercy, is able to relish the transcendental qualities (*guṇān*) of His pure devotees. *Ātma-pratyoditaiḥ* would then indicate that by surrendering unto the Lord, who is the reservoir of all good qualities, the pure devotees become similarly endowed with godly qualities. The words *manyamāna idaṁ sṛṣṭam ātmānam* would indicate that the Lord accepts the body of His pure devotee to be on the same spiritual level as He Himself, as indicated in the verse *ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit*. The Lord is attracted by the loving devotional service of His pure devotees and thus becomes entangled in the network of their loving relationship with Him. For example, after the Battle of Kurukṣetra, when Kṛṣṇa was leaving for His own city, Dvārakā, the loving appeal of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira forced the Lord to remain for several more weeks in Hastināpura. Similarly, when the elderly *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana clapped their hands, Kṛṣṇa would dance like a puppet, keeping time to their rhythm. In relation to this subject matter, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.4.68):

*sādhavo hṛdayaṁ mahyaṁ
sādhūnām hṛdayaṁ tv aham
mad-anyaṁ te na jānanti
nāhaṁ tebhyo manāg api*

“The pure devotee is always within the core of My heart, and I am always in the heart of the pure devotee. My devotees do not know anything but Me, and I do not know anyone but them.”

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura the word *prabhuḥ* may also be understood as follows. The word *pra* indicates *prakarṣeṇa*, or “excessively,” and *bhū* indicates *bhavati*, or “taking birth.” Thus *prabhuḥ* indicates *prakarṣeṇa deva-tiryag-ādiṣu bhavatīti saḥ*, or repeatedly taking birth among the demigods, animals, human beings and other forms of life. Confirming the statement by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī concerning the Lord’s attachment to the spiritualized body of a pure devotee, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has quoted the following verses from *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 4.192–93):

*dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa
sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama*

“At the time of initiation, when a devotee fully surrenders unto the service of the Lord, Kṛṣṇa accepts him to be as good as Himself.”

*sei deha kare tāra cid-ānanda-maya
aprākṛta-dehe tānra caraṇa bhajaya*

“When the devotee’s body is thus transformed into spiritual existence, the devotee, in that transcendental body, renders service to the lotus feet of the Lord.”

TEXT 3.6

*karmāṇi karmabhiḥ kurvan
sa-nimittāni deha-bhṛt
tat tat karma-phalaṁ grhṇan
bhramatīha sukhetaram*

karmāṇi – various kinds of fruitive work; *karmabhiḥ* – by the *karmendriyas*, the organs of action; *kurvan* – performing; *sa-nimittāni* – which are imbued with motivating desires; *deha-bhṛt* – the proprietor of the material body; *tat tat* – various; *karma-phalam* – results of work; *grhṇan* – accepting; *bhramati* – he wanders; *iha* – throughout this world; *sukha* – happiness; *itaram* – and otherwise.

TRANSLATION

Impelled by deep-rooted material desires, the embodied living entity engages his active sense organs in fruitive activities. He then experiences the results of his material actions by wandering throughout this world in so-called happiness and distress.

PURPORT

The argument may be given that if a living entity were subject to the results of his previous activities there would be no scope for free will; once having committed a sinful action, the living entity would be bound in an endless chain of suffering, being perpetually subject to previous reactions. According to this speculation there cannot be a just and omniscient God, since the living entity is forced to commit sinful activities by the reactions of his previous activities, which were reactions to still previous activities. Since even an ordinary gentleman will not unfairly punish an innocent person, how could there be a God witnessing the helpless suffering of the conditioned souls within this world?

This foolish argument can easily be refuted by a practical example. If I purchase a ticket for an airline flight, board the plane and commence the flight, once the plane has taken off my decision to board the plane forces me to continue flying until the plane lands. But although I am forced to accept the reaction of this decision, on board the plane I have many new decisions I can make. I may accept the food and drink from the stewardesses or reject it, I may read a magazine or newspaper, I may sleep, walk up and down the aisle, converse with other passengers, and so on. In other words, although the general context – flying to a particular city – is forcibly imposed upon me as a reaction to my previous decision to board the plane, even within that

situation I am constantly making new decisions and creating new reactions. For example, if I cause a disturbance on the airplane I may be arrested when the plane lands. On the other hand, if I make friends with a businessman sitting next to me on the plane, such a contact may lead to a favorable business transaction in the future.

Similarly, although the living entity is forced to accept a particular body by the laws of *karma*, within the human form of life there is always scope for free will and decision-making. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot be considered unjust for holding the living entity in human life responsible for his present activities despite the living entity's undergoing the reactions of his previous work.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura the influence of *māyā* is so strong that even in a hellish condition the proud conditioned soul thinks that he is enjoying life.

TEXT 3.7

*ittham karma-gatīḥ gacchan
bahv-abhadra-vahāḥ pumān
ābhūta-samplavāt sarga-
pralayāv aśnute'vaśaḥ*

ittham – in this way; *karma-gatīḥ* – the destinations determined by his past activities; *gacchan* – obtaining; *bahu-abhadra* – much that is inauspicious; *vahāḥ* – which involve; *pumān* – the living being; *ābhūta-samplavāt* – until the dissolution of the created universe; *sarga-pralayau* – birth and death; *aśnute* – he experiences; *avaśaḥ* – helplessly.

TRANSLATION

Thus the conditioned living entity is forced to experience repeated birth and death. Impelled by the reactions of his own activities, he helplessly wanders from one inauspicious situation to another, suffering from the moment of creation until the time of cosmic annihilation.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Madhvācārya, after hearing that the living entity is repeatedly subjected to birth and death within the material world, if one still considers such a helpless entity equal to God in all respects one will surely fall into the darkest regions of the universe, from which it is difficult to rise.

TEXT 3.8

*dhātūpaplava āsanne
vyaktaṁ dravya-guṇātmakam
anādi-nidhanaḥ kālo
hy avyaktāyāpakarṣati*

dhātu – of the material elements; *upaplave* – the dissolution; *āsanne* – when it has become imminent; *vyaktam* – the manifest cosmos; *dravya* – gross objects; *guṇa* – and the subtle modes; *ātmakam* – consisting of; *anādi* –

without beginning; *nidhanaḥ* – or end; *kālaḥ* – time; *hi* – indeed; *avyaktāya* – into the unmanifest; *apakarṣati* – draws.

TRANSLATION

When the annihilation of the material elements is imminent, the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form of eternal time withdraws the manifest cosmos, consisting of gross and subtle features, and the entire universe vanishes into nonmanifestation.

PURPORT

In the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Lord Kapiladeva teaches that the material nature originally exists in an inert state of equilibrium called *pradhāna*. When Lord Viṣṇu casts His potent glance in the form of *kāla*, or time, material interactions take place, culminating in the variegated creation of the material cosmos. In this verse it is stated that at the end of universal time the same *kāla* that originally incited the female nature into manifestation again withdraws the cosmos into its original state of inert nonmanifestation. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the time potency itself, *kāla*, is then withdrawn, and it merges into the Supreme Soul, who manifests Himself as the original cause of material nature (*anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*).

Such technical arrangements for creation and annihilation, birth and death, do not exist in the eternal spiritual kingdom of God. In the spiritual sky the variegated spiritual enjoyment of the Lord and His devotees is not hampered by the inferior cycles of birth, maintenance and destruction found in the material world.

TEXT 3.9

*śata-varṣā hy anāvṛṣṭir
bhaviṣyaty ulbaṇā bhuvi
tat-kālopacitoṣṇārko
lokāṁs trīn pratapiṣyati*

śata-varṣā – lasting one hundred years; *hi* – indeed; *anāvṛṣṭiḥ* – drought; *bhaviṣyati* – there will be; *ulbaṇā* – terrible; *bhuvi* – on the earth; *tat-kāla* – in that duration of time; *upacita* – accumulated; *uṣṇa* – whose heat; *arkaḥ* – the sun; *lokān* – the worlds; *trīn* – three; *pratapiṣyati* – will greatly burn.

TRANSLATION

As cosmic annihilation approaches, a terrible drought takes place on earth for one hundred years. For one hundred years the heat of the sun gradually increases, and its blazing heat begins to torment the three worlds.

TEXT 3.10

*pātāla-talam ārabhya
saṅkarṣaṇa-mukhānalaḥ
dahann ūrdhva-śikho viṣvag
vardhate vāyuneritaḥ*

pātāla-talam – the planet Pātāla; *ārabhya* – beginning from; *saṅkarṣaṇa-mukha* – from the mouth of the Supreme Lord in His form as Saṅkarṣaṇa; *analaḥ* – the fire; *dahan* – burning; *ūrdhva-śikhaḥ* – its flame going upward; *viṣvak* – all the directions; *vardhate* – grows; *vāyunā* – by winds; *īritaḥ* – impelled.

TRANSLATION

Beginning from Pātālaloka, a fire grows, emanating from the mouth of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. Its flames shooting upward, driven by great winds, it scorches everything in all directions.

TEXT 3.11

*saṁvartako megha-gaṇo
varṣati sma śataṁ samāḥ
dhārābhir hasti-hastābhir
līyate salile virāṭ*

saṁvartakaḥ – of annihilation; *megha-gaṇaḥ* – hordes of clouds; *varṣati* – will rain; *sma* – indeed; *śataṁ samāḥ* – for one hundred years; *dhārābhiḥ* – with torrents; *hasti-hastābhiḥ* – (raindrops measuring the length of) elephant trunks; *līyate* – will merge; *salile* – in the water; *virāṭ* – the entire universe.

TRANSLATION

Hordes of clouds called Saṁvartaka pour torrents of rain for one hundred years. Flooding down in raindrops as long as the trunk of an elephant, the deadly rainfall submerges the entire universe in water.

TEXT 3.12

*tato virājam utsṛjya
vairājaḥ puruṣo nṛpa
avyaktam viśate sūkṣmam
nirindhana ivānalaḥ*

tataḥ – then; *virājam* – the universe; *utsṛjya* – giving up (as his body); *vairājaḥ puruṣaḥ* – the personality of the universal form (Hiraṇyagarbha Brahmā); *nṛpa* – O King Nimi; *avyaktam* – unmanifest nature (the *pradhāna*); *viśate* – he enters; *sūkṣmam* – subtle; *nirindhanaḥ* – devoid of fuel; *iva* – like; *analaḥ* – a fire.

TRANSLATION

Then Vairāja Brahmā, the soul of the universal form, gives up his universal body, O King, and enters into the subtle unmanifest nature, like a fire that has run out of fuel.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura the word *vairājaḥ* in this verse indicates the totality of the individual conditioned souls who originally take birth from Brahmā and are amalgamated back into him at the time of annihilation. By the manifestation of the *virāṭ-puruṣa*, the universal form of the Lord, there is a temporary display of forms, qualities and

activities within the material creation. But the entire cosmic scene reverts to inert formlessness when the creation is withdrawn by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore the Lord's universal form cannot be accepted as an eternal form of the Lord. It is merely the temporary imaginary resemblance of His personal form within the kingdom of *māyā*. In the First Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, as well as in the Second Canto, the universal form of the Lord is clearly explained to be an imaginary form offered to the neophyte for meditation on God. Those who are excessively materialistic are totally unable to understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is actually *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, or the eternal form of bliss and knowledge, transcendental to the exhibition of material energy. Therefore to encourage such gross materialists to become faithful theists, the Vedic literature instructs them to meditate upon the physical universe as the gigantic body of the Supreme Lord. This pantheistic conception does not reflect the ultimate reality of the Supreme Lord but is a technique to bring the mind gradually toward God.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has quoted the following verse as evidence that Lord Brahmā is supposed to go back to Godhead at the time of annihilation:

*brahmaṇā saha te sarve
samprāpte pratisañcare
parasyānte kṛtātmāṇaḥ
praviśanti param padam*

“At the time of final annihilation all self-realized souls enter with Brahmā into the supreme abode.” Since Brahmā is sometimes considered the best devotee of the Supreme Lord, he surely should obtain liberation rather than merely entering into the unmanifest state of material nature called *avyakta*. In this connection Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī points out that there is a class of nondevotees who attain the planet of Brahmā by performing *aśvamedha-yajñas* and other sacrifices, and in certain cases Brahmā himself may not be a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So the words *avyaktam viśate sūkṣmam* can be understood to indicate that such a nondevotee Brahmā cannot enter the spiritual sky, despite having achieved the ultimate universal status of material expertise. But when Brahmā is a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the word *avyaktam* can be taken to indicate the spiritual sky; since the spiritual sky is not manifest to the conditioned souls, it may also be considered *avyakta*. If even Lord Brahmā cannot enter the kingdom of God without surrendering to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then what to speak of other so-called pious or expert nondevotees.

In this regard Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has pointed out that there are three categories within the status of Brahmā, namely those of *karmī*, *jñānī* and devotee. A Brahmā who is the most exalted *karmī* of the universe will have to come back to the material world; a living entity who has achieved the post of Brahmā by being the greatest speculative philosopher within the universe may attain impersonal liberation; and a living entity who

has been awarded the post of Brahmā due to being a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead enters into the personal abode of the Lord. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.32.15) yet another case is described: a Brahmā who is a devotee of the Lord but who has the tendency to think himself independent of or equal to the Lord may achieve Mahā-Viṣṇu's abode at the time of annihilation, but when creation begins again he has to return and again take the post of Brahmā. The word used in this case is *bheda-dṛṣṭyā*, which refers to the tendency to think oneself independently powerful. The various destinations possible for such an exalted living entity as a Lord Brahmā definitely prove that any material position is worthless for guaranteeing an eternal life of bliss and knowledge. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa promises that if one gives up all other so-called obligations and surrenders to the devotional service of the Lord, the Lord will personally protect him and bring him back to the supreme abode in the spiritual sky. It is futile and foolish to try to achieve perfection by one's own strenuous endeavor and not surrender to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Such a blind attempt is described in the Eighteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* as *bahulāyāsam*, indicating that it is work in the material mode of passion. Brahmā is the lord of passion, and his creation and management of the entire universe are certainly *bahulāyāsam*, or strenuous endeavor, in the most exalted sense. But all such passionate work, even that of Lord Brahmā, is ultimately useless without surrender to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 3.13

*vāyunā hṛta-gandhā bhūḥ
salilatvāya kalpate
salilam tad-dhṛta-rasam
jyotiṣṭvāyopakalpate*

vāyunā – by the wind; *hṛta* – deprived; *gandhā* – of its quality of aroma; *bhūḥ* – the element earth; *salilatvāya kalpate* – becomes water; *salilam* – water; *tad* – by that (the same element, wind); *hṛta-rasam* – deprived of its quality of taste; *jyotiṣṭvāya upakalpate* – becomes fire.

TRANSLATION

Deprived of its quality of aroma by the wind, the element earth is transformed into water; and water, deprived of its taste by that same wind, is merged into fire.

PURPORT

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam gives several descriptions of the material creation, by which air is expanded from ether, fire from air, water from fire, and earth from water. Now, in the reverse order, the creation is wound up. Thus earth merges back into the water from which it came, and water similarly merges into fire.

TEXT 3.14

*hṛta-rūpaṁ tu tamasā
vāyau jyotiḥ pralīyate
hṛta-sparśo'vakāśena
vāyur nabhasi līyate
kāla-ātmanā hṛta-guṇaṁ
nabha ātmani līyate*

hṛta-rūpam – deprived of its quality of form; *tu* – certainly; *tamasā* – by darkness; *vāyau* – into air; *jyotiḥ* – fire; *pralīyate* – merges; *hṛta-sparśaḥ* – deprived of touch; *avakāśena* – by the element space; *vāyuh* – air; *nabhasi* – into space; *līyate* – merges; *kāla-ātmanā* – by the Supreme Soul in the form of time; *hṛta-guṇam* – deprived of its tangible quality; *nabhaḥ* – space; *ātmani* – into false ego in the mode of ignorance; *līyate* – merges.

TRANSLATION

Fire, deprived of its form by darkness, dissolves into the element air. When the air loses its quality of touch by the influence of space, the air merges into that space. When space is deprived of its tangible quality by the Supreme Soul in the form of time, space merges into false ego in the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 3.15

*indriyāṇi mano buddhiḥ
saha vaikārikair nṛpa
praviśanti hy ahaṅkāraṁ
sva-guṇair aham ātmani*

indriyāṇi – the senses; *manaḥ* – the mind; *buddhiḥ* – intelligence; *saha vaikārikaiḥ* – along with the demigods, who are products of false ego in the mode of goodness; *nṛpa* – O King; *praviśanti* – they enter; *hi* – indeed; *ahaṅkāraṁ* – the element ego; *sva-guṇaiḥ* – along with its qualities (goodness, passion and ignorance); *aham* – ego; *ātmani* – into the *mahat-tattva*.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, the material senses and intelligence merge into false ego in the mode of passion, from which they arose; and the mind, along with the demigods, merges into false ego in the mode of goodness. Then the total false ego, along with all of its qualities, merges into the mahat-tattva.

TEXT 3.16

*eṣā māyā bhagavataḥ
sarga-sthity-anta-kāriṇī
tri-varṇā varṇitāsmābhiḥ
kiṁ bhūyaḥ śrotum icchasi*

eṣā – this; *māyā* – material energy; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Supreme Lord; *sarga* – of creation; *sthiti* – maintenance; *anta* – and dissolution (of this universe); *kāriṇī* – the agent; *tri-varṇā* – consisting of three modes (goodness, passion

and ignorance); *varṇitā* – has been described; *asmābhiḥ* – by us; *kim* – what; *bhūyaḥ* – further; *śrotum* – to hear; *icchasi* – do you wish.

TRANSLATION

I have now described māyā, the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This illusory potency, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is empowered by the Lord for the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material universe. Now, what more do you wish to hear?

PURPORT

King Nimi had expressed to the *nava-yogendras* his fear of the illusory potency of the Lord and had requested a detailed explanation of *māyā* so that he could avoid becoming a victim at her hands. Now, Śrī Antarīkṣa, having described the illusory potency, is suggesting that the King inquire about the means to become totally free of *māyā*'s influence. Not waiting for the King to ask such a question, Śrī Antarīkṣa himself is suggesting, "Now that you have heard about *māyā*'s influence, you should inquire about the process of becoming free of such influence." According to Śrīdhara Svāmī, that is the significance of Śrī Antarīkṣa's question *kim bhūyaḥ śrotum icchasi*, "What more do you wish to hear?"

The following is a summary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's explanation of the process of annihilation described in the previous verses. Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the presiding Deity of consciousness, which becomes manifest within the *mahat-tattva*. By further transformations of the *mahat-tattva* the threefold false ego appears as follows. (1) From *vaikārika*, false ego in the mode of goodness, appears the eleventh sense, the mind, whose presiding Deity is Aniruddha. (2) From *taijasa*, false ego in the mode of passion, comes intelligence, whose presiding Deity is Pradyumna, and the five working senses and five knowledge-acquiring senses with their various presiding deities. (3) From false ego in the mode of ignorance arises the subtle form of sound, and from that sound, or *śabda*, all the material elements gradually become manifest, beginning with ether and the sense of hearing. The presiding Deity of these three divisions of false ego is Saṅkarṣaṇa. This description is taken from Chapter Twenty-six of the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, verses 21, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32 and 35.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead's external potency, *māyā*, causes the birth, maintenance and destruction of the material world. She is tricolored red, white and black. In her red feature the material nature is created, in white it endures, and in black it is annihilated. The *mahat-tattva* arises from this *māyā*, and from the *mahat-tattva* come the three varieties of false ego mentioned above. At the time of annihilation the five great elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and ether, merge into false ego in the mode of ignorance, from which they were originally generated; the ten senses and intelligence merge into false ego in passion; and the mind, along with the demigods, merges into false ego in the mode of goodness, which then

merges into *mahat-tattva*, which further takes shelter of the *prakṛti* or unmanifest *pradhāna*.

As described above, each of the gross elements is wound up when its distinguishing quality is removed; the element then merges into the previous element. This can be understood as follows. In space or ether there is the quality of sound. In air there are the qualities of sound and touch. In fire there are sound, touch and form. In water there are sound, touch, form and taste. And in earth there are sound, touch, form, taste and aroma. Therefore from ether down to earth each element is distinguished by the addition of its own unique quality, called *guṇa-viśeṣam*. When that quality is removed, an element becomes nondifferent from its previous element and thus merges into it. For example, when great winds take aroma away from earth, earth contains only sound, touch, form and taste and thus becomes nondifferent from water, into which it merges. Similarly when water loses its *rasa*, or taste, it contains only sound, touch and form, thus becoming nondifferent from fire, which also contains those three qualities. So the wind takes away aroma to merge earth into water and takes away taste to merge water into fire. Then when the universal darkness removes form from fire, fire merges into air. Space then removes the sense of touch from air, and air merges into space. The Supreme Personality of Godhead as the time element removes sound from space, and space then merges into the false ego in the mode of ignorance, from which it arose. Finally, false ego is merged into the *mahat-tattva*, which is merged into the unmanifest *pradhāna*, and thus the universe is annihilated.

TEXT 3.17

śrī-rājovāca
yathaitām aiśvarīm māyām
dustarām akṛtātmabhiḥ
taranty añjaḥ sthūla-dhiyo
mahaṛṣa idam ucyatām

śrī-rājā uvāca – King Nimi said; *yathā* – how; *etām* – this; *aiśvarīm* – of the Supreme Lord; *māyām* – material energy; *dustarām* – unsurpassable; *akṛtātmabhiḥ* – by those who are not self-controlled; *taranti* – they may cross over; *añjaḥ* – easily; *sthūla-dhiyaḥ* – persons whose intelligence is dulled by materialistic attachments; *maha-ṛṣe* – O great sage; *idam* – this; *ucyatām* – please tell.

TRANSLATION

King Nimi said: O great sage, please explain how even a foolish materialist can easily cross over the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord, which is always insurmountable for those who are not self-controlled.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, *sthūla-dhiyaḥ* indicates those who ignorantly identify themselves with the gross material body and who are

therefore unable to analyze the subtle laws of nature by which the soul transmigrates in illusion. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments that *sthūla-dhiyaḥ* also indicates so-called pious persons who execute pompous religious ceremonies for material sense gratification rather than trying to prepare themselves to go back home, back to Godhead, by engaging in the loving devotional service of the Lord.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, King Nimi was already an advanced devotee of the Lord and therefore knew that one can cross over the illusory energy, *māyā*, by surrendering to the lotus feet of the Lord and pleasing Him by pure devotional service. Therefore the King was asking the question for the benefit of those who falsely consider themselves very much learned but in fact are addicted to materialistic fruitive activities, which increasingly entangle them in illusion. In this regard Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has quoted from the *Amara-kośa* dictionary to show that *akṛtātmabhiḥ* indicates *apūrṇatvam*, or one whose life is empty.

Every living being has an eternal relationship with the supreme living being, Kṛṣṇa. One may love Kṛṣṇa by thinking of Him as one's eternal master, one's most intimate friend, one's beloved child or the object of one's conjugal attraction. Of course, such ecstasies should never be confused with ordinary, material emotions, which are perverted reflections of spiritual *rasas*, or relationships. In the material world we try to relish these same relationships of servitude, friendship, parental love and conjugal love, but the object of such feelings is a temporary material body, which is quickly devastated by the laws of nature. These loving feelings should be directed toward the spiritual body of the Supreme Personality, Kṛṣṇa, who is the reservoir of all beauty and transcendental bliss. One who has not learned the art of directing his love to Kṛṣṇa is *apūrṇa*, or one whose life is ultimately empty. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, one whose life is empty can also be called *manda-dhīḥ*, or one whose intelligence is crippled by a lack of broad experience. King Nimi, a pure Vaiṣṇava, was so kind that he asked, "How can such cripple-minded people cross over *māyā* in the easiest way possible, since by nature they are very lazy in spiritual matters?"

TEXT 3.18

śrī-prabuddha uvāca
karmāṇy ārabhamāṇānām
duḥkha-hatyai sukhāya ca
paśyet pāka-viparyāsam
mithunī-cāriṇām nṛṇām

śrī-prabuddhaḥ uvāca – Śrī Prabuddha said; *karmāṇi* – fruitive activities; *ārabhamāṇānām* – making endeavors in; *duḥkha-hatyai* – for the elimination of distress; *sukhāya ca* – and for gaining happiness; *paśyet* – one should see; *pāka* – of the result; *viparyāsam* – contrary outcome; *mithunī-cāriṇām* – who are coupled as men and women; *nṛṇām* – of such persons.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Prabuddha said: Accepting the roles of male and female in human society, the conditioned souls unite in sexual relationships. Thus they constantly make material endeavors to eliminate their unhappiness and unlimitedly increase their pleasure. But one should see that they inevitably achieve exactly the opposite result. In other words, their happiness inevitably vanishes, and as they grow older their material discomfort increases.

PURPORT

Without the mercy of a pure devotee it is exceedingly difficult to free oneself from the bodily concept of life, which is the illusory basis of sexual attraction.

TEXT 3.19

*nityārtidena vittena
durlabhenātma-mṛtyunā
gṛhāpatyāpta-paśubhiḥ
kā prītiḥ sādhitaiś calaiḥ*

nitya – constantly; *ārti-dena* – giving pain; *vittena* – with wealth; *durlabhena* – hard to acquire; *ātma-mṛtyunā* – death for the self; *gṛha* – with one’s home; *apatya* – children; *āpta* – relatives; *paśubhiḥ* – and domestic animals; *kā* – what; *prītiḥ* – happiness; *sādhitaiḥ* – which are gained (by that wealth); *calaiḥ* – unsteady.

TRANSLATION

Wealth is a perpetual source of distress, it is most difficult to acquire, and it is virtual death for the soul. What satisfaction does one actually gain from his wealth? Similarly, how can one gain ultimate or permanent happiness from one’s so-called home, children, relatives and domestic animals, which are all maintained by one’s hard-earned money?

TEXT 3.20

*evam lokam param vidyān
naśvaram karma-nirmitam
sa-tulyātiśaya-dhvaṁsam
yathā maṇḍala-vartinām*

evam – in this way; *lokam* – the world; *param* – next (after this life); *vidyāt* – one should understand as; *naśvaram* – impermanent; *karma-nirmitam* – created from fruitive work; *sa-tulya* – characterized by (the rivalry of) equals; *atiśaya* – and superiors; *dhvaṁsam* – and by ruination; *yathā* – as; *maṇḍala-vartinām* – (the rivalries) of minor rulers.

TRANSLATION

One cannot find permanent happiness even on the heavenly planets, which one can attain in the next life by ritualistic ceremonies and sacrifices. Even in material heaven the living entity is disturbed by rivalry with his equals and envy of those superior to him. And since

one's residence in heaven is finished with the exhaustion of pious fruitive activities, the denizens of heaven are afflicted by fear, anticipating the destruction of their heavenly life. Thus they resemble kings who, though enviously admired by ordinary citizens, are constantly harassed by enemy kings and who therefore never attain actual happiness.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has quoted the following text from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (8.1.6): *tad yatheha karma-cito lokaḥ kṣīyate, evam evāmutra puṇya-cito lokaḥ kṣīyate*. "One's present status of material pleasure, the result of one's previous work, will eventually be vanquished by time. Similarly, although by executing pious activities one will be elevated to a higher status in the next life, that future situation will also be vanquished." The basis of material enjoyment is the particular body one has acquired. The material body is *karma-citaḥ*, the accumulated result of one's previous material activities. If one is awarded a body decorated with beauty, education, popularity, strength and so on, his standard of material enjoyment is certainly high class. On the other hand, if one is ugly, mentally retarded, crippled or repulsive to others, there is very little hope for his material happiness. In both cases, however, the situation is flickering and temporary. One who has acquired an attractive body should not rejoice, since death will quickly bring an end to such an intoxicating situation. Similarly, one who has taken birth in an obnoxious situation should not lament, since his suffering is also temporary. The beautiful man and the ugly man, the rich and the poor, the educated and the foolish should all endeavor to become Kṛṣṇa conscious so that they can be elevated to their eternal constitutional situation, which is to reside in the planets beyond this material universe. Originally every living entity is unimaginably beautiful, intelligent, wealthy, and so strong that his spiritual body lives forever. But we foolishly give up this eternal, blissful situation because we are unwilling to meet the condition for eternal life. The condition is that one should be a lover of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Although love of Kṛṣṇa is the most exquisite ecstasy, surpassing by millions of times the most intense pleasure of the material universe, we foolishly break off our loving affair with the Supreme Lord and artificially try to become independent enjoyers in the material atmosphere of self-delusion and false pride. Even if one reaches the exalted heavenly planets of this universe he will be afflicted by various types of suffering. Every conditioned soul in the material world wants to become the greatest person. Therefore one is constantly harassed by his equals who have a similar desire. This situation is commonly termed the "rat race" of material existence. Even on the heavenly planets there is a similar rat race for heavenly distinction. Since some persons inevitably excel our own achievements, our hearts burn with envy upon seeing others enjoying the very rewards we have strived for. And because our whole situation is temporary, we must undergo fear, anxiety and death

even on the heavenly planets. The example given here is very nice. Minor kings may be enviously admired by ordinary citizens for their wealth, power and fame, but such kings themselves constantly burn with jealousy, resentment and fear due to rivalry and threats from other kings. Similarly, modern politicians are constantly harassed by envy and fear. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that the conditioned souls, being eager to acquire material happiness and avoid distress, take shelter of sexual relationships and thus surrender to the hard labor of fruitive activities. Those who are enlightened, however, can perceive the ultimate futility of such gross materialistic endeavors. One's so-called wife, home, children, relatives, bank account and so on are all temporary phantasmagoria, and even while manifest they can never give real satisfaction to one's senses. To acquire wealth in this world one is practically forced to become the killer of his own soul. There is no possibility of acquiring pleasure from materialistic activities, since they are performed with temporary senses in the hot pursuit of temporary sense objects. When the conditioned soul achieves his goal he becomes proud and brags to others as if his achievements were permanent. And when defeated he is submerged in lamentation. Such a tendency to consider oneself the doer is a sign of weak intelligence, since in fact the living entity is merely desiring within the material body. The body itself is moved by the forces of material nature, under the control of God. The relationships of master and servant, father and son, husband and wife entail exchanges of well-wishing and service that give a sense of material gratification, but such ephemeral devotion can never bring about the eternal absolute benefit of the soul. By such temporary gratification, *māyā* induces the conditioned soul to wander throughout the material world, pursuing the relative rewards of material nature. According to the subtle laws of *karma*, the living entity achieves happiness and distress. One cannot obtain happiness by force, no matter how strenuously or how long one tries. Therefore those whose intelligence is uncontaminated should surrender at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and give up the ludicrous pursuit of permanent material happiness, a pursuit which can be compared to a dog's chasing its tail.

TEXT 3.21

*tasmād gurum prapadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātam
brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*

tasmāt – therefore; *gurum* – a spiritual master; *prapadyeta* – one should take shelter of; *jijñāsuḥ* – being inquisitive; *śreyaḥ uttamam* – about the highest good; *śābde* – in the *Vedas*; *pare* – in the Supreme; *ca* – and; *niṣṇātam* – perfectly knowledgeable; *brahmaṇi* – (in these two aspects) of the Absolute Truth; *upaśama-āśrayam* – fixed in detachment from material affairs.

TRANSLATION

Therefore any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona fide guru is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *śābde* refers to the Vedic literature, and *pare* refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The bona fide spiritual master must be *niṣṇātam*, deeply experienced in authorized Vedic literatures and in practical understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Without scriptural knowledge and practical realization of the Personality of Godhead, a so-called *guru* will be unable to dissipate the doubts of his disciples and therefore unable to execute the function of bringing the sincere student back home, back to Godhead. The symptom of realized understanding of the *Vedas* and Kṛṣṇa is *upaśamāśrayam*. In other words, the bona fide spiritual master is one who has retired from the glittering illusions of materialistic society, friendship and love.

Within the material world one is certainly attracted to becoming a great intellectual, a powerful politician, the loving father of many beautiful and affectionate little children, a most honored welfare worker or a highly admired and successful businessman. But none of these material positions have a permanent basis, nor do they afford permanent happiness, because they are all based on the primary misunderstanding by which one identifies himself with the material body.

Anyone can readily experience that he is not the body but consciousness. Even if one loses a limb of his body, he does not cease to exist as a conscious entity. Ultimately, the entire body is lost at the time of death, and the living entity acquires a new body. The preliminary understanding of one's identity as consciousness is called self-realization. But beyond this elementary knowledge is the elaborate subject matter of how the soul came to exist within the cycle of 8,400,000 material species of life. And if the living entity is not the material body but consciousness, he must ultimately have an original status on a higher platform.

Punishment implies reward also; a powerful man who can punish is also able to reward. Therefore, the existence of punishment for the living being, who is forced to take a miserable material body subject to birth, old age, disease and death, also logically implies the existence of a reward for him. Although we mistakenly consider material sense gratification the ultimate reward of life, material happiness is actually another type of punishment, since it entices one to continue rotating in the cycle of birth and death. In the Western countries violent prisoners are placed in solitary confinement

whereas well-behaved prisoners are sometimes allowed to work in the warden’s garden or library as a reward. But any position in prison is ultimately a punishment. Similarly, the existence of higher and lower categories of material sense gratification does not explain the living entity’s ultimate reward, which must constitute the natural antithesis of the punishment of material existence. That actual reward is an eternal life of bliss and knowledge in the kingdom of God, where there is no punishment. The kingdom of God is *Vaikuṅṭha*, or unconditional pleasure. There is no punishment in the spiritual world; it is a place of ever-increasing pleasure. A bona fide spiritual master is one who is expert in all of these subject matters, not by his personal imagination or speculation but by mature understanding of the authorized Vedic literatures, which are the literary manifestation of the causeless mercy of God. The Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.3):

*aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā
dharmasyāśya parantapa
aprāpya mām nivartante
mṛtyu-saṁsāra-vartmani*

“Those who are not faithful on the path of devotional service cannot attain Me, O conqueror of foes, but return to birth and death in this material world.” Therefore the spiritual master must awaken the disciple to the eternal existence of devotional service. The example may be given that in the early morning a mother may enter her child’s room to wake him up so that he can attend school. The child does not want to get up, but the loving mother forces him to get up and sends him off to school to be educated. Similarly, the bona fide spiritual master awakens the sleeping soul and sends him to the *gurukula*, or the *āśrama* of the spiritual master, where he can be trained in perfect knowledge.

If the disciple has doubts about the value of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the bona fide spiritual master must dissipate those doubts by superior knowledge. One who himself doubts the authority of Kṛṣṇa or Vedic knowledge cannot become a bona fide spiritual master. On the other hand, *kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kena naya/ yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei ‘guru’ haya*: any human being from any social or economic status can become a bona fide spiritual master if he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said:

*yāre dekha, tāre kaha ‘kṛṣṇa’-upadeśa
āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra ei deśa*

“Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land.” (Cc. *Madhya* 7.128) Only by the order and authority of the Supreme Lord one can become a spiritual master, not by one’s own so-called erudition.

The duty of the bona fide *guru* is to connect the disciple to Kṛṣṇa. A scholar or meditator has no potency to connect another living being with Kṛṣṇa if that scholar or meditator himself is not connected with Kṛṣṇa. Although

many sports fans attend gymnastic competitions and applaud at the exhibition of difficult calisthenic feats, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not such a gymnastic spectator, and He does not applaud the calisthenics exhibited by foolish persons in the name of *yoga*. Nor is the Supreme Personality of Godhead impressed by mediocre attempts at philosophical speculation, since the Lord has already given His own opinion in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*śṛṇu me paramaṁ vacaḥ*). The word of Kṛṣṇa is *paramaṁ vacaḥ*, the last word in knowledge. And Kṛṣṇa says, *yaj jñātvā neha bhūyo 'nyaj jñātavyam avaśiṣyate*: “When you know this knowledge there shall remain nothing further to be known.” Kṛṣṇa has also referred to His knowledge as *rāja-vidyā*, the king of all knowledge.

If one does not become a lover of Kṛṣṇa, his connection with Kṛṣṇa takes place indirectly, through the illusory potency of the Lord. The idea that one can attract the Supreme Lord through mere gymnastics or foolish speculation on the Absolute Truth is certainly a product of *māyā*. One who is connected to Kṛṣṇa through His external, illusory potency can serve only as a material master to connect his so-called disciples to the same illusory energy. On the other hand, in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.13) it is said:

*mahātmānas tu mām pārtha
daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ
bhajanty ananya-manaso
jñātvā bhūtādim avyayam*

Those who are actually great souls have surrendered to the internal potency of the Lord and can similarly connect others to the internal pleasure-giving potency. A *mahātmā* is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* as follows: *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ*. “He knows Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is. Such a great soul is very rare.” It is to such a spiritual master, who has reached the mature understanding that Vāsudeva is everything, that one must surrender. According to Śrī Nārada Muni, *yo vidvān sa gurur hariḥ*: such a great soul is to be considered the external manifestation of Kṛṣṇa Himself. Kṛṣṇa states this also:

*ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyān
nāvamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāsūyeta
sarva-devamayo guruḥ*

“One should know the *ācārya* to be My self and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.” (*Bhāg.* 11.17.27)

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, if a spiritual master cannot destroy his disciple’s doubts by superior knowledge, the disciple will gradually become despondent in spiritual life. Because a bogus *guru* cannot actually give Kṛṣṇa to the disciple according to the principle of *rasa-varjam raso 'py asya*, the disciple will again become attracted to material happiness, not having achieved the bliss of Kṛṣṇa’s association. Such a weak disciple of a weak spiritual master will gradually become hopeless and discouraged in

his attempt at self-realization and will again become fascinated by the temptations of illusion, such as women, money and so-called intellectuality based on speculation and imagination.

Further symptoms of the bona fide spiritual master are given in the *Upadeśāmṛta* (1) as follows:

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*

“A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind’s demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated, *upaśamāśrayam krodha-lobhādy-avaśī-bhūtam*: a bona fide spiritual master cannot be under the control of ordinary anger, greed and lust.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, one who has understood the futility of material existence can approach a bona fide spiritual master. In the two previous verses the futility of earthly and heavenly sense gratification has been described. Now, the natural conclusion is that one who has understood this should approach a bona fide spiritual master. The bona fide spiritual master broadcasts the sound vibration from the spiritual planets called Vaikuṅṭha. The inhabitants of the spiritual planets, headed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, are certainly not deaf and dumb; they are in constant communication through unlimited transcendental bliss and knowledge. And the bona fide spiritual master can transmit this sound vibration of bliss and knowledge to his disciple. Just as a radio broadcasts mundane news, the bona fide *guru* broadcasts the news from Vaikuṅṭha. This is confirmed by Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura: *golokera prema-dhana, hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana*. The spiritual master also transmits to the disciple the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, which is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa Himself. The bona fide *guru* informs his disciple that every living entity is qualitatively one with the Supreme Lord but quantitatively different and thus engages the disciple in the loving service of the Lord. Because the living entity is qualitatively one with the Lord and is part of Him, there is an eternal loving relationship between them. And because the living entity is quantitatively different, that relationship is eternally one of service.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, even though one may have the good fortune to accept a bona fide, highly qualified *guru*, if one maintains a taste for fruitive activities or mental speculation one’s advancement will be checked. But if a serious student surrenders to a bona fide spiritual master there is absolutely no impediment to the transmission of perfect knowledge and bliss in the devotional service of the Lord.

TEXT 3.22

*tatra bhāgavatān dharmān
śikṣed gurv-ātma-daivataḥ
amāyayānuvṛtṭyā yaiḥ
tuṣyed ātmātma-do hariḥ*

tatra – there (in the association of the spiritual master); *bhāgavatān dharmān* – the science of devotional service; *śikṣet* – should learn; *guru-ātma-daivataḥ* – he for whom the spiritual master is his very life and worshipable deity; *amāyayā* – without deceit; *anuvṛtṭyā* – by faithful service; *yaiḥ* – by which (devotional science); *tuṣyet* – can be satisfied; *ātmā* – the Supreme Soul; *ātma-daḥ* – who bestows His own self; *hariḥ* – Lord Hari.

TRANSLATION

Accepting the bona fide spiritual master as one’s life and soul and worshipable deity, the disciple should learn from him the process of pure devotional service. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the soul of all souls, is inclined to give Himself to His pure devotees. Therefore, the disciple should learn from the spiritual master to serve the Lord without duplicity and in such a faithful and favorable way that the Supreme Lord, being satisfied, will offer Himself to the faithful disciple.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī the Lord’s tendency to give Himself to His pure devotee is demonstrated in the case of Bali Mahārāja, who sacrificed his universal kingdom for the pleasure of Lord Vāmanadeva. Lord Vāmana was so pleased by the selfless surrender of Bali Mahārāja that the Lord became the doorman in the palace of Bali, who was reinstated as a great leader in the universe.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments that the spiritual master is to be considered the *ātmā*, or the very life, of the disciple, since real life begins when one is initiated by a bona fide spiritual master. Although one may experience many seemingly wonderful or important events in a dream, one’s real life begins when he wakes up. Similarly, since the spiritual master gives birth to the disciple by awakening him to spiritual life, a bona fide disciple understands that his spiritual master is the very basis of his life.

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the reservoir of all pleasure, and thus the Lord’s giving Himself to a pure devotee indicates that such a devotee becomes immersed in the highest possible ecstasy. In this connection there is the following *śruti-mantra*: *ānandād dhīmāni bhūtāni jāyante*. “Indeed, it is from the all-blissful Supreme that all these creatures have come into being.” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has further pointed out that when the Lord bestows His own self upon a pure devotee such a fortunate devotee can actually see the Lord, touch Him and directly engage in His service.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, one should never consider one’s spiritual master to be mundane or on an equal level with one’s self. One should see the spiritual master as being always under the

shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. One should never try to engage the spiritual master in one's personal service with the mentality of lording it over the spiritual master and attaining through him some material gain. One who is actually advancing will become more and more eager to serve the spiritual master, and thus such a disciple experiences the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has delineated four preliminary requisites for advancement for the sincere disciple:

*guru-pādāśrayas tasmāt
kṛṣṇa-dīkṣādi-śikṣaṇam
viśrambheṇa guroḥ sevā
sādhu-vartmānuvartanam*

“[1] Accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master, [2] becoming initiated by the spiritual master and learning how to discharge devotional service from him, [3] obeying the orders of the spiritual master with faith and devotion, and [4] following in the footsteps of great *ācāryas* [teachers] under the direction of the spiritual master.” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.74) One who has executed these preliminary duties is qualified to relish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

When one actually hears the sound vibration of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as it is, he becomes free from the desire for sense gratification and mental speculation and is happy and satisfied in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

*yasyām vai śrūyamāṇāyām
kṛṣṇe parama-pūruṣe
bhaktir utpadyate puṁsaḥ
śoka-moha-bhayāpahā*

“Simply by giving aural reception to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the feeling for loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, sprouts up at once to extinguish the fire of lamentation, illusion and fearfulness.” (*Bhāg.* 1.7.7) One should hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from a bona fide spiritual master who can expertly engage the propensity for loving Kṛṣṇa that arises from hearing the transcendental sound of the *Bhāgavatam*. Such a transcendental, authorized engagement is called *bhāgavata-dharma*.

Within the International Society for Krishna Consciousness there are many thousands of authorized engagements pertaining to the Society's missionary activities. And by hearing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and performing such engagements the Society's members feel relief from *śoka* (lamentation), *moha* (illusion) and *bhaya* (fear).

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, those who have achieved a mature understanding of the transcendental sound vibration of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* may adopt the order of *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa*, as described in the *Harṁsa-gītā*, the Thirteenth Chapter of this canto. A so-called Vaiṣṇava who whimsically neglects the strict control of the body, mind and speech cannot actually achieve shelter at the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master. Even if such a whimsical sense enjoyer makes a show of assuming

the dress and *daṇḍa* of Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsa*, he will not attain the desired result, love of Kṛṣṇa. A bona fide Vaiṣṇava should work earnestly to free himself from any tinge of sense gratification and mental speculation, and with a loving heart he should carry out the orders of his bona fide spiritual master. By always remembering the exalted position of the bona fide spiritual master, the disciple will achieve shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 3.23

*sarvato manaso'saṅgam
ādau saṅgam ca sādhuṣu
dayām maitrīm praśrayam ca
bhūteṣv addhā yathocitam*

sarvataḥ – everywhere; *manasaḥ* – of the mind; *asaṅgam* – detachment; *ādau* – in the beginning; *saṅgam* – association; *ca* – and; *sādhuṣu* – with saintly persons; *dayām* – mercy; *maitrīm* – friendship; *praśrayam* – reverence; *ca* – and; *bhūteṣu* – for all living beings; *addhā* – thus; *yathā ucitam* – as is suitable.

TRANSLATION

A sincere disciple should learn to dissociate the mind from everything material and positively cultivate association with his spiritual master and other saintly devotees. He should be merciful to those in an inferior position to him, cultivate friendship with those on an equal level and meekly serve those in a higher spiritual position. Thus he should learn to deal properly with all living beings.

PURPORT

Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted from the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* to demonstrate that within this universe those who take birth as demigods, great *ṛṣis* or pious human beings are all considered *santaḥ*, or saintly persons. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, *traiguṇya-viṣayā vedāḥ*: the *varṇāśrama* culture described in Vedic literature deals mostly with the living entities who are struggling within the three modes of nature. The Vedic literatures teach such conditioned souls that material happiness can be achieved only through pious works. In this sense, the demigods are to be considered the most pious living entities within the three modes of material nature. The *ṛṣis*, or the great saintly mystics of the universe, who are able to travel at will to various planets and who cultivate mystic powers, are to be considered somewhat below the demigods. And those human beings on earth who perfectly execute the Vedic rituals are to be considered in the third or lowest category of *santaḥ*, or saintly persons. But a devotee of the Lord is beyond the three modes of material nature. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.26):

*mām ca yo'vyabhicāreṇa
bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatīyaitān
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

“One who engages in full devotional service, who does not fall down in any circumstance, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman.” Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly says that a Vaiṣṇava who does not fall down from the regulations of *bhakti-yoga* is beyond the three modes of nature. And Lord Kṛṣṇa advised Arjuna, a *kṛṣṇa-bhakta*, to transcend the three material qualities of the illusory creation of *māyā* (*nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna*). But in the Eighteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.40) the Lord says:

*na tad asti pṛthivyām vā
divi deveṣu vā punaḥ
sattvaṁ prakṛti-jair muktaṁ
yad ebhiḥ syāt tribhir guṇaiḥ*

“There is no being existing, either here or among the demigods in the higher planetary systems, who is free from the three modes of material nature.” Thus the demigods are not exempt from the pollution of the three modes of material nature, whereas a pure devotee actually becomes *guṇātīta*, or transcendental to the influence of *māyā*.

Therefore, one should cultivate the association of the *uttama-adhikārī*, or pure devotee of the Lord, as stated previously (*Bhāg.* 11.3.21):

*tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātam
brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*

“Therefore any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona fide *guru* is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.”

On the other hand, one should avoid the association of a materialistic person even if such a person is outwardly chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has advised in this respect:

*kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta
dīkṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īśam
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-
nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā*

One may mentally offer respect to any living entity who is chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, but one should avoid intimate association with materialistic persons, especially those attached to sex enjoyment. *Tamo-dvāraṁ yoṣitāṁ saṅgi-saṅgam*. If one associates with a sensuous person who is attached to the company of women, by such association one will surely go to hell.

But if a materialistic person approaches a pure devotee with a sincere desire to hear from him about spiritual improvement, that first-class devotee may mercifully give his association, provided the purpose of such a meeting is

advancement in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa. By such association even a materialistic person can gradually become a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. If an advanced devotee is not able to engage a materialistic person in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa, such association is strictly forbidden.

In the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* it is stated:

*viśeṣataḥ svottameṣu
vinā saṅgam na mucyate
sva-nīceṣu tu deveṣu
vinā saṅgam na pūryate*

“One cannot be liberated without association with a pure devotee of the Lord. And unless one shows mercy to those in an inferior position, one’s life will be superficial.” It is our practical experience in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement that those who are expanding their mercy by preaching the message of Kṛṣṇa are making rapid spiritual progress, and their life is filled with transcendental bliss. Those who neglect the quality of mercy, being uninterested in the missionary activities of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, are not filled with transcendental pleasure as described here by the word *pūryate*. Not being filled with spiritual pleasure, surely such persons attempt to fill their lives with material pleasure through sense gratification and mental speculation, associating with women or reading innumerable mundane novels, newspapers, newsmagazines, and so on. According to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu the preaching activities of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are *ānandāmbudhi-varadhanam*, the ever-increasing ocean of bliss. Missionary activities are based on the principle of *dayām*, or mercy to those who are fallen. Those who are actually preaching become enlivened by associating with other preachers. This principle is called *maitrīm*, or friendship among equals. The power to carry out such preaching activities, as well as the proper guidance for distributing Kṛṣṇa’s message, comes through the principle of *praśrayam*, or humble service at the lotus feet of spiritual authorities such as the spiritual master. If one preaches Kṛṣṇa consciousness sincerely under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master and in the company of fellow preachers, one is perfectly fulfilling the statement of this verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and thus he will come to the point of *sarvato manaso ’saṅgam*, or complete detachment from the illusory energy of the Lord. Caitanya Mahāprabhu has stated, *lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*. By becoming attached to the devotees of the Lord, one will achieve all perfection in life, going back home, back to Godhead. If one neglects the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by engaging in sinful life, he is certainly not merciful. One who ignores his eternal status as part and parcel of the Supreme Lord and who instead covers himself more and more with material illusions in the form of temporary designations – “I am American,” “I am Russian,” “I am Indian,” “I am black,” “I am white” and so on – is certainly a killer of his own soul and cannot be considered merciful. Similarly, those who support animal slaughter by eating meat, fish and eggs cannot be considered merciful. Sometimes the argument is given that if one

does not harm others he is perfectly religious. But because we are now in a state of ignorance, we have no idea whatsoever of the future reactions to our present activities. Ignorantly boasting that one is not harming others, without an awareness of the subtle laws of nature, does not make one a religious person. One becomes religious by surrendering to the laws of God as they are stated by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā*. As long as a living entity is infatuated with his own mental speculations, which carry him away like the waves of the ocean, he cannot understand the process of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Mental speculations based on our experience of the variegated creations of the Lord's illusory energy are incapable of bringing us to perfect knowledge. One must give up materialistic association and make company with pure devotees of the Lord, those who are engaged twenty-four hours a day in perfectly pleasing the Supreme Lord.

One should cultivate association with those who are more advanced than oneself in devotional service. One's advancement can be measured by one's detachment from sense gratification and his ability to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others. In this connection Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has said, *chāḍiyā vaiṣṇava-sevā, nistāra pāyeche kebā*: "Who can attain salvation if he gives up the service of the Vaiṣṇavas?" By serving the lotus feet of pure devotees, one is immediately enlightened with spiritual knowledge. All of the so-called pleasures of the material world, culminating in many varieties of sexual fantasy and impersonal visions of oneself as God, become useless to one who has achieved the mercy of the lotus feet of a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. The entire material creation is compared to an insignificant bubble in the ocean. The material universe rests on the spiritual potency of the Lord called *brahmajyoti*, just as an insignificant bubble rests on the potency of the unlimited ocean. By serving the lotus feet of a pure devotee one can enter the ocean of eternal happiness and experience his constitutional position as a servant of Kṛṣṇa. The mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas is unlimited, and one who has tasted that mercy becomes mad after the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, not caring for the hallucinations of so-called material pleasure or mental speculation. The mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas is substantial and as powerful as Kṛṣṇa Himself, whereas impersonal speculations and hopeless dreams of society, friendship and love merely constitute various means by which *māyā* cheats the conditioned souls and keeps them in perpetual frustration.

TEXT 3.24

*śaucam tapas titikṣām ca
maunam svādhyāyam ārjavam
brahmacaryam ahimsām ca
samatvam dvandva-samjñayoḥ*

śaucam - cleanliness; *tapas* - austerity; *titikṣām* - tolerance; *ca* - and; *maunam* - silence; *svādhyāyam* - study of the Vedas; *ārjavam* - simplicity;

brahmacaryam – celibacy; *ahimsām* – nonviolence; *ca* – and; *amatvam* – equanimity; *dvandva-samjñayoḥ* – in situations perceived in terms of duality.

TRANSLATION

To serve the spiritual master the disciple should learn cleanliness, austerity, tolerance, silence, study of Vedic knowledge, simplicity, celibacy, nonviolence, and equanimity in the face of material dualities such as heat and cold, happiness and distress.

PURPORT

Śaucam, or “cleanliness,” refers to both internal and external purity. One should remain externally clean by bathing with soap and water at least once and, if possible, three times daily. One is considered internally pure when he is free from the pollution of false pride and egotism. *Tapah*, or “austerity,” means that despite the irrational impulses of the mind one should remain fixed in executing his proper duty in life. Specifically, one must control burning anger and the urge for wanton sex life. If a human being does not control the impulses of lust, anger and greed, he loses his power to understand his actual situation. Human life is a golden opportunity to solve the overwhelming problems of birth, death, old age and disease. According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (3.8.9):

*varṇāśramācāra-vatā
puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā
nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*

Every human being can achieve spiritual perfection by dedicating the fruits of his prescribed work to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. Similarly, in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.45) Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly states, *sve sve karmaṇy abhirataḥ saṁsiddhiṁ labhate naraḥ*. One does not have to adopt a monastic life or live in the forest as a *yogī*; one can achieve perfection by dedicating his occupational duties to the Supreme Lord. Similarly, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said, *nāmāśraya kari' yatane tumi, thakaha āpana kāje*. If one sincerely takes shelter of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, he will achieve spiritual perfection within the compass of his normal daily activities. Unfortunately, if a human being neglects the regulative principles of civilized life that prohibit illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication and gambling, he will surely be overwhelmed by the waves of lust and anger, which completely cover one's consciousness of the reality of spiritual life and draw one to engage in the phantasmagoria of the temporary material body. As Lord Kṛṣṇa has stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.39):

*āvṛtam jñānam etena
jñānino nitya-vairiṇā
kāma-rūpeṇa kaunteya
duṣpūreṇānalena ca*

“Thus a man’s pure consciousness is covered by his eternal enemy in the form of lust, which is never satisfied and which burns like fire.” Therefore, the word *tapah*, or “austerity,” in this verse indicates that one must remain in his prescribed duty and not become impatient or unregulated due to the waves of lust, anger and greed.

The word *titikṣām*, or “tolerance,” indicates that a transcendentalist must be forgiving. The material world is full of embarrassing and irritating situations, and unless one is inclined to be very much forgiving he will become infected by a vindictive mentality, which spoils one’s spiritual consciousness.

Maunam, or “silence,” means that one should not speak on worthless or frivolous topics, but should discuss the actual issues of human life such as going back home, back to Godhead. Remaining completely silent is a symptom of ignorance; a stone is silent due to a lack of consciousness. Since every material thing has its spiritual counterpart, the Vedic *śāstras* contain negative and positive injunctions. Corresponding to the negative injunction against speech is the positive injunction that one should always speak about Kṛṣṇa. *Satataṁ kīrtayanto māṁ*. One should always speak about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, glorifying His holy name, fame, pastimes, entourage, and so on. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also it is stated, *śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca dhyeyaḥ pūjyaś ca nityadā*. One should always hear about, glorify, meditate upon and worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. In the verse 21 of this chapter it was stated, *śābde pare ca niṣṇātam*. The bona fide spiritual master is expert in *śābde pare*, or the transcendental sound vibration describing the spiritual world. One cannot artificially remain empty-headed or speechless, as advocated by foolish proponents of concocted systems of meditation and *yoga*. But one should be so absorbed in the loving service of Kṛṣṇa, and so lovingly attracted to praising Kṛṣṇa, that one has not a single moment free to speak nonsense. That is the purport of the word *maunam*.

Svādhyāyam means that one should study Vedic literature according to his individual ability and also teach others. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is mentioned that a *brāhmaṇa* should have the qualities of *jñāna* and *vijñāna*, scriptural knowledge and practical realized application of knowledge. Specifically one should study those books which increase one’s desire to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His Divine Grace Oṁ Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has written in a few short years a veritable library of transcendental knowledge. It is being practically seen throughout the world that when the principle of *svādhyāyam*, or Vedic study, is applied to these books, such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *The Nectar of Devotion*, the sincere reader becomes infused with the ecstatic determination to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The entire International Society for Krishna Consciousness is expanding all over the world on the basis of this transcendental literature. *Svādhyāyam* does not indicate speculative or imaginary interpretations of religious scriptures, nor

should one try to read many books to increase his false prestige as a so-called scholar. One should read those books which inspire practical spiritual advancement in knowledge and renunciation, as exemplified by the books of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The word *ārjavam* indicates simplicity or straightforwardness. According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī *svacchatām*, or “clarity, transparency,” is a synonym for *straightforwardness*. Unless one is pure in consciousness he will adopt many crooked means. *Straightforwardness* does not indicate that one should insult others in the name of honesty, but that one should speak the humble truth. The word *brahmacaryam*, or “celibacy,” indicates either renouncing completely the association of women or following strictly the Vedic principles of householder life, which regulate sex life for the purpose of procreating saintly children. *Ahiṁsām* indicates that one should not commit violence against any living entity. Unless one is aware of the subtle laws of *karma*, by which a living being enjoys and suffers, one cannot actually practice *ahiṁsā*, or nonviolence. Ultimately the material world is full of violence, and the laws of nature, which impose old age, disease and death upon every living creature, are themselves filled with violence. Therefore, if somehow or other one can convince others to surrender to Kṛṣṇa and thus release themselves from the violent laws of material nature, that is the perfection of *ahiṁsā*. *Samatvaṁ dvandva-saṁjñayoḥ* indicates that one should keep a cool head even when disturbing material dualities become manifest. Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.14):

*mātrā-sparśās tu kaunteya
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ
āgamāpāyino'nityās
tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata*

“O son of Kuntī, the nonpermanent appearance of happiness and distress, and their disappearance in due course, are like the appearance and disappearance of winter and summer seasons. They arise from sense perception, O scion of Bharata, and one must learn to tolerate them without being disturbed.”

TEXT 3.25

*sarvatrātmeśvarānvīkṣāṁ
kaivalyam aniketatām
vivikta-cīra-vasanaṁ
santoṣaṁ yena kenacit*

sarvatra – everywhere; *ātma* – for one’s true self; *īśvara* – and for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *anvīkṣāṁ* – meditation by keeping continuously in view; *kaivalyam* – solitude; *aniketatām* – having no fixed residence; *vivikta-cīra* – scraps of cloth found in unfrequented places; *vasanam* – wearing; *santoṣam* – satisfaction; *yena kenacit* – with anything.

TRANSLATION

One should practice meditation by constantly seeing oneself to be an eternal cognizant spirit soul and seeing the Lord to be the absolute controller of everything. To increase one's meditation, one should live in a secluded place and give up false attachment to one's home and household paraphernalia. Giving up the decorations of the temporary material body, one should dress himself with scraps of cloth found in rejected places, or with the bark of trees. In this way one should learn to be satisfied in any material situation.

PURPORT

Kaivalyam, or living in a secluded place, indicates a place free from material disturbances. Therefore, one should live in the association of Vaiṣṇavas, where the common goal is advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Especially in the Kali-yuga, if one tries to remain physically isolated from all others the result will be degradation or insanity. *Aniketatām* means that one should not be intoxicated by the ephemeral satisfaction of one's "home sweet home," which will vanish at any moment by the unforeseen circumstances produced by one's previous activities. In this age it is not actually possible to dress in tree bark in modern cities, nor to wear mere scraps of cloth. Previously, human culture accommodated those practicing *tapasya*, or penances in the interest of spiritual advancement. In this age, however, the most urgent necessity is for preaching the message of *Bhagavad-gītā* throughout human society. Therefore, it is recommended that Vaiṣṇavas dress with clean and neat cloth, covering the body decently so that the conditioned souls will not be frightened or repulsed by the severe penances of the Vaiṣṇavas. In the Kali-yuga the conditioned souls are extremely attached to material sense gratification, and extreme austerities are not appreciated, but are instead considered abominable denials of the flesh. Of course, austerity is required for spiritual advancement, but the practical example set by Śrīla Prabhupāda in successfully spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was that all material things should be used to attract people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, Vaiṣṇavas may at times adopt ordinary dress to serve the higher principle of distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In any case, one should learn to be satisfied in any material situation so as to prepare for the moment of death. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, at the time of death the particular consciousness we have created in this life will carry us to our future situation. Therefore, human life can be seen as a type of practice for successfully fixing one's mind on the Absolute Truth during the severe trials of death.

TEXT 3.26

*śraddhām bhāgavate śāstre
'nindām anyatra cāpi hi
mano-vāk-karma-daṇḍam ca
satyaṁ śama-damāv api*

śraddhām – faith; *bhāgavate* – related to the Supreme Lord; *śāstre* – in scripture; *anindām* – not blaspheming; *anyatra* – others; *ca* – also; *api hi* – indeed; *manaḥ* – of the mind; *vāk* – speech; *karma* – and one’s activities; *daṇḍam* – strict control; *ca* – and; *satyam* – truthfulness; *śama* – self-control of the mind; *damau* – and of the external senses; *api* – also.

TRANSLATION

One should have firm faith that he will achieve all success in life by following those scriptures that describe the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān. At the same time, one should avoid blaspheming other scriptures. One should rigidly control his mind, speech and bodily activities, always speak the truth, and bring the mind and senses under full control.

PURPORT

The definition of *śraddhā*, or faith, is given as follows in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.62):

*‘śraddhā’-śabde - viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niścaya
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*

“By rendering transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa, one automatically performs all subsidiary activities. This confident, firm faith, favorable to the discharge of devotional service, is called *śraddhā*.” Thus a devotee should be confident that by carrying out the injunctions of *bhāgavata-śāstra*, or Vedic literature that directly, rather than indirectly, describes devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one will easily achieve all knowledge and the perfection of life.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, *mano-vāk-kāya-daṇḍam*, or strict control of the mind, speech and bodily activities, means *mānasa-vācika-kāyika-vikarma-rāhityam*; that is, one should rigidly abandon all sinful activities with his mind, speech and body. As Śrīla Prabhupāda has repeatedly pointed out, sense control does not mean stopping sensory activities, thus becoming like a dead body, but rather engaging one’s mental, vocal and bodily activities in the service of Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has stated:

*īhā yasya harer dāsyē
karmaṇā manasā girā
nikhilāsv apy avasthāsu
jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate*

“A person acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in the service of Kṛṣṇa, with his body, mind, intelligence and words is a liberated person, even within the material world, although he may be engaged in many so-called material activities.” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.187) Thus one can achieve *vikarma-rāhityam*, or freedom from unauthorized, sinful activities, by engaging one’s senses, mind, intelligence and speech twenty-four hours daily in the service of Kṛṣṇa. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says that only those pious living entities who are *vikarma-rahita*, completely free from sinful life, can achieve

freedom from the illusory duality of material nature (*samatvaṁ dvandva-samjñayoḥ*). The Lord says:

*yeṣāṁ tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ
janānāṁ punya-karmaṇām
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā
bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*

“Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of delusion engage themselves in My service with determination.” (Bg. 7.28) In his purport to this verse, His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda has stated, “Those eligible for elevation to the transcendental position are mentioned in this verse. For those who are sinful, atheistic, foolish and deceitful, it is very difficult to transcend the duality of desire and hate. Only those who have passed their lives in practicing the regulative principles of religion, who have acted piously and have conquered sinful reactions can accept devotional service and gradually rise to the pure knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then, gradually, they can meditate in trance on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the process of being situated on the spiritual platform. This elevation is possible in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the association of pure devotees who can deliver one from delusion.”

Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted the following statement from the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*: “One should have complete faith in transcendental literature such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other literature that directly glorifies the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should also have faith in Vaiṣṇava *tantras*, the original *Vedas*, and *Mahābhārata*, which includes *Bhagavad-gītā* and which is considered the fifth *Veda*. The Vedic knowledge originally emanated from the breathing of Viṣṇu, and Vedic literature has been compiled in literary form by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of Viṣṇu. Therefore, Lord Viṣṇu should be understood to be the personal speaker of all this Vedic literature.

“There are other Vedic literatures, called *kalā-vidyā*, which give instructions in material arts and sciences. Since all such Vedic arts and sciences are ultimately intended to be used to render devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Keśava, saintly persons in the renounced order of life should never blaspheme such apparently mundane literatures; because such literatures are indirectly connected with the Supreme Lord, one may go to hell for blaspheming these secondary literatures.

“*Śraddhā* indicates a faithful mentality, which can be analyzed in two sections. The first type of faith is a firm conviction that all the statements of the multifarious Vedic literatures are true. In other words, the understanding that Vedic knowledge in general is infallible is called *śraddhā*, or faith. A second type of faith is the belief that one must personally carry out a particular injunction of Vedic literature in order to achieve his goal in life. A devotee of the Supreme Lord should thus apply the first type of faith to the various *kalā-vidyās*, or Vedic material arts and sciences, but he should not accept such scriptures as pointing out his personal goal in life. Nor should he

carry out any Vedic injunction that is contradictory to the injunctions of Vaiṣṇava scriptures such as the *Pañcarātra*.

“Thus one should faithfully accept all Vedic literature as directly or indirectly describing the Supreme Personality of Godhead and should not blaspheme any portion of it. Even for Lord Brahmā, as well as for other creatures, down to the insignificant unmoving species such as trees and stones, blasphemy of any Vedic literature causes one to merge into the darkness of ignorance. Thus the *suras* – the demigods, great sages and devotees of the Lord – should understand that the Pañcarātric literatures, as well as the four *Vedas*, the original *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other *Purāṇas*, and the *Mahābhārata*, are Vedic literatures that establish the supremacy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the unique transcendental position of the Lord’s devotees according to their status of spiritual advancement. Any other vision of Vedic literatures is to be considered an illusion. In all authorized religious scriptures the ultimate goal is to understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the controller of everything and everyone, and that the Lord’s devotees are not different from Him, although such devotees are to be understood in terms of their level of spiritual advancement.” Lord Kṛṣṇa has stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo/ vedānta-kṛd veda-vid eva cāham*: “By all the *Vedas*, I am to be known; indeed, I am the compiler of *Vedānta*, and I am the knower of the *Vedas*.” Similarly, the Lord states:

*yasmāt kṣaram atīto’ham
akṣarād api cottamaḥ
ato’smi loke vede ca
prathitaḥ puruṣottamaḥ*

“Because I am transcendental, beyond both the fallible and the infallible, and because I am the greatest, I am celebrated both in the world and in the *Vedas* as the Supreme Person.” (Bg. 15.18)

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura mentions that one cannot develop the godly qualities mentioned in the preceding verses unless one accepts the shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide Vaiṣṇava spiritual master. *Tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*. In this connection, he has quoted the following statement:

*arcayitvā tu govindam
tadīyān nārcayet tu yaḥ
na sa bhāgavato jñeyaḥ
kevalam dāmbhikaḥ smṛtaḥ*

“One who performs worship of Lord Govinda but fails to worship His devotees should be understood to be not a devotee of the Lord but simply a victim of false pride.” For one who has accepted shelter at the lotus feet of a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, it is very easy to execute worship of the Lord Himself. For such a surrendered soul there is no need of artificial penances and austerities. In this regard Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has quoted the following (from *Nārada Pañcarātra*):

*ārādhito yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim
nārādhito yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim
antar bahir yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim
nāntar bahir yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim*

“If one is worshiping Lord Hari, what is the use of performing extraneous penances? And if one is not worshiping Lord Hari, no such penances will save one. If one can understand that Lord Hari is all-pervading, within and without, what is the need of performing penances? And if one is not able to understand that Hari is all-pervading, all his penances are useless.” A Vaiṣṇava is always absorbed in executing his devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. If a devotee becomes falsely proud of executing severe penances and austerities and meditates on accepting and rejecting material objects instead of thinking of his service to Kṛṣṇa, his so-called austerities become an impediment to devotional service.

A devotee should not be disturbed by the word jugglery of those who are against the devotional service of the Lord. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has emphatically pointed out that devotional service to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord is the only means of achieving the final perfection of life. Therefore a Vaiṣṇava should practice *maunam*, or silence, by ignoring those literatures which are full of false arguments, such as those of the Māyāvāda school, and those *karma-kāṇḍa* scriptures which promote sense gratification in the name of religious life. If one becomes overwhelmed by mundane unhappiness due to not achieving immediate success in self-realization, or if one becomes deluded by sense gratification and tries to take shelter of materialistic men and doctrines, one’s devotional progress will immediately be checked. Similarly, if a devotee expresses love for things separate from Kṛṣṇa or tries to find fault in the process of devotional service or the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā* in order to justify absorbing himself in the sense gratification of seeing things separate from Kṛṣṇa, his progress in spiritual enlightenment will be seriously disturbed. Such an illusory concept is called *dvitīyābhiniveśa*, or absorption in illusion. On the other hand, if one is attracted to the vibration of Vedic sound by the consensus of self-realized authorities called the *vaiṣṇava-paramparā* and thus engages enthusiastically in *kṛṣṇa-nāma-kīrtana*, or chanting the holy names of the Lord, then one’s practice of *mauna*, or silence, is perfect.

One should avoid *prajalpa*, or whimsical conversations unrelated to devotional service. Merely restraining the senses artificially without chanting and hearing the glories of the Supreme Lord cannot be considered the spiritual perfection. The example is given that although many domestic animals in the barnyard are sometimes forced to practice celibacy when isolated from one another, such animals cannot be considered *brahmacārīs*, or spiritual students. Similarly, one is not considered spiritually advanced simply because of dry speculative arguments or temporary austerities. One must submissively hear the message of the Vedic sound vibration, especially

as it is summarized in *Bhagavad-gītā* by the Lord Himself. *Vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah.*

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has warned us that if one becomes attracted to nontheistic ethical philosophies, such as those of the Buddhists and Jains, which glorify such mundane principles as *ahimsā*, or nonviolence, one's mundane faith in godless ethics is spiritually suicidal. To restrict the senses by artificial austerities and to undertake huge social arrangements to facilitate mass sense gratification are both godless attempts to regulate human society in an artificial way that hides the eternal relationship of every living being with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the natural leader of society. When so-called moral philosophers spoil the opportunity of human life, the opportunity to revive our eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, in the name of ethics such foolish persons commit the greatest violence against human society. Therefore, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has said:

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-dayā karaha vicāra
vicāra karile citte pābe camatkāra*

“If you are indeed interested in logic and argument, kindly apply them to the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. If you do so, you will find such mercy strikingly wonderful.” (Cc. Ādi 8.15)

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura a *mahā-bhāgavata*, or pure devotee of the Lord, is one who sees that both the material and spiritual worlds are nondifferent from Lord Kṛṣṇa, being expansions of His potency, but also sees that Vrajendranandana, Kṛṣṇa, keeps Himself eternally distinct by His unique quality of all-attractiveness. Thus a pure devotee of the Lord is *aniketana*, without a fixed residence, meaning that he accepts neither the gross nor subtle body as his eternal residence. Since one's so-called home and family are expansions of his body, such material creations are also not to be considered one's actual residence. Caitanya Mahāprabhu said:

*ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaram
patitam mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau
kṛpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-
sthita-dhūli-sadṛśam vicintaya*

“O Kṛṣṇa, son of Mahārāja Nanda, I am Your eternal servitor, yet somehow or other I have fallen into the ocean of birth and death. Please pick me up from this ocean of death and place me as one of the atoms at Your lotus feet.” (Śikṣāṣṭaka 5) Thus a devotee should understand that his eternal residence is fixed in the dust of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A Vaiṣṇava should reject the gross sense gratification of living in the forest in the mode of goodness, in the city in the mode of passion, or in the gambling house in ignorance. A pure devotee may travel all over the world distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but he should never consider any material place to be his actual residence. One who has become mature in this understanding may take the *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* order of life under the direct shelter of the Lord. The impersonalist cannot understand how the devotee of the Lord, although fixed in the duality of seeing himself as eternally different from the Lord,

sees all existence as nondifferent from the Lord. Those who attempt to acquire knowledge by impersonal speculation based on their tiny experience of the material cosmic manifestation cannot understand the transcendental reality of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, the Absolute Truth's simultaneous oneness with and difference from His creation. The process of assimilating this transcendental knowledge is given in these verses, starting with *tasmād gurum prapadyeta*. One is recommended to accept a bona fide spiritual master and serve him according to the direction of these verses. The essence of such instructions is that one should abandon the association of Māyāvādī impersonalists, ritualistic fruitive workers and those who are whimsically indifferent to the ultimate purpose of life, and instead one should devote himself to associating with the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A falsely proud neophyte may imagine himself a great devotee of the Lord without taking to the company of the Lord's followers, but without such association it is not possible to become advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXTS 3.27-28

*śravaṇam kīrtanam dhyānam
 harer adbhuta-karmaṇaḥ
 janma-karma-guṇānām ca
 tad-arthe'khila-ceṣṭitam
 iṣṭam dattam tapo japtam
 vṛttam yac cātmanaḥ priyam
 dārān sutān gṛhān prāṇān
 yat paraśmai nivedanam*

śravaṇam – hearing; *kīrtanam* – chanting; *dhyānam* – and meditation; *hareḥ* – of the Supreme Lord, Hari; *adbhuta-karmaṇaḥ* – whose activities are wonderful; *janma* – of His incarnations; *karma* – pastimes; *guṇānām* – transcendental qualities; *ca* – and; *tad-arthe* – for His sake; *akhila* – all; *ceṣṭitam* – endeavors; *iṣṭam* – whatever worship one performs; *dattam* – whatever charity; *tapo* – penance; *japtam* – whatever *mantras* one chants; *vṛttam* – pious activities performed; *yat* – what; *ca* – also; *ātmanaḥ* – to oneself; *priyam* – dear; *dārān* – wife; *sutān* – sons; *gṛhān* – home; *prāṇān* – vital air; *yat* – which; *paraśmai* – unto the Supreme; *nivedanam* – offering.

TRANSLATION

One should hear, glorify and meditate upon the wonderful transcendental activities of the Lord. One should specifically become absorbed in the appearance, activities, qualities and holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus inspired, one should perform all of one's daily activities as an offering to the Lord. One should perform sacrifice, charity and penance exclusively for the Lord's satisfaction. Similarly, one should chant only those mantras which glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And all one's religious activities should be performed as an offering to the

Lord. Whatever one finds pleasing or enjoyable he should immediately offer to the Supreme Lord, and even his wife, children, home and very life air he should offer at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.27) Lord Kṛṣṇa has ordered:

*yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi
yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya
tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam*

“O son of Kuntī, all that you do, all that you eat, all that you offer and give away, and all austerities that you perform should be done as an offering unto Me.” Śrīla Prabhupāda has commented on this verse as follows: “Thus, it is the duty of everyone to mold his life in such a way that he will not forget Kṛṣṇa in any circumstance. Everyone has to work for maintenance of his body and soul together, and Kṛṣṇa recommends herein that one should work for Him. Everyone has to eat something to live; therefore he should accept the remnants of foodstuffs offered to Kṛṣṇa. Any civilized man has to perform some religious ritualistic ceremonies; therefore Kṛṣṇa recommends, ‘Do it for Me,’ and this is called *arcanam*. Everyone has a tendency to give something in charity; Kṛṣṇa says, ‘Give it to Me,’ and this means that all surplus money accumulated should be utilized in furthering the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Nowadays people are very much inclined to the meditational process, which is not practical in this age, but if anyone practices meditating on Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* round his beads, he is surely the greatest *yogī*, as substantiated by the Sixth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*.”

Many persons who become attracted to the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa are bewildered by the material possessions, reputation or skills they have accumulated by their previous material activities. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī these two verses indicate that all such material opulences accumulated by one’s previous *karma* should be used as an offering to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One’s fame, education, wealth and so on should all be used to carry out the mission of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Sometimes envious materialists ask why one should waste one’s wealth and education in the Lord’s service when such things could be better used to gratify the temporary material body. Actually, however, whatever we possess, including this body, is ultimately the property of the Supreme Lord, who is the creator, maintainer and annihilator of all existence. Therefore, one should be blessed by dovetailing one’s so-called opulences in the devotional service of the Lord. Otherwise, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *mṛtyuḥ sarva-haraś cāham*: the Supreme Lord will appear before us at the time of death as *mṛtyu*, death personified, and violently take away all of our possessions. Therefore, such possessions should be peacefully offered to the lotus feet of

the Lord while we are still living and able to enjoy the pious result of such an offering.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, *tapah*, austerity, means that one should observe vows such as Ekādaśī-vrata, in which one fasts from grains and beans twice a month. The word *japtam* refers to chanting the holy names of the Lord, such as Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has further pointed out that one can offer one's wife, children and home to the Lord by converting one's family into devotees of the Supreme Lord. Rather than becoming artificially puffed up in the pursuit of so-called status symbols, one's family should be trained to understand that they are eternal servants of the Supreme Lord. And when the entire family becomes dedicated to the Lord's service, a very beautiful situation is created.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that if a human being is not initiated into the process of *bhāgavata-dharma* he must depend upon the uncertain knowledge derived from his gross material senses. Indifferent to the sublime descriptions of the Lord's eternal appearances, pastimes and innumerable transcendental qualities, the faithless materialist wanders about on the platform of mundane enjoyment. But if one can understand the reality of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is described in authorized Vedic literature, then one should accept the order of *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa*, or at least one should practice restraint of the body, mind and words and thus become self-controlled and fixed in the Absolute Truth. Then all of one's desires, all the charity he gives, and his penances and chanting of *mantras* – in other words, his entire personality, his home, his children, his wife and his very life air – become heartfelt offerings to the Supreme Lord. When a living entity constantly hears the authorized descriptions of the Supreme Lord and dovetails all of his activities in the Lord's service, avoiding other activities, he is considered to be fixed on the platform of *bhāgavata-dharma*.

TEXT 3.29

*evam kṛṣṇātma-nātheṣu
manuṣyeṣu ca sauhṛdam
paricaryām cobhayatra
mahatsu nṛṣu sādhuṣu*

evam – thus; *kṛṣṇa-ātma-nātheṣu* – for those who take Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Lord of their soul; *manuṣyeṣu* – humans; *ca* – and; *sauhṛdam* – friendship; *paricaryām* – service; *ca* – and; *ubhayatra* – rendered to both (moving and nonmoving creatures, or the Lord and His devotees); *mahatsu* – (especially) to the pure devotees of the Lord; *nṛṣu* – to human beings; *sādhuṣu* – those who are fixed in saintly behavior.

TRANSLATION

One who desires his ultimate self-interest should cultivate friendship with those persons who have accepted Kṛṣṇa as the Lord

of their life. One should further develop an attitude of service toward all living beings. One should especially try to help those in the human form of life and, among them, especially those who accept the principles of religious behavior. Among religious persons, one should especially render service to the pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the highest duty for devotees of the Supreme Lord is to establish friendship with those who have completely surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and who have thus achieved *śaraṇāgati*, shelter at the Lord's lotus feet. One should render service to both the Lord and His devotees, since the Lord is more pleased by sincere service rendered to His pure devotees. One should not only officially offer respect to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, His devotees and His worshipful paraphernalia, but should actually render service to the representatives of the Lord, who are known as *mahā-bhāgavatas*.

TEXT 3.30

*parasparānukathanam
pāvanam bhagavad-yaśaḥ
mitho ratir mithas tuṣṭir
nivṛttir mitha ātmanaḥ*

paraspara – mutual; *anukathanam* – discussion; *pāvanam* – purifying; *bhagavat* – of the Supreme Lord; *yaśaḥ* – glories; *mithaḥ* – mutual; *ratih* – loving attraction; *mithaḥ* – mutual; *tuṣṭiḥ* – satisfaction; *nivṛttiḥ* – cessation of material miseries; *mithaḥ* – mutual; *ātmanaḥ* – of the soul.

TRANSLATION

One should learn how to associate with the devotees of the Lord by gathering with them to chant the glories of the Lord. This process is most purifying. As devotees thus develop their loving friendship, they feel mutual happiness and satisfaction. And by thus encouraging one another they are able to give up material sense gratification, which is the cause of all suffering.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, those who are advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not envy one another or quarrel among themselves. Giving up all such mundane feelings, they should gather together and chant the glories of the Supreme Lord for mutual purification. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has pointed out that glorification of the Supreme Lord is especially potent when performed in the association of pure devotees. When devotees engage in *saṅkīrtana*, chanting the glories of the Lord together, they experience the highest transcendental bliss and satisfaction. Thus they encourage one another to give up material sense gratification, which is based on illicit sexual connections with women. One devotee will say to

another, “Oh, you have given up sense gratification. Starting today, I shall also give it up.”

One should learn to increase one’s love for the devotees, to satisfy them and to give up sense objects unfavorable to serving Kṛṣṇa. And one should learn to view the entire universe as paraphernalia for the Lord’s service. By engaging the objects of the senses in Kṛṣṇa’s service, one automatically becomes detached from them. And as one passes one’s days in the association of the Lord’s devotees, one’s transcendental ecstasy increases more and more, through discussions about the topics of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*. Therefore, one who wants to be free from the harassment of *māyā* in the form of sense gratification must constantly associate with pure devotees of the Lord who have no engagement other than chanting and hearing the glories of the Lord and carrying out His mission on earth.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has pointed out that just as one should cultivate friendship with devotees, one must cultivate a spirit of friendship toward the demigods, who manage the universe on the Lord’s behalf. Thus one should live peacefully within this world.

TEXT 3.31

*smarantaḥ smārayantaś ca
mitho’ghaughā-haram harim
bhaktyā sañjātayā bhaktyā
bibhraty utpulakām tanum*

smarantaḥ – remembering; *smārayantaḥ ca* – and reminding; *mithaḥ* – one another; *ghaughā-haram* – who takes away everything inauspicious from the devotee; *harim* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhaktyā* – by devotion; *sañjātayā* – awakened; *bhaktyā* – by devotion; *bibhrati* – possess; *utpulakām* – agitated by ecstasy; *tanum* – body.

TRANSLATION

The devotees of the Lord constantly discuss the glories of the Personality of Godhead among themselves. Thus they constantly remember the Lord and remind one another of His qualities and pastimes. In this way, by their devotion to the principles of bhakti-yoga, the devotees please the Personality of Godhead, who takes away from them everything inauspicious. Being purified of all impediments, the devotees awaken to pure love of Godhead, and thus, even within this world, their spiritualized bodies exhibit symptoms of transcendental ecstasy, such as standing of the bodily hairs on end.

PURPORT

The word *ghaughā-haram* is very significant in this verse. *Agha* refers to that which is inauspicious or sinful. The living entity is actually *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*, or eternal and full of bliss and knowledge, but by neglecting his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, he commits

sinful activities and undergoes the inauspicious result in the form of material suffering. The chain of sinful reactions is called *ogha*, or a relentless wave of suffering. Kṛṣṇa is *aghaugha-haraṁ harim*; He takes away the sinful reactions of His devotees, who are thus entitled to experience the inconceivable bliss of the kingdom of God even while remaining in this world. The words *bhaktyā sañjāyā bhaktyā* indicate that there are two divisions of *bhakti-yoga*: *sādhana-bhakti* and *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Śrīla Prabhupāda has elaborately explained in his book *The Nectar of Devotion* the progress of the devotee from *sādhana-bhakti*, or the execution of regulative principles, to *rāgānuga-bhakti*, or service executed in love of Godhead. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a liberated soul is always enthusiastic due to the appearance of transcendental ecstasy within his body. Thus he always aspires to remain overwhelmed in chanting the glories of the Personality of Godhead, Hari.

TEXT 3.32

*kvacid rudanty acyuta-cintayā kvacid
dhasanti nandanti vadanty alaukikāḥ
nṛtyanti gāyanty anuśīlayanty ajam
bhavanti tūṣṇīm param etya nirvṛtāḥ*

kvacit – sometimes; *rudanti* – they cry; *acyuta* – of the infallible Supreme Lord; *cintayā* – by the thought; *kvacit* – sometimes; *hasanti* – they laugh; *nandanti* – take great pleasure; *vadanti* – speak; *alaukikāḥ* – acting amazingly; *nṛtyanti* – they dance; *gāyanti* – sing; *anuśīlayanti* – and imitate; *ajam* – the unborn; *bhavanti* – they become; *tūṣṇīm* – silent; *param* – the Supreme; *etya* – obtaining; *nirvṛtāḥ* – freed from distress.

TRANSLATION

Having achieved love of Godhead, the devotees sometimes weep loudly, absorbed in thought of the infallible Lord. Sometimes they laugh, feel great pleasure, speak out loud to the Lord, dance or sing. Such devotees, having transcended material, conditioned life, sometimes imitate the unborn Supreme by acting out His pastimes. And sometimes, achieving His personal audience, they remain peaceful and silent.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has explained the symptoms of love of Godhead. *Rudanti*: The devotees cry, thinking, “Another day has passed, and still I could not obtain Kṛṣṇa. Then what will I do, where will I go, from whom shall I inquire, and who can possibly help me reach Kṛṣṇa?” *Hasanti*: It is late at night, the sky is dark, and Kṛṣṇa is determined to steal from the house of one of the elderly *gopīs*. He is hiding underneath a tree in the corner of the courtyard belonging to one of the cowherd men. Although Kṛṣṇa thinks that He is completely concealed, He suddenly hears a voice from one of the elderly members of the family. “Who are You there? Who are You? I say.” Thus Kṛṣṇa has been caught, and He begins to flee the courtyard. When this

humorous scene is revealed to the devotee, the devotee begins to laugh heartily. *Nandanti*: When Kṛṣṇa actually reveals His transcendental form to the devotee, the devotee experiences the highest transcendental bliss. *Vadanti*: The devotee says to the Lord, “O Kṛṣṇa, after so many days I have finally achieved You.”

When all of the devotee’s senses are absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the devotee has successfully transcended the material condition of life. This is indicated by the word *alaukikāḥ*. *Alaukikāḥ*, or the transcendental platform, is explained by the Lord in *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.26):

*mām ca yo’vyabhicāreṇa
bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatītyaitān
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

“One who engages in full devotional service, who does not fall down in any circumstance, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman.”

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, *ajam harim, anuśīlayanti tal-līlām abhinayanti*: “*Anuśīlayanti* indicates that out of extreme ecstasy the devotees sometimes imitate or act out the pastimes of the Supreme Lord.” This ecstatic symptom was manifested by the *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana during Kṛṣṇa’s absence.

In verse 21 of this chapter it was stated that one who has understood that there is no happiness either on earth or in material heaven must surrender at the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master. *Tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*. The following verses gave many detailed instructions regarding the activities of a bona fide disciple. Now this verse is describing the mature fruit of devotional service, namely, pure love of Godhead. Everyone has the opportunity to come to this platform of transcendental bliss by taking the dust of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa’s representative on his head. One should give up the mentality of envy and false prestige and humbly take shelter of the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The spiritual master is to be considered the incarnation of the Lord’s mercy. There is absolutely no doubt that a sincere soul who serves a bona fide spiritual master will achieve the highest perfection of life (*śreya uttamam*). He will enjoy eternal bliss and knowledge in the personal abode of the Lord.

TEXT 3.33

*iti bhāgavatān dharmān
śikṣan bhaktyā tad-utthayā
nārāyaṇa-paro māyām
añjas tarati dustarām*

iti – thus; *bhāgavatān dharmān* – the science of devotional service; *śikṣan* – studying; *bhaktyā* – by devotion; *tad-utthayā* – generated by it; *nārāyaṇa-paraḥ* – completely devoted to the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa; *māyām* – the

illusory energy; *añjaḥ* – easily; *tarati* – crosses beyond; *dustarām* – impossible to cross.

TRANSLATION

Thus learning the science of devotional service and practically engaging in the devotional service of the Lord, the devotee comes to the stage of love of Godhead. And by complete devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, the devotee easily crosses over the illusory energy, māyā, which is extremely difficult to cross.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has pointed out that *mukti*, or liberation, which is described in this verse by the words *māyām añjas tarati dustarām*, is actually a by-product or secondary result of pure love of Godhead. In the second verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is pointed out, *dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām/ vedyam vāstavam atra vastu śivadam tāpa-trayonmūlanam. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* teaches the science of devotional service, in which the ultimate goal is pure love of Godhead. According to the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, *mukti*, or liberation, is a by-product of love of Godhead. *Śivadam tāpa-trayonmūlanam*. One should not approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead for liberation, since one is automatically liberated by obeying the order of the Lord. Kṛṣṇa's order is given at the end of *Bhagavad-gītā*: *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*. Every living being should give up his mundane conceptions of life and take full shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. If one carries out this order the Lord automatically provides liberation (*mukti*). Actual happiness comes from loving God without any tinge of mental speculation or fruitive desire.

*anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-
śīlanam bhaktir uttamā*

“One should render transcendental loving service to Lord Kṛṣṇa favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11) So crossing over the insurmountable ocean of illusion, as described here, is not actually the principal result of *bhāgavata-dharma*, or devotional service to the Lord, but is a by-product of pure love of Godhead.

TEXT 3.34

*śrī-rājovāca
nārāyaṇābhīdhānasya
brahmaṇaḥ paramātmanaḥ
niṣṭhām arhatha no vaktum
yūyam hi brahma-vittamāḥ*

śrī-rājā uvāca – the King said; *nārāyaṇa-abhidhānasya* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, named Nārāyaṇa; *brahmaṇaḥ* – of the Absolute Truth; *parama-ātmanaḥ* – of the Supersoul; *niṣṭhām* – the transcendental situation; *arhatha* – you may kindly; *naḥ* – to us; *vaktum* – speak; *yūyam* – all of you; *hi* – indeed; *brahma-vit-tamāḥ* – the most expert knowers of the Supreme.

TRANSLATION

King Nimi inquired: Please explain to me the transcendental situation of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa, who is Himself the Absolute Truth and the Supersoul of everyone. You can explain this to me, because you are all most expert in transcendental knowledge.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, in the previous verse the sages informed the King, *nārāyaṇa-paro māyām añjas tarati dustarām*: simply by unalloyed devotion to Lord Nārāyaṇa, one can very easily cross over the ocean of material illusion. Therefore, in this verse the King is requesting specific information about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa. It is significant in this verse that the King refers to the Supreme Lord as Nārāyaṇa, Brahman and Paramātmā. Although King Nimi is already understood to be a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by his question he wants to clarify that the Personality of Godhead is the highest transcendental truth. In the *Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11):

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmēti
bhagavān iti śabdyate*

“Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this nondual substance Brahman, Paramātmā or Bhagavān.” Therefore it is to be understood that the word *nārāyaṇa* in this verse refers to the Bhagavān feature of the Supreme Lord in the spiritual world.

Generally the speculative philosophers become attracted to the impersonal Brahman feature of the Absolute Truth, whereas the mystic *yogīs* meditate upon the Paramātmā, the Supersoul within everyone’s heart. On the other hand, those who have achieved mature transcendental knowledge surrender directly to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān, who is eternally situated in His own abode, called Vaikuṅṭha-dhāma. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly says, *brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham*: “I am the source of the impersonal Brahman.” Similarly, it is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that the Supersoul, Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, is a secondary plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. King Nimi wants the sages to make clear that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the original feature of the Absolute Truth, and therefore he places his question before the next of the nine Yogendras, Pippalāyana.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura the word *niṣṭhā* can also be translated as “firm faith.” In this sense, Nimi Mahārāja is inquiring about the process of developing perfect faith in the Supreme Lord (*bhagavan-niṣṭhā*).

TEXT 3.35

śrī-pippalāyana uvāca
sthity-udbhava-pralaya-hetur ahetur asya
yat svapna-jāgara-suṣuptiṣu sad bahiś ca
dehendriyāsu-hṛdayāni caranti yena
sañjīvitāni tad avehi param narendra

śrī-pippalāyanaḥ uvāca – Śrī Pippalāyana said; *sthiti* – of maintenance; *udbhava* – of the creation; *pralaya* – and destruction; *hetuḥ* – the cause; *ahetuḥ* – itself without cause; *asya* – of this material universe; *yat* – which; *svapna* – in dream; *jāgara* – wakefulness; *suṣuptiṣu* – in deep sleep or unconsciousness; *sat* – which exists; *bahiḥ ca* – and external to them as well; *deha* – of the material bodies of the living entities; *indriya* – the senses; *āsu* – life airs; *hṛdayāni* – and minds; *caranti* – act; *yena* – by which; *sañjīvitāni* – given life; *tad* – that; *avehi* – please know; *param* – to be the Supreme; *nara-indra* – O King.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Pippalāyana said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe, yet He has no prior cause. He pervades the various states of wakefulness, dreaming and unconscious deep sleep and also exists beyond them. By entering the body of every living being as the Supersoul, He enlivens the body, senses, life airs and mental activities, and thus all the subtle and gross organs of the body begin their functions. My dear King, know that Personality of Godhead to be the Supreme.

PURPORT

In the previous verse King Nimi inquired about various aspects of the Absolute Truth, namely Nārāyaṇa, Brahman and Paramātmā. Now the sage Śrī Pippalāyana explains these three features of the Absolute Truth in the same order in which the King mentioned them. *Sthity-udbhava-pralaya-hetuḥ* refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who expands Himself as the triple *puruṣa* incarnations – Mahā-Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu and Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. As described in the *Bhāgavatam* (1.3.1):

jagrhe pauruṣam rūpam
bhagavān mahad-ādibhiḥ
sambhūtam ṣoḍaśa-kalam
ādau loka-sisṛkṣayā

“In the beginning of the creation, the Lord first expanded Himself in the universal form of the *puruṣa* incarnation and manifested all the ingredients for the material creation. And thus at first there was the creation of the

sixteen principles of material action. This was for the purpose of creating the material universe.” Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, is mentioned here as *hetuḥ*, or the supreme cause of the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the cosmic situation. Still, there is no cause of the Lord Himself; He is *ahetuḥ*. As expressed in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, *anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*. The Supreme Lord is the cause of all causes, and being the eternal Absolute Truth, He has no cause of Himself. The word *ahetuḥ* has also been explained by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī to indicate that the Supreme Lord has His original form as Kṛṣṇa in His own transcendental abode, called Kṛṣṇaloka. Since Kṛṣṇa is always engaged in His blissful pastimes in the company of His eternally liberated associates, He is aloof from the affairs of this world, which is created by His external potency, known as *māyā*. Therefore it is stated, *jaḡrhe pauruṣaṁ rūpam*. The Lord expands Himself as Nārāyaṇa and Viṣṇu to facilitate the gross illusion and gradual rectification of the conditioned souls. The Lord’s aloofness from the material creation is also described in the *Vedas*: *na tasya kāryaṁ karaṇaṁ ca vidyate*. The Absolute Truth has nothing to do, since everything is done self-sufficiently by His multipotencies. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that even though the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is *ahetuḥ*, or causeless and aloof from the cause of material creation, the Lord is also described in this verse as *hetuḥ*, or the ultimate cause of the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material manifestation, because He expands Himself as Paramātmā, or the Supersoul, who acts as the prime mover of the cosmic manifestation.

The word *ahetuḥ* may also be understood in another way. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.5) the Lord says:

*apareyam itas tv anyāṁ
prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām
jīva-bhūtāṁ mahā-bāho
yayedaṁ dhāryate jagat*

The conditioned living entities (*jīva-bhūta*) desire to engage in sense gratification with their material senses (*manaḥ-śaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi prakṛti-sthāni karṣati*). Thus the creation of the material world becomes necessary. In fact, the material cosmic manifestation continues to exist because of the desires of the conditioned souls to exploit it (*yayedaṁ dhāryate jagat*). The government must create a prison to accommodate those citizens who are inclined to criminal activity. There is no need for any citizen to live in the obnoxious conditions of the prison, but because a certain portion of the population is inclined toward antisocial behavior, the prison becomes necessary. In a higher sense, the prisoners themselves can be considered the *hetuḥ*, or the cause, for the construction of the prison. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead expands His internal potency according to His own desire to increase the *ānanda*, or transcendental bliss, of Himself and His pure devotees, but He manifests the material universe in response to the illicit desires of the conditioned souls to live a life of sense gratification in

willful forgetfulness of Him. Therefore the conditioned living entities themselves can be considered the *hetuḥ*, or cause, of the material manifestation. The external potency of the Lord, *māyā*, who is charged with the duty of material manifestation, is called *chāyā*, or the shadow of the Lord's internal potency. *Sṛṣṭi-sthiti-pralaya-sādhana-śaktir ekā/ chāyeva yasya bhuvanāni bibharti durgā*. The Lord does not personally desire to manifest the shadow potency, called Durgā or *māyā*. The blissful spiritual planets, eternally manifest, contain the best possible facilities for the living entities who are parts and parcels of the Lord. But the conditioned souls, rejecting the inconceivable, eternal living arrangements the Lord has kindly provided, prefer to seek their misfortune in the shadow kingdom called the material world. Thus, both Durgā and the conditioned living entities may be considered the *hetuḥ*, or cause, of the material manifestation. Since Lord Kṛṣṇa is ultimately *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*, the cause of all causes, He is to be known as the ultimate supreme cause. But how the Lord functions as the supreme cause of the material manifestation (*sthity-udbhava-pralaya-hetuḥ*) is described in the Thirteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*. *Updraṣṭānumantā ca*: the Lord acts as overseer and permitter. The actual desire of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is stated very clearly in *Bhagavad-gītā*: *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*. The Lord desires every living entity to give up the shadow potency *māyā* and return to the actual substance (*vāstavaṁ vastu*), which is the eternal kingdom of God. Although various aspects of the Absolute Truth are being described, the Absolute Truth is ultimately one, as stated in this verse (*tad avehi param narendra*). King Nimi inquired about Brahman, and now this verse says, *yat svapna-jāgara-suṣuptiṣu sad bahiś ca*. The Lord's all-pervading feature within wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep, and His existence beyond these three mental states, are understood to be manifestations of Brahman, the spiritual potency of the Lord. Finally, the statement *dehendriyāsu-hṛdayāṇi caranti yena sañjīvitāni* can be understood to refer to the Paramātmā feature of the Lord. When the Lord expands Himself as Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, the third of the three Viṣṇu features, and enters the heart of every living entity, the gross and subtle organs of the body become enlivened for continuing the chain of fruitive activity called *karma*.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the multifarious manifestations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead do not compromise His supremacy as one without a second. The Absolute Truth is *paramavyoma-nātha*, or the Lord of the spiritual sky, who appears as two-armed Śyāmasundara, as four-armed, as eight-armed or as having one thousand arms. In each aspect His body is eternal and full of bliss and knowledge (*sac-cid-ānanda-mūrti*). He appears on earth as Vāsudeva and within the Causal Ocean as Mahā-Viṣṇu. He lies on the Milk Ocean as Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu and rescues His helpless young devotee as Nṛsimhadeva. Appearing as Lord Rāmacandra, He acts as a perfect king. And appearing as Kṛṣṇa He steals the heart of everyone, and especially of young

beautiful women. All these features of the Lord are indicated by the word *Nārāyaṇa*, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, just as the word *president* indicates not only the official duties of the president but his personal family life and long intimate friendships as well. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*. When one transcends an official understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and comes to the superior status of love of God, one can understand the Lord to be Kṛṣṇa, the cause of all causes. The innumerable Viṣṇu expansions of the Lord are also understood to be plenary portions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*. As the Lord Himself states in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavaḥ*. These points have been explicitly clarified in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as well as in the opening verse, *om̐ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya, janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś cārtheṣu*.

TEXT 3.36

*naitan mano viśati vāg uta cakṣur ātmā
prāṇendriyāṇi ca yathānalam arcīṣaḥ svāḥ
śabda'pi bodhaka-niṣedhatayātma-mūlam
arthoktam āha yad-ṛte na niṣedha-siddhiḥ*

na - cannot; *etat* - this (Supreme Truth); *manaḥ* - the mind; *viśati* - enter; *vāk* - the function of speech; *uta* - nor; *cakṣuḥ* - sight; *ātmā* - intelligence; *prāṇa* - the subtle airs supporting life; *indriyāṇi* - the senses; *ca* - or; *yathā* - just as; *analam* - a fire; *arcīṣaḥ* - its sparks; *svāḥ* - own; *śabdaḥ* - the authoritative sound of the Vedas; *api* - even; *bodhaka* - being able to indicate by verbal reference; *niṣedhatayā* - because of denying such; *ātma* - of the Supreme Soul; *mūlam* - basic evidence; *artha-uktam* - expressed indirectly; *āha* - does express; *yad-ṛte* - without which (Supreme); *na* - there is not; *niṣedha* - of the negative statements of scripture; *siddhiḥ* - ultimate purpose.

TRANSLATION

Neither the mind nor the faculties of speech, sight, intelligence, the life air or any of the senses are capable of penetrating that Supreme Truth, any more than small sparks can affect the original fire from which they are generated. Not even the authoritative language of the Vedas can perfectly describe the Supreme Truth, since the Vedas themselves disclaim the possibility that the Truth can be expressed by words. But through indirect reference the Vedic sound does serve as evidence of the Supreme Truth, since without the existence of that Supreme Truth the various restrictions found in the Vedas would have no ultimate purpose.

PURPORT

The small sparks generated by a blazing fire have no power to illuminate the original fire, nor can they burn it. The quantity of heat and light in the original fire is always superior to the quantity found in the insignificant sparks. Similarly, the minute living entity is generated from the internal

potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as stated in *Vedānta-sūtra* (*janmādy asya yataḥ*) and *Bhagavad-gītā* (*aham sarvasya prabhavaḥ, mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*). The minute living entities, being *aṁśaḥ*, or sparks of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, can never equal the Supreme Godhead in the quantity of their potency. The quantity of knowledge and bliss in the Supreme Personality of Godhead is always superior. Therefore, when a foolish conditioned soul tries to illuminate the subject matter of the highest truth with his tiny brain, he merely illuminates his own foolishness. The Personality of Godhead has personally spoken *Bhagavad-gītā*, which is the blazing fire of perfect knowledge that burns to ashes the insignificant speculations and theories of so-called philosophers and scientists regarding the ultimate truth.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is called *Ḥṛṣīkeśa*, or the Lord of everyone's senses. Because the Personality of Godhead has supreme seeing power, hearing power, touching power, smelling power and tasting power, the living entities in a limited sense can also see, hear, touch, smell and taste, by the mercy of *Ḥṛṣīkeśa*. This idea is expressed in the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (4.4.18): *prāṇasya prāṇam uta cakṣuṣaś cakṣur uta śrotrasya śrotram annasyānnaṁ manaso ye mano viduḥ*. "The Supreme Truth is understood to be the life air sustaining everyone's life air, the vision of everyone's eyes, the hearing power of the ear, and the sustenance of food itself." The obvious conclusion is that the Supreme Truth can be known by His own causeless mercy, and not by our foolish attempts to bring the all-pervading truth within the insignificant boundaries of our intelligence. It is stated in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (2.4.1), *yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha*: "The descriptive power of speech fails in the realm of the Supreme Truth, and the speculative power of the mind cannot achieve Him." But because such statements of Vedic *śrutis* are in themselves descriptions of the Absolute Truth, one may consider such Vedic statements contradictory. Therefore, in this connection it is stated, *śabda 'pi bodhaka-niṣedhatayātma-mūlam arthoktam āha*: although the Vedic *śruti* (*śabda*) forbids us to speculate upon the Absolute Truth, such restrictive injunctions indirectly constitute positive assertions of the existence of the supreme living entity. In fact, the Vedic restrictions are meant to save one from the false path of mental speculation and ultimately bring one to the point of devotional surrender. As Lord *Kṛṣṇa* Himself states in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*: by all Vedic literatures the Supreme Personality of Godhead is to be known. The assertion that a particular process, such as mental speculation, is useless (*yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha*) constitutes an indirect assertion of the existence of a correct path of achieving the Supreme. As *Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī* has stated, *sarvasya niṣedhasya sāvadhivāt*: "Every negative injunction is understood to have a specific limit. Negative injunctions cannot be taken as applicable in all cases." For example, a negative injunction is that no living entity can be equal to or greater than the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But *Śrīmad-*

Bhāgavatam clearly states that because of the intense love of the residents of Vṛndāvana for Kṛṣṇa, they sometimes assume a superior position. Thus mother Yaśodā binds Kṛṣṇa with ropes, and the influential cowherd boys sometimes ride on the shoulders of Kṛṣṇa or defeat Him in wrestling. Negative injunctions, therefore, may sometimes be adjusted according to the transcendental situation.

Although the Absolute Truth is transcendental to the material creation and therefore beyond the scope of material senses, when those same material senses are saturated with love of Godhead they become spiritualized and empowered to perceive the Absolute Truth. As stated in *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.38):

*premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena
santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti
yaṁ śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

“I worship the primeval Lord, Govinda, who is always seen by the devotee whose eyes are anointed with the pulp of love. He is seen in His eternal form of Śyāmasundara within the heart of the devotee.” In *Bhagavad-gītā* (11.8) Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Arjuna,

*na tu mām śakyase draṣṭum
anenaiva sva-cakṣuṣā
divyaṁ dadāmi te cakṣuḥ
paśya me yogam aiśvaram*

“But you cannot see Me with your present eyes. Therefore I give you divine eyes by which you can behold My mystic opulence.” Similarly, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes many incidents in which the Supreme Absolute Truth revealed Himself to His devotee, as in the histories of Prahlāda Mahārāja, Dhruva Mahārāja, Pṛthu Mahārāja, Kardama Muni, the Pāṇḍavas and the *gopīs*. Therefore, the Vedic assertions that the Absolute Truth is beyond the power of the eyes refer to those who have not received transcendental eyes by the mercy of the Personality of Godhead. But the Lord’s own transcendental senses, which are the source of our limited senses, are confirmed in the *śruti*, as in the following statement from the *Kena Upaniṣad* (1.4): *yad vācānabhyuditaṁ yena vāg abhyudyate/ tad eva brahma tvaṁ viddhi nedaṁ yad idam upāsate*. “Brahman, the Absolute, should be understood to be that which cannot be ascertained by the material power of speech; speech itself is evinced by that Supreme Truth.” By the statement *yena vāg abhyudyate*, “our power of speech is expressed by the Absolute Truth,” it is clearly expressed that the Absolute Truth has His own transcendental senses. Therefore He is called Hṛṣīkeśa.

Śrīla Nārada Muni has stated, *hṛṣīkena hṛṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate*. Our senses cannot approach the Absolute Truth by their own power, but when engaged in loving devotional service to satisfy the Lord of the senses, our limited senses must become connected with the Lord’s unlimited senses, and thus by the Lord’s mercy He can be understood.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted the following statement from the *Brahma-tarka*:

*ānando nedṛśānanda
ity ukte lokataḥ param
pratibhāti na cābhāti
yathāvad darśanaṁ vinā*

“The transcendental bliss of the Absolute Truth cannot be compared to the ordinary happiness of the material world.” Similarly, in the *Vedānta-sūtra* the Absolute Truth is described as *ānandamaya*, or full of bliss.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, in this verse Śrī Pippalāyana is more or less describing the impersonal feature of the Absolute Truth. The nine Yogendras were themselves devotees of the personal feature of the Lord, so King Nimi asked his question about the different features of the Absolute Truth to clarify that the Personality of Godhead is the source of all the variegated aspects of the *advaya-jñāna*, or transcendental reality. This is also expressed by the following statement in *śruti: taṁ tv aupaniṣadaṁ puruṣaṁ pṛcchāmi*. “I am inquiring about that Supreme Person revealed in the *Upaniṣads*.”

If the Absolute Truth were actually inaccessible by words, there would be no meaning to the Vedic literature, which consists of collections of transcendental words. Since the Vedic descriptions of the truth are to be taken as infallible, it is impossible to maintain that the power of speech is in all cases unable to describe the truth. After all, the Vedic *mantras* themselves are meant to be spoken and heard. Therefore, the injunction that neither the mind nor speech can approach the Absolute Truth (*naitan mano viśati vāg uta*) cannot be taken as applicable in all cases; rather, it is a warning to those who foolishly try to encompass the Absolute Truth by their own puny speculative powers. Since the Vedic injunctions, either positive or negative, are to be taken as realistic descriptions of the Absolute Truth, the process of hearing and repeating Vedic knowledge (*śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ*) can be understood as a separate process in which one’s hearing and speaking power becomes spiritualized by submissive reception of transcendental knowledge. This process depends upon one’s faith in the bona fide spiritual master, who is a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore it is stated:

*yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

“Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23) As the Lord Himself states in the *Hari-varṇā*:

*tat-param paramaṁ brahma
sarvaṁ vibhajate jagat*

*mamaiva tad ghanam tejo
jñātum arhasi bhārata*

“That Supreme Truth, Parabrahman, expands itself into all the variegatedness of this universe. You should know it to be My own concentrated effulgence, O Bhārata.” The words *jñātum arhasi*, “you must know it,” spoken by the Lord Himself, indicate that the Absolute Truth is to be known, but one must surrender to the truth, rather than waste time in foolish speculation.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has pointed out that according to authorized statements of Vedic literature the Lord’s transcendental form is understood to be *brahmamaya*, or completely spiritual, with no trace of material contamination. Therefore, in such statements as *nīlotpala-dalaśyāmam*, “the Lord’s form is beautifully manifest with the hue of dark blue lotus petals,” it is understood that a transcendental dark blue color is being described. Still, the Lord is inconceivably merciful to His devotees, even those on the neophyte platform who are trying to come to the state of love of Godhead. Therefore the Lord gradually purifies the senses of a conditioned soul who is trying to understand Him, and eventually the Lord appears before such a rectified servitor. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, *prākṛta-nīlotpala-varṇatvena bhaktair dhyātam atādṛśam api*. In the beginning, being conditioned by previous materialistic activities, a devotee meditating on the Lord’s transcendental form may base his meditation on his experience of material forms and colors within this world. The Lord’s transcendental form has nothing to do with material forms and colors, but since the object of this meditation is Kṛṣṇa, such meditation will eventually be transformed into transcendental experience of the actual form, color, activities, pastimes and entourage of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In other words, transcendental knowledge depends not on material logic but on the pleasure of the Personality of Godhead. If the Lord is pleased by His devotee’s sincere attempt to understand Him, the Lord can immediately circumvent all the so-called technicalities of material logic and Vedic injunctions and reveal Himself to His pure devotee. Unless one accepts this omnipotency of the Personality of Godhead, there is no hope of approaching the Absolute Truth. Therefore it is stated in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.3.12), *dṛśyate tv agryayā buddhyā*: the Absolute Truth is seen by transcendental intelligence.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that knowledge acquired through the interaction of the material senses with the modes of nature is merely hypothetical and not factual. Empirical knowledge deals with our ephemeral experience of the sense objects generated by material nature. For example, there are many wars currently going on because of a false concept of nationalism. Similarly, there is conflict throughout the world, and great world leaders fight like cats and dogs for the economic development of their countries. Thus, material language is used to designate temporary objects perceived by the eyes, nose, tongue, touch and taste. This

type of language and experience is useless for approaching the Absolute Truth. But the transcendental sound from the spiritual sky has a completely different effect. We should not foolishly try to use materially concocted language to include the Supreme Personality of Godhead as an object of the material world. The Supreme Lord is completely transcendental and is known as *ātma-prakāśa*, or self-manifested. Therefore, as stated in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

“Material senses cannot appreciate Kṛṣṇa’s holy name, form, qualities and pastimes. But when a conditioned soul is awakened to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and renders service by using his tongue to chant the Lord’s holy name and taste the remnants of the Lord’s food, the tongue is purified, and one gradually comes to understand who Kṛṣṇa really is.” If one surrenders to the Supreme Lord, taking shelter at His lotus feet, one’s spiritualized senses gradually become empowered to perceive the Lord. Mere empiricism and material logic have a limited jurisdiction within the external energy of the Supreme Lord and cannot apply to those things which are eternal. In this regard, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has quoted the following verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.5.32):

*naiṣāṁ matis tāvad urukramāṅghrim
spṛśaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthaḥ
mahīyasāṁ pāda-rajo-’bhiṣekaṁ
niṣkiñcanānāṁ na vṛṇīta yāvat*

“Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination.”

Although Śrī Pippalāyana is expressing that the Absolute Truth cannot be approached by material senses, the sage himself is describing the Absolute Truth with transcendental senses, and King Nimi is able to understand this transcendental sound because he has surrendered at the lotus feet of pure devotees, the *nava-yogendras*. Therefore, one should not foolishly try to understand this verse out of context, in an impersonal way, but should follow the example of King Nimi, who was trying to understand how the Supreme Personality of Godhead is ultimately the source of everything.

TEXT 3.37

*sattvaṁ rajas tama iti tri-vṛd ekam ādau
sūtraṁ mahān aham iti pravadanti jīvam*

*jñāna-kriyārtha-phala-rūpatayoru-śakti
brahmaiva bhāti sad asac ca tayoḥ param yat*

sattvam – goodness; *rajaḥ* – passion; *tamaḥ* – and ignorance; *iti* – thus known; *tri-vṛt* – threefold; *ekam* – one; *āḍau* – in the beginning, before creation; *sūtram* – the power to act; *mahān* – the power of consciousness; *aham* – and the false ego; *iti* – thus; *pravadanti* – is called; *jīvam* – (false ego, which covers) the living entity; *jñāna* – the demigods as the embodiment of knowledge; *kriyā* – the senses; *artha* – sense objects; *phala* – and fruitive results such as happiness and distress; *rūpatayā* – assuming the forms; *uru-śakti* – possessing great varieties of energy; *brahma eva* – the Supreme alone; *bhāti* – is manifest; *sat asat ca* – as both gross objects and their subtle causes; *tayoḥ* – both; *param* – beyond; *yat* – which is.

TRANSLATION

Originally one, the Absolute, Brahman, comes to be known as threefold, manifesting itself as the three modes of material nature - goodness, passion and ignorance. Brahman further expands its potency, and thus the power to act and the power of consciousness become manifest, along with the false ego, which covers the identity of the conditioned living being. Thus, by the expansion of the multipotencies of the Absolute, the demigods, as the embodiment of knowledge, become manifest, along with the material senses, their objects, and the results of material activity, namely happiness and distress. In this way the manifestation of the material world takes place as the subtle cause and as the material effect visible in the appearance of gross material objects. Brahman, which is the source of all subtle and gross manifestations, is simultaneously transcendental to them, being absolute.

PURPORT

In the previous verse the sage Pippalāyana described the Absolute, Brahman, as being beyond the range of material sense perception and mental speculation. At the same time, it was stated, *ātma-mūlam arthoktam āha yad-ṛte na niṣedha-siddhiḥ*: the negative injunctions of the *Vedas* indirectly indicate the existence of the Absolute Truth. This Absolute Truth can be approached by correct means. Now, in the present verse, it is clearly described that the Absolute Truth possesses innumerable potencies (*uru-śakti brahmaiva bhāti*). Thus by the expansion of the Absolute Truth the gross and subtle features of the material world become manifest. As stated by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, *kāryam kāraṇād bhinnam na bhavati*: “The result is not different from its cause.” Therefore, since the Absolute is eternal existence, this material world, being the potency of the Absolute, must also be accepted as real, although the various manifestations of the material world are temporary and thus illusory. The material world should be understood to consist of the bewildering interactions of real elements. The material world is not false in the imaginary sense of the Buddhists and Māyāvādīs, who state that in fact the material world does not exist outside

the mind of the observer. The material world, as the potency of the Absolute, has real existence. But the living entity becomes bewildered by the temporary manifestations, foolishly taking them to be permanent. Thus the material world functions as an illusory potency, causing the living entity to forget the spiritual world, wherein life is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge. Because the material world thus bewilders the conditioned soul, it is called illusory. When a magician performs his tricks onstage, that which the audience apparently sees is an illusion. But the magician actually exists, and the hat and rabbit exist, although the appearance of a rabbit coming out of a hat is an illusion. Similarly, when the living entity identifies himself as part and parcel of the material world, thinking, “I am American,” “I am Indian,” “I am Russian,” “I am black,” “I am white,” he is bewildered by the magic of the Lord’s illusory potency. The conditioned soul must come to understand, “I am a pure spirit soul, part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. Now let me stop my useless activities and serve Kṛṣṇa, since I am part of Him.” Then he is free from the illusion of *māyā*. If one artificially tries to escape the clutches of the illusory energy by declaring that there is no illusory potency and that this world is false, he merely falls into another illusion created by *māyā* to keep him in ignorance. Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14):

*daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī
mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etāṁ taranti te*

Unless one surrenders at the lotus feet of Māyeśa, the Lord of the illusory potency, there is no possibility of escaping from illusion. Childishly declaring that there is no illusory potency is useless, since *māyā* is *duratyayā*, or insurpassable for the tiny living entity. But Lord Kṛṣṇa, the omnipotent Personality of Godhead, can immediately call off the illusory potency. In this verse the expansion of the material world from Brahman, the Absolute, is described. Since Brahman is one of the subordinate features of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*brahmeti paramātmēti bhagavān iti śabdyate*), one who understands this material world to be Brahman is freed from the tendency to exploit the material energy through sense gratification and mental speculation aimed at one’s own satisfaction.

The question may be raised, Since Brahman is stated to be *ekam*, or one, how does it become manifest in the innumerable varieties of the material world? Therefore this verse uses the word *uru-śakti*. The Absolute contains multipotencies, as stated in the *Vedas* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*): *parāśya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate*. The Absolute Truth is not *śakti*, or energy, but *śaktimān*, the possessor of innumerable potencies. According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, one should submissively hear these authorized descriptions of the Absolute Truth. As stated in the previous verse, *yathānalām arciṣaḥ svāḥ*: the insignificant sparks of a fire have no power to illuminate the blazing fire, which is itself the source of illumination. Similarly, the tiny living entity, who is like a spark of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, cannot

illuminate the Personality of Godhead by his insignificant intellectual power. One may argue that the sun expands its potency in the form of its rays and it is through the illumination of those rays that we are able to see the sun. In the same way, we should be able to perceive the Absolute Truth by the expansion of its potency. In answer to this it may be stated that if the sun creates a cloud covering the sky, then despite the presence of sun rays the sun cannot be seen. Therefore, ultimately the power to see the sun depends not only on the sun's rays but on the presence of a clear sky, which is also an arrangement by the sun. Similarly, as stated in this verse, one can understand the existence of the Absolute Truth by the expansion of its potencies.

Although in the previous verse the power of the material senses and mind was rejected, the authorized descriptions given here inform us that one can directly perceive everything that exists to be the potency of the Personality of Godhead. In this regard, Nārada Muni advised King Prācīnabarhi as follows:

*atas tad apavādārthaṁ
bhaja sarvātmanā harim
paśyaṁs tad-ātmakaṁ viśvaṁ
sthity-utpatty-apyayā yataḥ*

“You should always know that this cosmic manifestation is created, maintained and annihilated by the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Consequently, everything within this cosmic manifestation is under the control of the Lord. To be enlightened by this perfect knowledge, one should always engage himself in the devotional service of the Lord.” (*Bhāg.* 4.29.79) As stated here, *bhaja sarvātmanā harim*: one must worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead so that one's consciousness will become clean and pure, just like the clear blue sky in which the potent sun is fully manifest. When one sees the sun, he immediately sees the sun's rays in full potency. Similarly, if one engages in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa, one's mind becomes cleansed of material dirt, and thus he can see not only the Lord but the Lord's expansions as the spiritual world, as the pure devotees, as the Paramātmā, as the impersonal Brahman effulgence and as the subsequent creation of the material world, the shadow of the kingdom of God (*chāyeva*), in which so many material varieties become manifest. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the word *phalam* can also be understood to mean *puruṣārtha-svarūpam*, or the actual form of the goal of life, or, in other words, the transcendental form of the Lord Himself. The living entity in his original pure state is not different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, the infinite multicolored opulence of the kingdom of God, called Vaikuṅṭha, is nondifferent in quality from the Lord. Thus when the Supreme Personality of Godhead is personally present with His unparalleled opulence and His pure spiritual servitors, the living entities, a very happy situation is created. The mundane concept of family is a perverted reflection of the happy situation created when the Lord is united in full spiritual opulence with

His pure devotees. Every living entity has the option to join the Lord in His opulent eternal kingdom. Thus one should understand from this verse that everything within the gross and subtle cosmic manifestations is the potency of the Lord and is therefore meant to be used in the Lord's service.

Īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvam.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has given an elaborate explanation proving that the entire cosmic situation is the natural potency of the Absolute Truth. Sometimes superstitious people, without knowledge of the Personality of Godhead, say that material activities are controlled by an independent devil and that God is struggling with such a devil. Such gross ignorance of the omnipotent status of the Personality of Godhead can be removed by understanding the purport of this verse. Just as a spark is a tiny emanation from a blazing fire, everything that exists is but an insignificant spark of the potency of the Personality of Godhead. The Lord therefore says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.42):

*athavā bahunaitena
kiṁ jñātena tavārjuna
viṣṭabhyāham idaṁ kṛtsnam
ekāṁśena sthito jagat*

“But what need is there, Arjuna, for all this detailed knowledge? With a single fragment of Myself I pervade and support this entire universe.” The omnipotent Personality of Godhead is actually the well-wishing friend of every living entity (*suhṛdam sarva-bhūtānām*). Therefore, if one becomes sane and understands that one's well-wishing friend Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate source and controller of everything that exists, one attains immediate peace (*jñātvā mām śāntim ṛcchati*). Fear and illusion arise when one foolishly thinks that even one atom of the creation is not the controlled potency of the Personality of Godhead. *Bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syāt*. Denying the existence of the material world also creates a very dangerous situation of illusion. Both types of atheism – namely, seeing the material world as belonging to oneself (and therefore being meant for one's sense gratification) and declaring the nonexistence of the material world – are futile attempts to avoid one's eternal subordination to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the actual owner and enjoyer of everything. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted the following question stated by Śrī Maitreya to Śrī Parāśara in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1.3.1):

*nirguṇasyāprameyasya
śuddhasyāpy amalātmanaḥ
katham sargādi-kartṛtvaṁ
brahmaṇo'bhyupagamyate*

“How are we to understand that Brahman, the Supreme Soul, is the executor of the creation, maintenance and destruction of the material world, even though it is devoid of qualities, immeasurable, unembodied and free from any fault?” In reply, Śrī Parāśara stated:

*śaktayaḥ sarva-bhāvānām
acintya-jñāna-gocarāḥ*

*yato'to brahmaṇas tās tu
sargādyā bhāva-śaktayaḥ
bhavanti tapatām śreṣṭha
pāvakasya yathoṣṇatā*

“Mere logic cannot explain how even material objects expand their potency. These things can be understood by mature observation. The Absolute Truth expands His potency in the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material world just as fire expands its potency of heat.” (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 1.3.2) Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that one can understand the power of a valuable gem not by logical statements but by observing the effect of the gem. Similarly, one can understand the potency of a *mantra* by observing its power to achieve a particular effect. Such potency doesn't depend on so-called logic. There is no logical necessity for a seed's growing into a tree and giving fruits that nourish the human body. One may argue that the genetic code for the entire tree is contained within the seed. But there is no logical necessity for the existence of the seed, nor for the seed's expanding itself into a gigantic tree. *Ex post facto*, or after the manifestation of the wonderful material nature, the foolish material scientist traces out the expansion of a seed's potency in an apparently logical sequence of events. But there is nothing within the realm of so-called pure logic that dictates that a seed should expand into a tree. Rather, such expansion should be understood to be the potency of the tree. Similarly, the potency of a jewel is its mystic power, and various *mantras* also contain innate potencies. Ultimately the *mahā-mantra* – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – has the potency to transfer one to the spiritual world of bliss and knowledge. In the same way, the Absolute Truth has the natural quality of expanding itself into innumerable varieties of material and spiritual worlds. We may logically describe this expansion after the fact, but we cannot deny the expansion of the Absolute Truth. The conditioned soul who purifies his consciousness through the process of devotional service can scientifically observe the expansion of the Absolute Truth as described here, just as one who is not blind can observe the expansion of a seed into a huge tree. One can understand the potency of a seed not by speculation but rather by practical observation. Similarly, one must purify his vision so that he can practically observe the expansion of the Absolute Truth. Such observation can take place either by the ears or by the eyes. Vedic knowledge is *śabda-brahma*, or transcendental potency in the form of sound vibration. Therefore, one can observe the functions of the Absolute Truth through submissive hearing of transcendental sound. *śāstra-cakṣus*. When one's consciousness becomes fully purified one can perceive the Absolute Truth with all of one's spiritualized senses. The Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, is devoid of material qualities such as mundane goodness, passion and ignorance because He is an ocean of transcendental qualities and therefore has no need for the inferior qualities of the material world. As stated in the *Śvetāśvatara*

Upaniṣad (4.10), *māyāṁ tu prakṛtiṁ vidyān māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram*:
“Understand that *māyā* is the material energy whereas the Supreme Lord is the Supreme Lord of *māyā*.” Similarly, it is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *māyāṁ ca tad-apāśrayām*: *māyā* is always under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Just as it is understood from the above discussion that the material world is an emanation from the impersonal Brahman potency of the Lord, Brahman itself is an expansion of the potency of Kṛṣṇa, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham*).

*yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṅḡa-koṭi-
koṭiṣv aśeṣa-vasudhādi vibhūti-bhinnam
tad brahma niṣkalam anantam aśeṣa-bhūtaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

(*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.40)

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that in the impersonal Brahman there is neither transcendental activity nor the supreme *pum-artha*, or benefit of human life, namely *prema*, love of Godhead. Therefore, if one is prematurely dazzled by the expansion of the Lord’s bodily effulgence, known as Brahman, and therefore does not actually come to know the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no possibility of actually understanding one’s eternal identity as an eternal blissful expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The subject matter is summarized in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 1.3):

*yad advaitaṁ brahmopaniṣadi tad apy asya tanu-bhā
ya ātmāntaryāmī puruṣa iti so’syāṁśa-vibhavaḥ
saḍ-aiśvaryaīḥ pūrṇo ya iha bhagavān sa svayam ayaṁ
na caitanyāt kṛṣṇāj jagati para-tattvaṁ param iha*

TEXT 3.38

*nātmā jajāna na mariṣyati naidhate’sau
na kṣīyate savana-vid vyabhicāriṇāṁ hi
sarvatra śaśvat anapāyy upalabdhi-mātraṁ
prāṇo yathendriya-balena vikalpitaṁ sat*

na – never; *ātmā* – the soul; *jajāna* – was born; *na* – never; *mariṣyati* – will die; *na* – does not; *edhate* – grow; *asau* – this; *na* – does not; *kṣīyate* – become diminished; *savana-vit* – the knower of these phases of time; *vyabhicāriṇām* – as they occur in other, changing beings; *hi* – indeed; *sarvatra* – everywhere; *śaśvat* – constantly; *anapāyi* – never disappearing; *upalabdhi-mātraṁ* – pure consciousness; *prāṇaḥ yathā* – just like the life air within the body; *indriya-balena* – by the force of the senses; *vikalpitaṁ* – imagined as divided; *sat* – becoming.

TRANSLATION

Brahman, the eternal soul, was never born and will never die, nor does it grow or decay. That spiritual soul is actually the knower of the youth, middle age and death of the material body. Thus the soul

can be understood to be pure consciousness, existing everywhere at all times and never being destroyed. Just as the life air within the body, although one, becomes manifest as many in contact with the various material senses, the one soul appears to assume various material designations in contact with the material body.

PURPORT

The Vedic aphorism *sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma*, “Everything is Brahman,” has been explained in this chapter of the *Bhāgavatam*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the original source of everything. By expanding His internal potency, He manifests the spiritual world, and by expanding His external potency He manifests the material cosmos. The conditioned living entity is originally part and parcel of the superior, internal potency of the Lord, but being in contact with illusion, he falls under the clutches of the external potency. In any case, since everything is an expansion of the potency of the Supreme Brahman, everything is part and parcel of the Lord’s spiritual potency. *Bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād īśād apetasya viparyayo ’smṛtiḥ*. When a living entity thinks that the material world is not part and parcel of the Lord’s potency but is a separate existence, liable to be controlled and enjoyed by the tiny *jīva* soul, he is under *viparyayaḥ*, or a wrong conception. *Asmṛtiḥ*. Thus the living entity forgets that the Supreme Lord is the proprietor of everything, everything being an expansion of the Lord.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has pointed out that although the Lord’s external potency is subject to transformations such as birth, growth, decay and death, one should not foolishly conclude that the Lord’s internal potency, the living entity, is also subject to these changes. Both the living entity and material nature are ultimately Brahman, being expansions of the Supreme Brahman. But the *Vedas* clearly say, *parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate*: the Lord’s potencies are *vividhā*, or multifarious. Thus, according to this verse, *nātmā jajāna na mariṣyati naidhate ’sau na kṣīyate*: the soul is never born, nor does he die, and he certainly cannot grow or decay like a material body. Although the visible material body passes through boyhood, adolescence and old age, or although one may take birth as a demigod, human being, plant or animal, the spirit soul never changes his eternal constitutional position. Rather, he falsely identifies with the external transformations of the material body and thus imposes upon himself a psychological condition called illusion. This miserable illusory experience of seeing oneself transformed and ultimately annihilated by the laws of nature can be nullified by transcendental knowledge of one’s eternal status as the superior energy of the Lord.

The word *sarvatra* in this verse should not be foolishly misinterpreted to mean that the individual *jīva* soul is all-pervading. The soul is not born, nor does he die. Yet in our present conditioned state we falsely identify with the birth and death of the body. Therefore, because an all-pervading soul would never fall into illusion, *sarvatra* cannot indicate that the individual soul is all-pervading. *Illusion* implies an incomplete understanding of reality, which

would not be possible for an all-pervading entity. Therefore, the word *sarvatra* is understood to mean that the pure spiritual soul exists in all material conditions. In deep sleep, for example, consciousness may not overtly be manifest, and yet the spirit soul is understood to be present within the body. Similarly, it is understood from *Bhagavad-gītā* that the spirit soul (*nityaḥ sarva-gataḥ*) may exist even within fire, water or outer space, since the existence of the soul never depends upon material conditions but is an eternal fact. The consciousness of the soul is more or less manifest according to the possibilities offered by a particular material situation, just as electric light is manifest in a particular intensity and color according to the bulb available. The electrical energy is one, but it is manifested variously according to material conditions.

The argument may be raised that although the spirit soul is pure consciousness (*upalabdhi-mātram*), it is our practical experience that consciousness is constantly transformed. If I am thinking of a blue object such as the sky, then my previous thought of a yellow object such as a flower is destroyed. Similarly, if I become aware that I am hungry, then my consciousness of the blue sky is destroyed. In this way, consciousness is constantly being transformed. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has replied that consciousness itself is eternal, but in contact with the material senses it may be manifest in various ways. The example of the life air is very appropriate. *Prāṇa*, or the life air, is one, but in contact with the different senses it is manifest as the power to see, the power to hear, and so on. Similarly, consciousness, being spiritual, is ultimately one, but when in contact with the various senses it may be perceived in terms of particular sensory functions. But the state of consciousness is an eternal fact that cannot be changed, although it may be temporarily covered by *māyā*.

When one becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is understood to be *dhīra* (*dhīras tatra na muhyati*). At that time one is no longer subject to bewilderment by falsely identifying his consciousness with the transformations of material nature.

From the statement *tat tvam asi*, found in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, it is to be understood that spiritual knowledge is not impersonal but entails gradually perceiving the pure spiritual soul within the material body. Just as in *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa repeatedly says *aham*, or “I,” this Vedic aphorism uses the word *tvam*, or “you,” to indicate that just as the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the individual spark of Brahman (*tat*) is also an eternal personality (*tvam*). Therefore, according to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī it is to be understood that the individual spark of Brahman is eternally conscious. Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has further pointed out that instead of wasting time trying to understand the truth in its impersonal aspect, which is merely the negation of temporary material variety, one should try to understand oneself to be an eternally conscious entity in the *jīva* category. In other words, one should understand oneself to be eternally a conscious servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In this regard Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted the following statement from the *Mokṣa-dharma* section of the *Mahābhārata*:

*ahaṁ hi jīva-saṁjño vai
mayi jīvaḥ sanātanaḥ
maivam tvayānumantavyam
dṛṣṭo jīvo mayeti ha
ahaṁ śreyo vidhāsyāmi
yathādhikāram īśvaraḥ*

“The living entity, known as *jīva*, is not different from Me, for he is My expansion. Thus the living entity is eternal, as I am, and always exists within Me. But you should not artificially think, ‘Now I have seen the soul.’ Rather, I, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, will bestow this benediction upon you when you are actually qualified.”

TEXT 3.39

*aṅdeṣu peśiṣu taruṣv aviniściteṣu
prāṇo hi jīvam upadhāvati tatra tatra
sanne yad indriya-gaṇe’hami ca prasupte
kūṭa-stha āśayam ṛte tad-anusmṛtir naḥ*

aṅdeṣu – in (species of life born from) eggs; *peśiṣu* – in embryos; *taruṣu* – in plants; *aviniściteṣu* – in species of indeterminate origin (born from perspiration); *prāṇaḥ* – the vital air; *hi* – indeed; *jīvam* – the soul; *upadhāvati* – follows; *tatra tatra* – from one species to another; *sanne* – they are merged; *yat* – when; *indriya-gaṇe* – all the senses; *ahami* – the false ego; *ca* – also; *prasupte* – in deep sleep; *kūṭa-sthaḥ* – unchanging; *āśayam* – the subtle covering of contaminated consciousness, the *liṅga-śarīra*; *ṛte* – without; *tat* – of that; *anusmṛtiḥ* – (there is) subsequent remembrance; *naḥ* – our.

TRANSLATION

The spirit soul is born in many different species of life within the material world. Some species are born from eggs, others from embryos, others from the seeds of plants and trees, and others from perspiration. But in all species of life the prāṇa, or vital air, remains unchanging and follows the spirit soul from one body to another. Similarly, the spirit soul is eternally the same despite its material condition of life. We have practical experience of this. When we are absorbed in deep sleep without dreaming, the material senses become inactive, and even the mind and false ego are merged into a dormant condition. But although the senses, mind and false ego are inactive, one remembers upon waking that he, the soul, was peacefully sleeping.

PURPORT

When a living entity is awake the material senses and mind are constantly active. Similarly, when one is sleeping the false ego recollects one’s waking experiences, and thus one experiences dreams or fragments of dreams while sleeping. But in the state of *prasupti*, or deep sleep, both the mind and the

senses become inactive, and the false ego does not recall previous experiences or desires. The subtle mind and false ego are called *liṅga-śarīra*, or the subtle material body. This *liṅga-śarīra* is experienced in the form of temporary material designations such as “I am a rich man,” “I am a strong man,” “I am black,” “I am white,” “I am American,” “I am Chinese.” The sum total of one’s illusory conceptions of oneself is called *ahaṅkāra*, or false ego. And due to this illusory conception of life the living entity transmigrates from one species of life to another, as clearly explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*. The spirit soul, however, does not change its constitutional position of eternity, knowledge and bliss, although the soul may temporarily forget this position. To cite an analogous situation, if one dreams at night that he is walking in the forest, such a dream does not change one’s actual position of lying in bed within his apartment. Thus it is stated in this verse, *kūṭa-stha āśayam ṛte*: despite the transformations of the subtle body, the spirit soul does not change. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has given the following example to illustrate this point. *Etāvantaṁ kālaṁ sukham aham asvāpsam, na kiñcid avedīṣam*. One often thinks, “I was sleeping very peacefully, although I was not dreaming or aware of anything.” It can be logically understood that one cannot remember something of which he has had no experience. Therefore, since one remembers peacefully sleeping although there was no mental or sensual experience, such a memory should be understood to be a vague experience of the spirit soul.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has explained that the demigods, who are a superior race of humanlike entities on the higher planetary systems of this universe, do not actually undergo the gross ignorance of deep sleep as do ordinary human beings. Because the demigods have superior intelligence, they are not merged into ignorance at the time of sleeping. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanam ca*. Sleep is *apohanam*, or forgetfulness. Sometimes by dreaming there is *smṛti*, or memory of one’s actual condition, although in a dream one may experience one’s family or friends in an altered, illusory state. But all such conditions of remembering and forgetting are due to the presence of the Supersoul within the heart. By the mercy of the Supersoul one can have a preliminary glimpse of the soul by remembering how one was peacefully resting even without mental or sensual experience.

According to the authorized commentaries on this verse, *aviniściteṣu* means *sveda-jeṣu*, or born from perspiration. Śrīla Madhvācārya has pointed out, *bhū-svedena hi prāyo jāyante*: the earth’s dew is to be considered the perspiration of the earth, and various species of life are generated from dew. In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.1.9) the situation of the soul in relation to *prāṇa* is explained:

*eṣo’ṅur ātmā cetasā veditavyo
yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa
prāṇaiś cittam sarvam otaṁm prajānām
yasmin viśuddhe vibhavaty eṣa ātmā*

“The soul is atomic in size and can be perceived by perfect intelligence. This atomic soul is floating in the five kinds of air [*prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, samāna* and *udāna*]. The soul is situated within the heart, and it spreads its influence all over the body of the embodied living entities. When the soul is purified from the contamination of the five kinds of material air, its spiritual influence is exhibited.” Thus in the innumerable species of life the spiritual soul remains situated within *prāṇa*, or the material life air.

TEXT 3.40

*yarhy abja-nābha-caraṇaiṣaṇayoru-bhaktyā
ceto-malāni vidhamed guṇa-karma-jāni
tasmin viśuddha upalabhyata ātma-tattvaṁ
śākṣād yathāmala-dṛśoḥ savitr-prakāśaḥ*

yarhi – when; *abja-nābha* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose navel is shaped like a lotus; *caraṇa* – the feet; *eṣaṇayā* – desiring (only); *uru-bhaktyā* – by powerful devotional service; *cetaḥ* – of the heart; *malāni* – the dirt; *vidhamet* – cleanses away; *guṇa-karma-jāni* – generated from the modes of nature and material activities in those modes; *tasmin* – in that; *viśuddhe* – completely purified (heart); *upalabhyate* – is perceived; *ātma-tattvam* – the true nature of the self; *śākṣāt* – directly; *yathā* – just as; *amala-dṛśoḥ* – of pure eyes; *savitṛ* – of the sun; *prakāśaḥ* – the manifestation.

TRANSLATION

When one seriously engages in the devotional service of the Personality of Godhead, fixing the Lord’s lotus feet within one’s heart as the only goal of life, one can destroy the innumerable impure desires lodged within the heart as a result of one’s previous fruitive work within the three modes of material nature. When the heart is thus purified one can directly perceive both the Supreme Lord and one’s self as transcendental entities. Thus one becomes perfect in spiritual understanding through direct experience, just as one can directly experience the sunshine through normal, healthy vision.

PURPORT

In the previous verse it was explained that one can have a preliminary glimpse of the eternal, unchanging soul by remembering one’s experience of peacefully sleeping even while the mind and senses were totally inactive. One may ask, If in deep sleep there is a preliminary experience of the soul, why upon waking does one return to illusory material existence? It may be answered that because of material desires lodged within the heart the conditioned soul is addicted to the nescience of material sense gratification. A prisoner may glimpse through the bars the free light outside the prison window but still remain captive behind the bars. Similarly, although a conditioned soul may have a glimpse of the spirit soul, he remains captured within the bondage of material desires. Therefore, although one may have a preliminary understanding of the eternal soul that exists within the

temporary body, or even of the Supersoul that accompanies the individual soul within the heart, a specific process is still required to eliminate the cause of material existence, namely material desire.

As explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.6):

*yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ
tyajaty ante kalevaram
taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya
sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*

“Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail.” According to one’s desire at the time of death a suitable material body is awarded by material nature. *Karmaṇā daiva-netreṇa jantur dehopapattaye*. According to one’s fruitive desires and actions and under the jurisdiction of the representatives of the Lord called demigods, the living entity is awarded a particular material body, which is inevitably subject to harassment by birth, death, old age and disease. If one can eliminate the cause of a particular phenomenon, logically he also eliminates the effect. Therefore, this verse states that one should desire only to achieve shelter at the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead. One should give up illusory desires for material society, friendship and love, since such desires cause further material bondage. One should fix his mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, so that without fail one can remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death. As the Lord states:

*anta-kāle ca mām eva
smaran muktvā kalevaram
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ
yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ*

“Whoever, at the time of death, quits his body remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.” (Bg. 8.5) The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the actual shelter for every living being. And the Lord can be directly perceived as soon as one’s heart has become transparently clean through *bhakti-yoga*.

Bhagavad-gītā describes the state of achieving the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the words *tato mām tattvato jñātvā viśate tad-anantaram*, and sometimes impersonalists falsely interpret these words to be a description of *brahma-sāyujyam*, or impersonal merging into the existence of the Lord. It is clearly mentioned in this verse that one must fix his mind and devotion on the lotus feet of *abja-nābha*, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If the individual living entity were equal to the Personality of Godhead, the living entity could simply think of himself in order to be purified. But even then a contradiction would arise: the Personality of Godhead has no need to be purified, since He is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* as *pavitram paramam*, or the supreme pure. Therefore, one should not artificially try to twist an impersonal meaning out of the statements of the Vedic literature.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated that the perfect stage of devotional service indicated in this verse can be observed in the activities of

such great devotees as Dhruva Mahārāja. Dhruva Mahārāja approached the Personality of Godhead desiring a political adjustment on the material platform, but when purified by chanting the holy name of God (*oṃ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*) he felt no further need for material sense gratification. As stated in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *janayaty āśu vairāgyam*. As soon as one advances in devotional service, one is freed from the embarrassment of superficial material desires.

The words *upalabhyata ātma-tattvam* are significant in this verse.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that *ātma-tattvam*, or knowledge of the soul, indicates knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead along with His various expansions such as the impersonal *brahmajyoti* and the marginal living entity himself. As indicated here by the word *sākṣāt*, perceiving the Personality of Godhead means seeing the personal form of the Lord, His hands and legs, His various transcendental vehicles and servants, and so on, just as by devotion to the sun-god one can gradually perceive the personal body of the sun-god, along with his chariot and personal attendants.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that in verses 35 through 39 the various stages of standard logic are demonstrated. Verse 35 establishes the *viśaya*, or general thesis. Verse 36 manifests *saṁśaya*, or an expression of doubt. Verse 37 gives the *pūrva-pakṣa*, or opposing argument. And verse 38 definitely establishes the *siddhānta*, or conclusion. Verse 39 presents *saṅgati*, the summary. The *saṅgati*, or final word, is that one should become a pure devotee of the Personality of Godhead and worship the Lord's lotus feet. Thus by cleansing the mirror of the heart one can see the Lord, just as a normal human being with healthy 20/20 vision can very easily see the brilliant rays of the sun or as an advanced devotee of the sun-god himself can see the personal body of the sun-god.

TEXT 3.41

śrī-rājovāca
karma-yogaṁ vadata naḥ
puruṣo yena saṁskṛtaḥ
vidhūyehāśu karmāṇi
naiṣkarmyaṁ vindate param

śrī-rājā uvāca - the King said; *karma-yogam* - the practice of dovetailing one's work with the Supreme; *vadata* - please tell; *naḥ* - us; *puruṣaḥ* - a person; *yena* - by which; *saṁskṛtaḥ* - being refined; *vidhūya* - getting rid of; *iha* - in this life; *āśu* - quickly; *karmāṇi* - materialistic activities; *naiṣkarmyam* - freedom from fruitive reactions; *vindate* - enjoys; *param* - transcendental.

TRANSLATION

King Nimi said: O great sages, please speak to us about the process of karma-yoga. Purified by this process of dedicating one's practical work to the Supreme, a person can very quickly free himself from all

material activities, even in this life, and thus enjoy pure life on the transcendental platform.

PURPORT

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.5):

*na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api
jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt
kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma
sarvaḥ prakṛti-jair guṇaiḥ*

“All men are forced to act helplessly according to the impulses born of the modes of material nature; therefore no one can refrain from doing something, not even for a moment.” Since the living entity cannot remain inactive, he must learn to dedicate his activities to the Lord. Śrīla Prabhupāda comments on this verse from *Bhagavad-gītā* as follows: “It is not a question of embodied life, but it is the nature of the soul to be always active. Without the presence of the spirit soul, the material body cannot move. The body is only a dead vehicle to be worked by the spirit soul, which is always active and cannot stop even for a moment. As such, the spirit soul has to be engaged in the good work of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, otherwise it will be engaged in occupations dictated by illusory energy. In contact with material energy, the spirit soul acquires material modes, and to purify the soul from such affinities it is necessary to engage in the prescribed duties enjoined in the *śāstras*. But if the soul is engaged in his natural function of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whatever he is able to do is good for him.”

Ordinary people often question the busy activities of the devotees of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, mistaking such activities to be ordinary material work. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has stated in this connection, *kāmya-karmāṇy eva tyājītāni, na tu nitya-naimittikāni, phalasyaiva vinindatvāt*. One should give up selfish activities performed for one’s personal sense gratification, since the result of such thoughtless work is further material bondage. But one should offer one’s regular or occasional occupational duties to the Supreme Lord, and thus such activities become transcendental devotional service. By the words *tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*, this chapter has clearly explained that dovetailing one’s work with the service of the Lord is an art one should learn at the lotus feet of the bona fide spiritual master. Otherwise, if one whimsically declares his materialistic work to be transcendental devotional service, there will be no actual result. Therefore, according to Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, one should not mistake the word *naiṣkarmyam* to indicate inactivity; rather, it indicates transcendental activity under the guidance of the Lord and His representative.

TEXT 3.42

*evam praśnam ṛṣiṇ pūrvam
apṛccham pitur antike
nābruvan brahmaṇaḥ putrās
tatra kāraṇam ucyatām*

evam – similar; *praśnam* – a question; *ṛṣīn* – to the sages; *pūrvam* – previously; *apṛccham* – I asked; *pituh* – of my father (Ikṣvāku Mahārāja); *antike* – in front; *na abruvan* – they did not speak; *brahmaṇaḥ* – of Lord Brahmā; *putrāḥ* – the sons; *tatra* – of that; *kāraṇam* – the reason; *ucyatām* – please say.

TRANSLATION

Once in the past, in the presence of my father, Mahārāja Ikṣvāku, I placed a similar question before four great sages who were sons of Lord Brahmā. But they did not answer my question. Please explain the reason for this.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī the words *brahmaṇaḥ putrāḥ*, “the sons of Brahmā,” refer to the four Kumāras headed by Sanaka Ṛṣi. Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted a verse from the *Tantra-bhāgavata* stating that the reason the four sons of Lord Brahmā, although *mahājanas* and experts in the science of devotional service, declined to answer King Nimi was that they wanted to demonstrate clearly that even those who are expert in the cultivation of speculative knowledge cannot understand the actual science of pure devotional service. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has further commented that the sages avoided answering the question from the King because at that time King Nimi was a young boy and therefore not mature enough to understand the answer fully.

TEXT 3.43

śrī-āvirhotra uvāca
karmākarma vikarmeti
veda-vādo na laukikaḥ
vedasya ceśvarātmavāt
tatra muhyanti sūrayaḥ

śrī-āvirhotraḥ uvāca – the sage Āvirhotra said; *karma* – the execution of duties prescribed by scripture; *akarma* – failure to perform such duties; *vikarma* – engagement in forbidden activities; *iti* – thus; *veda-vādaḥ* – subject matter understood through the *Vedas*; *na* – not; *laukikaḥ* – mundane; *vedasya* – of the *vedas*; *ca* – and; *īśvara-ātmavāt* – because of coming from the Personality of Godhead Himself; *tatra* – in this matter; *muhyanti* – become confused; *sūrayaḥ* – (even) great scholarly authorities.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Āvirhotra replied: Prescribed duties, nonperformance of such duties, and forbidden activities are topics one can properly understand through authorized study of the Vedic literature. This difficult subject matter can never be understood by mundane speculation. The authorized Vedic literature is the sound incarnation of the Personality of Godhead Himself, and thus Vedic knowledge is perfect. Even the greatest learned scholars are bewildered in their

attempts to understand the science of action if they neglect the authority of Vedic knowledge.

PURPORT

Prescribed duties authorized by revealed scripture are called *karma*, whereas the failure to execute one's highest duty is called *akarma*. The performance of forbidden activities is called *vikarma*. Thus *karma*, *akarma* and *vikarma* are established by the authorized explanations of Vedic literature. They cannot be ascertained merely through mundane exercises in logic. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.16.51) the Lord says, *śabda-brahma param brahma mamobhe śāśvatī tanū*: "I am the form of the transcendental vibrations of the *Vedas*, such as *omkāra* and Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Rāma, and I am the Supreme Absolute Truth. These two forms of Mine - namely, the transcendental Vedic sound and the eternally blissful spiritual form of the Deity - are My eternal forms; they are not material." Similarly, it is stated in the *Bhāgavatam* (6.1.40), *vedo nārāyaṇaḥ sākṣāt svayambhūr iti śuśrūma*: "The *Vedas* are directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, and are self-born. This we have heard from Yamarāja." In the *Puruṣa-sūkta* (*Rg Veda*, *maṇḍala* 10, *sūkta* 90, *mantra* 9) it is stated, *tasmād yajñāt sarva-huta ṛcaḥ sāmāni jajñire/ chandāmsi jajñire tasmāt*: "From Him, Yajña, came all sacrificial offerings, hymns of invocation and songs of praise. All the *mantras* of the *Vedas* come from the Lord." All the incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are completely transcendental and free from the four defects of conditional life, namely mistakes, illusion, cheating and imperfect senses. So Vedic knowledge, being a plenary manifestation of the Supreme Lord, is similarly infallible and transcendental.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that in the material world, which is controlled by the illusory energy of the Lord, a particular sound vibration is discarded after describing its object. But on the spiritual platform called Vaikuṅṭha nothing is ever lost, and thus *śabda-brahma*, or the Personality of Godhead in His form as transcendental sound, is eternal. In ordinary human discourse one can ascertain the meaning of human words by understanding the intention of the speaker. But since Vedic knowledge is *apauruṣeya*, or transcendental, one can appreciate its purport only by hearing from the standard authorities in the chain of disciplic succession. This process is prescribed by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*evam paramparā-prāptam*). Thus, even highly learned scholars who proudly neglect this simple descending process are certainly bewildered and embarrassed in their hopeless attempt to ascertain the ultimate meaning of Vedic knowledge. The four sons of Lord Brahmā declined to answer the question of King Nimi since at that time the King was a mere child and therefore not capable of seriously surrendering to the process of hearing through disciplic succession. Śrīla Madhvācārya has pointed out in this regard, *īśvarātmavād īśvara-viṣayatvāt*. Because the *Vedas* describe the unlimited Personality of Godhead, Vedic knowledge cannot be approached by mundane methods of comprehension.

TEXT 3.44

*parokṣa-vādo vedo'yaṁ
bālānām anuśāsanam
karma-mokṣāya karmāṇi
vidhatte hy agadam yathā*

parokṣa-vādaḥ – describing a situation as something else in order to disguise its real nature; *vedaḥ* – Vedas; *ayam* – these; *bālānām* – of childlike persons; *anuśāsanam* – guidance; *karma-mokṣāya* – for liberation from material activities; *karmāṇi* – material activities; *vidhatte* – prescribe; *hi* – indeed; *agadam* – a medicine; *yathā* – just as.

TRANSLATION

Childish and foolish people are attached to materialistic, fruitive activities, although the actual goal of life is to become free from such activities. Therefore, the Vedic injunctions indirectly lead one to the path of ultimate liberation by first prescribing fruitive religious activities, just as a father promises his child candy so that the child will take his medicine.

PURPORT

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *traiguṇya-viṣayā vedā nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna*. The *Vedas* apparently offer fruitive results within the three modes of material nature. Those who perform ritualistic ceremonies or austerities in the mode of goodness are offered the chance for promotion to the higher planetary systems called Svargaloka. *Aśnanti divyān divi deva-bhogān*. Similarly, those who perform *karma-kāṇḍa*, or fruitive religious activities in the mode of passion, are allowed to become great rulers or wealthy men on earth and enjoy great prestige and earthly power. But as stated in the *Manu-saṁhitā*, *pravṛttir eṣā bhūtānām nivṛttis tu mahā-phalā*: “Although fruitive religious activities are very much popular among the conditioned souls, the actual perfection of life is achieved when one gives up all fruitive endeavor.” If a father tells his child, “You must take this medicine by my order,” the child may become fearful and rebellious and reject the medicine. Therefore, the father entices his child by saying, “I am going to give you a delicious piece of candy. But if you want this candy, first just take this little bit of medicine, and then you can have the candy.” Such indirect persuasion is called *parokṣa-vādaḥ*, or an indirect description that conceals the actual purpose. The father presents his proposal to the child as if the ultimate goal were to receive the candy and only a minor condition must be fulfilled to receive it. Actually, however, the father’s goal is to administer the medicine to the child and cure him of his disease. Thus, describing the primary purpose indirectly and concealing it with a secondary proposal is called *parokṣa-vādaḥ*, or indirect persuasion.

Since the great majority of conditioned souls are addicted to sense gratification (*pravṛttir eṣā bhūtānām*), the Vedic *karma-kāṇḍa* rituals offer them a chance to become free from temporary materialistic sense gratification by making them greedy for fruitive Vedic results such as promotion to heaven or a powerful ruling position on earth. In all Vedic rituals Viṣṇu is worshiped, and thus one is gradually promoted to the understanding that one's actual self-interest is to surrender to Viṣṇu. *Na te viduḥ svārtha-gatiṁ hi viṣṇum*. Such an indirect method is prescribed for *bālānām*, those who are childish or foolish. An intelligent person can immediately understand by direct analysis the actual purpose of Vedic literature as described by the Lord Himself (*vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*). All Vedic knowledge ultimately aims at achieving shelter at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Without such shelter one must rotate within the 8,400,000 species offered by the illusory energy of the Lord. Ordinary material vision, either through gross sense perception or the subtle perception of rational induction, always yields imperfect knowledge distorted by the desire for illusory material enjoyment. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments that the cultivation of impersonal self-realization is also a disturbance to the conditioned souls, since the impersonal speculative process is an artificial attempt to become completely formless. Such an attempt is not at all in accord with the proper judgment of the *Vedas*, which is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*).

In Lord Caitanya's movement there is no need to childishly pursue fruitive material results and gradually be dragged to actual knowledge. According to Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatiṁ anyathā*

In Kali-yuga life is very short (*prāyeṇālpāyusaḥ*), and people are generally undisciplined (*mandāḥ*), misguided (*sumanda-matayaḥ*), and overwhelmed by the unfavorable results of their previous activities (*manda-bhāgyāḥ*). Thus their minds are never peaceful (*upadrutāḥ*), and their very brief life span vitiates the possibility of their gradually progressing through the path of Vedic ritualistic activities. Therefore, the only hope is to chant the holy names of the Lord, *harer nāma*. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.3.51) it is stated:

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

Kali-yuga is an ocean of hypocrisy and pollution. In Kali-yuga all natural elements are polluted, such as water, earth, sky, mind, intelligence and ego. The only auspicious aspect of this fallen age is the process of chanting the

holy names of the Lord (*asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ*). Simply by the delightful process of *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* one is freed from his connection to this fallen age (*mukta-saṅga*) and goes back home, back to Godhead (*param vrajet*). Sometimes the preachers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement also use the *parokṣa*, or indirect method of persuasion, offering a nice transcendental sweet to the conditioned soul to entice him to come to the lotus feet of the Lord. Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement is *kevala ānanda-kāṇḍa*, simply blissful. But by the mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu even one who is indirectly attracted to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement achieves very quickly the perfection of life and goes back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 3.45

*nācared yas tu vedoktaṁ
svayam ajñō'jitendriyaḥ
vikarmaṇā hy adharmeṇa
mṛtyor mṛtyum upaiti saḥ*

na ācaret – does not perform; *yaḥ* – who; *tu* – but; *veda-uktam* – what is prescribed in the *Vedas*; *svayam* – himself; *ajñāḥ* – ignorant; *ajita-indriyaḥ* – not having learned to control his senses; *vikarmaṇā* – by not executing scriptural duty; *hi* – indeed; *adharmeṇa* – by his irreligion; *mṛtyoḥ mṛtyum* – death after death; *upaiti* – achieves; *saḥ* – he.

TRANSLATION

If an ignorant person who has not conquered the material senses does not adhere to the Vedic injunctions, certainly he will engage in sinful and irreligious activities. Thus his reward will be repeated birth and death.

PURPORT

In the previous verse it was stated that although fruitive activities are prescribed in the *Vedas*, the actual goal of human life is to free oneself from all materialistic activities. Therefore, one may conclude that there is no need to perform the Vedic rituals, which offer regulated sense gratification. But an ignorant person, or, in other words, one who has not understood that he is not the material body but an eternal spiritual soul, part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, will invariably be unable to control the urges of the material senses. Therefore, if such a materially inclined person neglects the Vedic injunctions that administer regulated sense gratification, he will surely fall down into unregulated sense gratification in *pāpa*, or sinful life. For example, those who are affected by sexual desire are ordered to accept the *vivāha-yajña*, or religious marriage ceremony. We often see that because of false pride a so-called *brahmacārī*, or celibate student of Vedic knowledge, rejects the marriage ceremony as *māyā*, or material illusion. But if such a celibate student is unable to control his senses he will undoubtedly degrade himself by eventually engaging in illicit sex, which has no connection to Vedic culture. Similarly, a neophyte in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is encouraged to eat *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* to his full satisfaction. Sometimes an immature practitioner

of *bhakti-yoga* tries to make a show of severe eating habits and eventually falls down into eating unregulated and abominable foodstuffs.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the words *mṛtyor mṛtyum upaiti* mean that a sinful person is awarded a free ticket to hell by the lord of death himself, Yamarāja. This is also described in the *Vedas* as follows: *mṛtvā punar mṛtyum āpadyate ardyamānaḥ sva-karmabhiḥ*. “Persons who cause themselves severe pain by their materialistic activities gain no relief at the moment of death, for they are placed again in a situation in which death will occur.” Therefore, Vedic ritualistic activities such as the wedding ceremony or the relishing of sumptuous *yajña-śiṣṭa*, or food remnants of sacrifice, should not be given up by those whose senses are not yet controlled.

The previous verse gave the example of a father’s administering candy to his son to induce the child to take medicine. If the child rejects the father’s offer, thinking that the candy is unnecessary, the child also misses the opportunity to take the medicine that will cure him. Similarly, if a materialistic person rejects the Vedic injunctions that administer prescribed sense gratification, he will not be purified but instead will be further degraded. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has described a materialistic person as one whose mind and intelligence are not faithfully fixed in the message of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Śrī Bhagavān, Lord Kṛṣṇa, gives wonderful explanations to the conditioned souls, represented by Arjuna, concerning the actual goal of life. One who cannot fix his mind on these instructions is to be considered a materialistic person who is inclined toward sinful activities and who must therefore submit himself to the standard Vedic injunctions. Such Vedic injunctions, even though fruitive, are considered *punya*, or pious, according to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, and thus one who strictly performs them will not go to hell. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself states in the *Bhāgavatam* (11.20.9):

*tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta
na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā
śraddhā yāvan na jāyate*

“One should continue to perform the Vedic ritualistic activities until one actually becomes detached from material sense gratification and develops faith for hearing and chanting about Me.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the *Vedas* prescribe that one rise early in the morning, bathe, and chant the Gāyatrī *mantra*. If one artificially gives up such a disciplined, regulated life, one will gradually become a victim of activities for gross sense gratification, such as eating in restaurants and indulging in illicit connections with women. Thus losing control of his senses, he becomes just like an animal, engaging from the early morning until the night in dangerous activities. Śrīla Madhvācārya has commented in this regard, *ajñāḥ sann ācarann api*. Although in ignorance, one continues to act, not considering the future result of one’s activities. Such indifference to the future result of one’s activities is described in

Bhagavad-gītā to be a symptom of the mode of ignorance. Just as an intelligent man will not drive his car on a highway if he knows the highway will lead him to danger, an intelligent man will not perform non-Vedic activities if he knows that the ultimate result will be the disaster described here by the words *mṛtyor mṛtyum upaiti*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has stated that ignorant persons sometimes think that after death one automatically attains everlasting peace. But by the powerful reactions of one's sinful activities one comes to a most unpeaceful condition, for one must suffer hellish miseries in exchange for the meager temporary fruits of material work. Such hellish reactions occur not once but perpetually, as long as one is indifferent to the Vedic injunctions.

TEXT 3.46

*vedoktam eva kurvāṇo
niḥsaṅgo'rpitam īśvare
naiṣkarmyaṁ labhate siddhim
rocanārthā phala-śrutiḥ*

veda-uktam – the regulated activities described by the Vedas; *eva* – certainly; *kurvāṇaḥ* – performing; *niḥsaṅgaḥ* – without attachment; *arpitam* – offered; *īśvare* – to the Supreme Lord; *naiṣkarmyam* – of liberation from material work and its reactions; *labhate* – one achieves; *siddhim* – the perfection; *rocana-arthā* – for the purpose of giving encouragement; *phala-śrutiḥ* – the promises of material results given in the Vedic scriptures.

TRANSLATION

By executing without attachment the regulated activities prescribed in the Vedas, offering the results of such work to the Supreme Lord, one attains the perfection of freedom from the bondage of material work. The material fruitive results offered in the revealed scriptures are not the actual goal of Vedic knowledge, but are meant for stimulating the interest of the performer.

PURPORT

Human life is an opportunity offered by the laws of nature to the conditioned soul so that he may understand his eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Unfortunately, even in the human form of life most living entities remain addicted to improving the standard of animal activities, namely eating, sleeping, defending and mating. Almost no one is interested in the actual success of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

*śrotavyādīni rājendra
nṛṇāṁ santi sahasraśaḥ
apaśyatām ātma-tattvaṁ
grheṣu grha-medhinām*

“Those persons who are materially engrossed, being blind to the knowledge of ultimate truth, have many subject matters for hearing in human society, O Emperor.” (*Bhāg.* 2.1.2)

It is stated, *parama-kāruṇiko vedaḥ* – “Vedic knowledge is supremely merciful” – because it engages the animalistic human beings in a gradual process of purification that culminates in full consciousness of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is confirmed by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*). The majority of human beings are not able to suddenly give up material sense gratification, even though they understand from Vedic literature that such sense gratification causes a pernicious future effect. We have practical experience in the Western countries that when the government informed the citizens that smoking cigarettes causes lung cancer, most people were unable to give up their smoking habit. Therefore, the Vedic literature prescribes a gradual process of purification in which the conditioned soul learns to offer the results of his material activities to the Supreme Lord, thus spiritualizing those activities. Material sense gratification is based on two organs, namely the tongue for tasting and the genitals for sex life. By offering palatable food to the Deity of Kṛṣṇa and then enjoying the remnants as *kṛṣṇa-prasādam* and by accepting the rules and regulations for Vedic householder life and begetting of Kṛṣṇa conscious children, one can gradually bring the full range of material activities to the platform of pure devotional service. By offering the fruits of one’s ordinary activities to the Supreme Lord, one gradually understands that the Lord Himself, and not material sense gratification, is the actual goal of life. Lord Kṛṣṇa warns in *Bhagavad-gītā* that if people are prematurely encouraged to give up householder life or the sumptuous remnants of the Lord’s *prasādam*, such artificial renunciation will have the opposite effect.

There is a class of duplicitous men who misunderstand the transcendental purpose of the *Vedas* and falsely claim that material fruitive results such as promotion to heaven, which is offered in the *agniṣṭoma* sacrifice, constitute the ultimate goal of the *Vedas*. Such foolish men have been described by Lord Kṛṣṇa:

*yām imām puṣpitām vācam
pravadanty avipaścitaḥ
veda-vāda-ratāḥ pārtha
nānyad astīti vādinaḥ
kāmātmānaḥ svarga-parā
janma-karma-phala-pradām
kriyā-viśeṣa-bahulām
bhogaiśvarya-gatiṁ prati*

“Men of small knowledge are very much attached to the flowery words of the *Vedas*, which recommend various fruitive activities for elevation to heavenly planets, resultant good birth, power, and so forth. Being desirous of sense gratification and opulent life, they say that there is nothing more than this.” (Bg. 2.42–43) To refute such a foolish understanding of the Vedic purpose, this verse uses the word *niḥsaṅgaḥ*, which means “without attachment to material results.” The actual purpose of the *Vedas* is *arpitam īśvare*, to offer

everything to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The result is *siddhim*, or the perfection of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The words *rocānārthā phala-śrutiḥ* clearly indicate that the fruitive results promised in the Vedic literature are meant to stimulate a materialistic person to have faith in the Vedic injunctions. The example is given that a child may be offered candy-covered medicine. The child becomes enthusiastic to take the medicine because of the candy coating, whereas a mature person will be enthusiastic to take the medicine itself, knowing that such medicine is meant for his real self-interest. The mature platform of Vedic understanding is mentioned in the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (4.4.22): *tam etaṁ vedānuvacanena brāhmaṇā vividiṣanti brahmacaryeṇa tapasā śraddhayā yajñenānāśakena ca*. “By the teaching of the *Vedas* and by celibacy, penances, faith and controlled eating, great *brāhmaṇas* come to know the Supreme.” The Supreme is Kṛṣṇa, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Although the prescribed rituals of the *Vedas* may sometimes resemble material fruitive work, the activity is spiritualized because the result is offered to the Supreme. Candy-covered medicine and ordinary candy may appear or taste the same. But the candy-covered medicine has a therapeutic effect not found in ordinary candy. Similarly, the words *naiṣkarmyaṁ labhate siddhim* in this verse indicate that a faithful follower of the Vedic injunctions will gradually be promoted to the highest perfection of life, pure love of Godhead, as stated by Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*premā pum-artho mahān*).

TEXT 3.47

*ya āśu hṛdaya-granthim
nirjihīṣuḥ parātmanaḥ
vidhinopacared devam
tantruktēna ca keśavam*

yaḥ - one who; *āśu* - quickly; *hṛdaya-granthim* - the knot of the heart (false identification with the material body); *nirjihīṣuḥ* - desirous of cutting; *parātmanaḥ* - of the transcendental soul; *vidhinā* - with the regulations; *upacaret* - he should worship; *devam* - the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tantra-uktena* - which are described by the *tantras* (the supplementary Vedic literatures that give detailed instructions for spiritual practice); *ca* - as well (in addition to those regulations which are directly *vedoktam*); *keśavam* - Lord Keśava.

TRANSLATION

One who desires to quickly cut the knot of false ego, which binds the spirit soul, should worship the Supreme Lord, Keśava, by the regulations found in Vedic literatures such as the tantras.

PURPORT

The Vedic literatures contain mysterious descriptions of the Absolute Truth that stimulate philosophical speculation. The *Vedas* also offer heavenly rewards for the performance of ritualistic ceremonies. But as stated in verse 44 of this chapter such *jñāna-kāṇḍa* and *karma-kāṇḍa* sections of the *Vedas*

are *bālānām anuśāsanam*; that is, because less intelligent or childish persons are addicted to mental speculation and fruitive activity, these sections of the *Vedas* are meant to attract such persons to take shelter of the Vedic injunctions for gradual promotion to the perfect stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Now that the path for those who are materialistic has been described in several verses, this verse describes the process for those who are *vijñāḥ*, or learned transcendentalists. Such learned transcendentalists are advised to follow the regulated worship described in such Vaiṣṇava *tantras* as *Śrī Nārada-pañcarātra* for pleasing the Supreme Lord directly. The words *upacared devaṁ tantroktena ca keśavam* indicate that one should directly worship Keśava, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who appears in many different incarnations to please His devotees. Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī has described the pastimes of the Lord in his song describing ten prominent incarnations of the Personality of Godhead, Keśava: Lord Fish, Lord Tortoise, Lord Boar, Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, Lord Vāmana, Lord Paraśurāma, Lord Rāmacandra, Lord Balarāma, Lord Buddha and Lord Kalki. The words *upacared devam* indicate devotional service to the Personality of Godhead. And therefore the word *tantroktena*, or “injunctions of the *tantras*,” should be understood to indicate *vaiṣṇava-tantras* such as *Śrī Nārada-pañcarātra*, which give explicit and detailed instructions for worshiping Keśava. The *Vedas* are referred to by the term *nigama*. And the elaborate explanation of these *nigamas* is called *āgama*, or *tantra*. When the transcendental living entity becomes perturbed by the obnoxious harassment of material bodily dualities, he becomes eager to hear from the *Vedas* about his transcendental situation. The word *āśu* in this verse indicates that those who are eager to put a quick end to material existence and situate themselves in the eternal blissful life of perfect knowledge should directly worship Lord Kṛṣṇa, bypassing the preliminary Vedic rituals described in the previous verses.

TEXT 3.48

*labdhvānugraha ācāryāt
tena sandarśitāgamaḥ
mahā-puruṣam abhyarcen
mūrtyābhimatayātmanaḥ*

labdhvā – having obtained; *anugrahaḥ* – mercy; *ācāryāt* – from the spiritual master; *tena* – by him; *sandarśita* – being shown; *āgamaḥ* – (the process of worship given by) the *vaiṣṇava-tantras*; *mahā-puruṣam* – the Supreme Person; *abhyarcet* – the disciple should worship; *mūrtyā* – in the particular personal form; *abhimatayā* – which is preferred; *ātmanaḥ* – by himself.

TRANSLATION

Having obtained the mercy of his spiritual master, who reveals to the disciple the injunctions of Vedic scriptures, the devotee should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the particular personal form of the Lord the devotee finds most attractive.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the word *labdhvānugrahaḥ* indicates formal initiation by a bona fide spiritual master. It is stated in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*ṣaṭ-karma-nipuṇo vipro
mantra-tantra-viśāradaḥ
avaiṣṇavo gurur na syād
vaiṣṇavaḥ śvapaco guruḥ*

A bona fide spiritual master must be a soul surrendered at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. In the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* it is stated:

*bodhaḥ kaluṣitas tena
daurātmyaṁ prakāṭi-kṛtam
gurur yena parityaktas
tena tyaktaḥ purā hariḥ*

“One pollutes his own intelligence and exhibits severe weakness of character when he rejects his own spiritual master. Indeed, such a person has already rejected the Supreme Lord, Hari.” The bona fide disciple should always remember that his entire understanding of Vedic knowledge is coming through the mercy of his bona fide spiritual master. If one superficially or whimsically accepts and rejects a bona fide Vaiṣṇava spiritual master, sometimes becoming attracted to another spiritual master, one commits a *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*, a great offense against the devotees of the Lord. Sometimes a foolish neophyte mistakenly thinks that the relationship with the spiritual master is meant for the sense gratification of the disciple, and therefore in the name of spiritual aspirations such a fool gives up a bona fide Vaiṣṇava *guru*. One should understand oneself to be the eternal servant of the *guru*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, however, has quoted this verse from the *Nārada-pañcarātra*:

*avaiṣṇavopadiṣṭena
mantreṇa nirayaṁ vrajet
punaś ca vidhinā samyag
grāhayed vaiṣṇavād guruḥ*

“One who is initiated into a *mantra* by a non-Vaiṣṇava must go to hell. Therefore he should again be initiated properly, according to the prescribed method, by a Vaiṣṇava *guru*.” It is the duty of the bona fide spiritual master to examine carefully the qualification of the disciple, and the disciple should similarly approach a bona fide spiritual master. Otherwise, the foolish disciple and the indiscriminate *guru* may both be punished by the laws of nature.

One should not artificially try to assimilate all of the apparently conflicting branches of Vedic knowledge. *Vedaś ca sarvair aham eva vedyaḥ*. Conditioned souls have various conflicting natures, which are engaged by apparently conflicting Vedic injunctions called *pravṛtti* and *nivṛtti-mārga*. But the easiest path is simply to learn the process of regularly worshipping *advaya-jñāna*, Lord Viṣṇu. All the demigods mentioned in the *Vedas* are paraphernalia for the service of the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu. Whatever exists in

the visible material world is also meant to be engaged in the Lord's service; otherwise, it has no value. If one artificially renounces material things useful in the service of the Supreme Lord, he loses his spiritual qualification of seeing everything as meant for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure and will be forced to think of material objects as meant for his own sense enjoyment. In other words, material things should be accepted or rejected according to the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Otherwise, one will fall down from the standard of pure devotional service. As stated in this verse, *labdhvānugraha ācāryāt*: such discrimination can be learned when one receives the mercy of a bona fide spiritual master, who reveals to the sincere disciple the practical application of Vedic knowledge.

TEXT 3.49

*śuciḥ sammukham āsīnaḥ
prāṇa-saṁyamanādibhiḥ
piṇḍam viśodhya sannyāsa-
kṛta-rakṣo'rcayed dharim*

śuciḥ – clean; *sammukham* – facing (the Deity); *āsīnaḥ* – thus seated; *prāṇa-saṁyamana-ādibhiḥ* – by *prāṇāyāma* (breathing exercises) and other means; *piṇḍam* – the gross body; *viśodhya* – purifying; *sannyāsa* – by placing transcendental marks of *tilaka* on various places of the body; *kṛta-rakṣaḥ* – in this way invoking the Lord's protection; *arcayet* – one should worship; *harim* – Lord Hari.

TRANSLATION

After cleansing oneself, purifying the body by prāṇāyāma, bhūta-śuddhi and other processes, and marking the body with sacred tilaka for protection, one should sit in front of the Deity and worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

Prāṇāyāma is the authorized Vedic process for controlling the air within the body. Similarly, *bhūta-śuddhi* is a process for purifying the body. The word *śuciḥ* means that one should be internally and externally clean. *Śuciḥ* means that one should perform activities only for the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If somehow or other one can remember the Supreme Lord constantly by chanting and hearing His holy name, one will come to the pure stage of life, as described in this Vedic *mantra*:

*om apavitraḥ pavitro vā
sarvāvasthām gato'pi vā
yaḥ smaret puṇḍarīkākṣam
sa bahyābhyantara-śuciḥ*

(*Garuḍa Purāṇa*)

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that although one may mark the body with sacred *tilaka*, perform *mudrās* and chant *mantras*, if one is thinking within his mind of material sense gratification his worship of Lord Śrī Hari is bogus. Therefore the word *śuciḥ* here indicates that one

should worship the Lord in a favorable frame of mind, considering the Lord to be sacred and one's self to be an insignificant servant of the Lord. Those who are not favorably inclined toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead do not like to worship the Deity in the temple, and they discourage people from going to the temple of the Lord by saying that since the Lord is omnipresent there is no need to do so. Such envious persons prefer the gymnastic exercises of *haṭha-yoga* or the *rāja-yoga* system. But statements by the Lord Himself, such as *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti* and *mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*, indicate that in mature transcendental realization one understands that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the source of everything and therefore the only worshipable object. Thus the devotees who worship the Deity of the Lord according to the *pañcarātra* system are not attracted by any *yoga* process except *bhakti-yoga*.

TEXTS 3.50-51

*arcādau hṛdaye cāpi
yathā-labdhopacāraiḥ
dravya-kṣity-ātma-liṅgāni
niṣpādya prokṣya cāsanam
pādyādīn upakalpyātha
sannidhāpya samāhitaḥ
hṛd-ādibhiḥ kṛta-nyāso
mūla-mantreṇa cārcayet*

arcā-ādau – in the form of the Deity and His paraphernalia; *hṛdaye* – in the heart; *ca api* – also; *yathā-labdha* – whatever is available; *upacāraiḥ* – with ingredients of worship; *dravya* – the physical items to be offered; *kṣiti* – the ground; *ātma* – one's own mind; *liṅgāni* – and the Deity; *niṣpādya* – preparing; *prokṣya* – sprinkling with water for purification; *ca* – and; *āsanam* – one's seat; *pādya-ādīn* – the water for bathing the Deity's feet and other offerings; *upakalpya* – getting ready; *atha* – then; *sannidhāpya* – placing the Deity in His proper place; *samāhitaḥ* – concentrating one's attention; *hṛt-ādibhiḥ* – on the Deity's heart and other places of the body; *kṛta-nyāsaḥ* – having drawn sacred marks; *mūla-mantreṇa* – with the appropriate basic *mantra* for worshiping the particular Deity; *ca* – and; *arcayet* – one should offer worship.

TRANSLATION

The devotee should gather whatever ingredients for worshiping the Deity are available, make ready the offerings, the ground, his mind and the Deity, sprinkle his sitting place with water for purification and prepare the bathing water and other paraphernalia. The devotee should then place the Deity in His proper place, both physically and within his own mind, concentrate his attention, and mark the Deity's heart and other parts of the body with tilaka. Then he should offer worship with the appropriate mantra.

PURPORT

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

(*Padma Purāṇa*)

The Absolute Truth can never be understood by ordinary material sense perception. The conditioned souls engrossed in the vain pursuit of material sense gratification are completely indifferent to the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Their materially conditioned minds are always impure and disturbed by the endless flow of material dualities, such as prosperity and poverty, winter and summer, fame and infamy, youth and old age. Such disturbed conditioned souls cannot recognize the personal presence of the Absolute Truth in the form of the Deity.

The Lord's incarnation as *arcā-avatāra*, the Deity form, is a special manifestation of the Lord's mercy toward the materialistic or neophyte devotees who are still under the influence of material designations. They are unable to perceive the Lord in His eternal abode, and therefore the Lord descends as the Deity form, manifesting the *prakāśa* incarnations and even the *svayam-prakāśa*, or the original form of the Lord. The *prakāśa* incarnations exhibit various pastimes within this world, whereas *svayam-prakāśa*, the Lord's original form, is the source of all *avatāras*.

To one who sincerely worships the Deity, the Deity manifests Himself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Those who are most unfortunate cannot even recognize the Supreme Lord in His merciful Deity expansion. They consider the Deity an ordinary material object. But by surrendering at the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master, who is a pure devotee of the Lord, one can learn to worship the Deity, as mentioned in this verse, and thus revive one's lost relationship with the Lord. One who considers such transcendental Deity worship to be equivalent to idol worship is grossly covered by the three modes of material nature. A person wearing rose-colored glasses sees the entire world to be rose colored. Similarly, those unfortunate living entities who are thickly covered by the material modes of nature see everything, including the Supreme Lord, as material due to their polluted vision.

TEXTS 3.52-53

*sāṅgopāṅgām sa-pārśadām
tām tām mūrtim sva-mantrataḥ
pādyārghyācamanīyādyaiḥ
snāna-vāso-vibhūṣaṇaiḥ
gandha-mālyākṣata-sragbhir
dhūpa-dīpopahāraikāiḥ
sāṅgam sampūjya vidhivat
stavaiḥ stutvā named dharim*

sa-aṅga – including the limbs of His transcendental body; *upāṅgām* – and His special bodily features such as His Sudarśana disc and other weapons; *sa-pārśadām* – along with His personal associates; *tām tām* – each particular; *mūrtim* – Deity; *sva-mantrataḥ* – by the Deity’s own *mantra*; *pādya* – with water for bathing the feet; *arghya* – scented water for greeting; *ācamanīya* – water for washing the mouth; *ādyaiḥ* – and so on; *snāna* – water for bathing; *vāsaḥ* – fine clothing; *vibhūṣaṇaiḥ* – ornaments; *gandha* – with fragrances; *mālya* – necklaces; *akṣata* – unbroken barleycorns; *sragbhiḥ* – and flower garlands; *dhūpa* – with incense; *dīpa* – and lamps; *upahārakaiḥ* – such offerings; *sa-aṅgam* – in all aspects; *sampūjya* – completing the worship; *vidhivat* – in accordance with the prescribed regulations; *stavaiḥ stutvā* – honoring the Deity by offering prayers; *namet* – one should bow down; *harim* – to the Lord.

TRANSLATION

One should worship the Deity along with each of the limbs of His transcendental body, His weapons such as the Sudarśana cakṛa, His other bodily features and His personal associates. One should worship each of these transcendental aspects of the Lord by its own mantra and with offerings of water to wash the feet, scented water, water to wash the mouth, water for bathing, fine clothing and ornaments, fragrant oils, valuable necklaces, unbroken barleycorns, flower garlands, incense and lamps. Having thus completed the worship in all its aspects in accordance with the prescribed regulations, one should then honor the Deity of Lord Hari with prayers and offer obeisances to Him by bowing down.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has mentioned that *akṣata*, or unbroken barleycorns (mentioned in verse 53), are to be used in decorating the Deity with *tilaka*, and not in the actual *pūjā*. *Nākṣatair arcayed viṣṇuṁ na ketakyā maheśvaram*: “Lord Viṣṇu should not be worshiped with unbroken barleycorns, and Lord Śiva should not be worshiped with *ketakī* flowers.”

TEXT 3.54

*ātmānam tan-mayam dhyāyan
mūrtim sampūjayed dhareḥ
śeṣām ādhāya śirasā
sva-dhāmny udvāsya sat-kṛtam*

ātmānam – oneself; *tat* – in the Lord; *mayam* – absorbed; *dhyāyan* – so meditating; *mūrtim* – the personal form; *sampūjayet* – should fully worship; *hareḥ* – of Lord Hari; *śeṣām* – the remnants of worship; *ādhāya* – taking; *śirasā* – upon one’s head; *sva-dhāmni* – in His place; *udvāsya* – putting; *sat-kṛtam* – respectfully.

TRANSLATION

The worshiper should become fully absorbed in meditating upon himself as an eternal servant of the Lord and should thus perfectly

worship the Deity, remembering that the Deity is also situated within his heart. Then he should take the remnants of the Deity's paraphernalia, such as flower garlands, upon his head and respectfully put the Deity back in His own place, thus concluding the worship.

PURPORT

The word *tan-mayam* in this verse is significant. One who is purified by worshiping the Deity form of the Lord can understand that he, the worshiper, is an eternal servant of the Lord and is qualitatively one with the Lord, being like a tiny spark of the original fire, the Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Madhvācārya has stated in this regard:

*viṣṇor bhṛtyo'ham ity eva
sadā syād bhagavan-mayaḥ
naivāhaṁ viṣṇur asmīti
viṣṇuḥ sarveśvaro hy ajaḥ*

“One should think, ‘I am an eternal servant of Viṣṇu, and therefore, because I am His eternal part and parcel, I am eternally one with Him. But I am not Viṣṇu Himself, because Viṣṇu is the supreme controller of everything.’”

The basic principle of Deity worship is that one must understand oneself to be an eternal servant of the Supreme Lord. One who is addicted to sexual gratification, foolishly identifying himself with the external material body, cannot change his conception of himself from that of an enjoyer to that of the enjoyed. Such a person interprets the word *tan-mayam* to mean that the worshiper is himself also the worshipable object. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhupāda has written in his *Durga-saṅgamanī*, his commentary on Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhu's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, that *ahaṅgrahopāsanā*, or the process of worshiping oneself as the Supreme, is a gross misidentification of one's own self with the Supreme, who is actually one's eternal shelter. The Six Gosvāmīs have repeatedly clarified this point. But unintelligent persons within the *prākṛta-sahajiyā* community become influenced by the bogus ideas of the Māyāvādī philosophers and thus display the deluded misconception that the worshiper becomes the supreme shelter. Such a hallucination is an *aparādha*, an offense against the Lord. Therefore the word *tan-maya* in this verse should not be offensively understood to mean that the worshiper becomes equal to his eternal worshipable object.

TEXT 3.55

*evam agny-arka-toyādāv
atithau hṛdaye ca yaḥ
yajatīśvaram ātmānam
acirān mucyate hi saḥ*

evam – thus; *agni* – in fire; *arka* – the sun; *toya* – water; *ādau* – and so on; *atithau* – in the guest at one's home; *hṛdaye* – in one's heart; *ca* – also; *yaḥ* – who; *yajati* – worships; *īśvaram* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead;

ātmānam – the Supreme Soul; *acirāt* – without delay; *mucyate* – becomes liberated; *hi* – indeed; *saḥ* – he.

TRANSLATION

Thus the worshiper of the Supreme Lord should recognize that the Personality of Godhead is all-pervading and should worship Him through His presence in fire, the sun, water and other elements, in the heart of the guest one receives in one's home, and also in one's own heart. In this way the worshiper will very soon achieve liberation.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Third Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Liberation from the Illusory Energy."

CHAPTER FOUR

Drumila Explains the Incarnations of Godhead to King Nimi

The various forms of the past, present and future incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Hari, and the various transcendental characteristics of each of these *avatāras* constitute the subject matter of this chapter.

Even if it were ever possible to count all the particles of dust on the face of the earth, any attempt to count all the innumerable transcendental qualities of the unlimited Lord Hari, the foundation of all potencies, would be simply madness. The Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa created the universe out of the five elements manufactured by His own *māyā*, entered into that universe in the form of the Supersoul and became known as the Puruṣa-avatāra. He effects the work of creation in the mode of passion through the personal form of Brahmā, of protection in the mode of goodness through the form of the Lord of sacrifice, Viṣṇu, and of annihilation in the mode of ignorance through the form of Rudra. Incarnating in the form of Nara-Nārāyaṇa, the greatest of sages, from the womb of Mūrti, the daughter of Dakṣa and wife of Dharma, He preached by His own practical demonstration the science of *naiṣkarmyam*. When Cupid (Kandarpa) and his hosts were sent to Badarikāśrama by King Indra, who had become fearful and envious at seeing the austerities of Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa, that best of sages welcomed Cupid as an honored guest. The pacified Cupid then offered prayers to the Supreme Personality Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi. By the order of the sage, Cupid returned from there with Urvaśī and upon presenting himself before Indra related to him everything that had taken place.

The Personality of Godhead Lord Viṣṇu has appeared in various partial incarnations for the benefit of the entire world and has given instructions in spiritual knowledge in the forms of Harṁsa, Dattātreya, Sanaka and the other Kumāra brothers, and Ṛṣabhadeva. In the form of Hayagrīva He killed the demon Madhu and saved all the *Vedas*. In the *avatāra* of Matsya, the fish, He protected both the earth and Satyavrata Manu. In the incarnation of Varāha, the boar, He delivered the earth and destroyed Hiraṇyākṣa; in that of Kūrma, the tortoise, He carried Mandara Mountain upon His back; and in the form of Śrī Hari He gave liberation to the king of the elephants. The Lord delivered the Vālakhilyas, who had been trapped in the water in a cow's hoofprint, He delivered Indra from the reaction for murdering a *brāhmaṇa*, and He delivered the wives of the demigods from imprisonment in the palaces of the demoniac *asuras*. In the *avatāra* of Nṛsimha, He killed Hiraṇyakaśipu. In the reign of each Manu He kills the demons, fulfills the needs of the demigods and protects all the planetary systems. In the form of Vāmana, the dwarf *brāhmaṇa* boy, He cheated Bali Mahārāja; in the form of Paraśurāma He rid the earth of *kṣatriyas* twenty-one times; and in the form of Śrī Rāma He brought the ocean under His submission and killed Rāvaṇa. Descending into the Yadu dynasty, He removed the burden of the earth. In the form of Buddha, by His argumentative preaching in defiance of the *Vedas* He bewildered the demons who were unqualified to perform sacrifices, and at the end of Kali-yuga He will destroy the *sūdra* kings in His form of Kalki. In

this way the innumerable appearances and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Hari are described.

TEXT 4.1

*śrī-rājavāca
yāni yānīha karmāṇi
yair yaiḥ svacchanda-janmabhiḥ
cakre karoti kartā vā
haris tāni bruvantu naḥ*

śrī-rājā uvāca - the King said; *yāni yāni* - each; *iha* - in this world; *karmāṇi* - of the activities; *yaiḥ yaiḥ* - by each; *svacchanda* - assumed independently; *janmabhiḥ* - of the appearances; *cakre* - He performed; *karoti* - is performing; *kartā* - will perform; *vā* - or; *hariḥ* - the Supreme Lord, Hari; *tāni* - these; *bruvantu* - please tell; *naḥ* - us.

TRANSLATION

King Nimi said: The Supreme Personality of Godhead descends into the material world by His internal potency and according to His own desire. Therefore, please tell us about the various pastimes Lord Hari has performed in the past, is performing now and will perform in this world in the future in His various incarnations.

PURPORT

In this Fourth Chapter the son of Jayantī, Drumila, will address King Nimi. The forty-eighth verse of the Third Chapter stated, *mūrtyābhimatayātmanaḥ*: “One should worship the particular form of the Lord most attractive to oneself.” Similarly it was stated in the previous chapter, *stavaiḥ stutvā named dharim*: “One should bow down to Lord Hari after glorifying Him with prayers.” Thus it is assumed that the worshiper has knowledge of the Supreme Lord’s transcendental qualities and pastimes in order to execute the process of worship previously described. King Nimi, therefore, is eagerly inquiring about the various incarnations of the Supreme Lord so that he can ascertain which particular form of the Supreme Lord is most suitable for his personal worship. It is understood that King Nimi is a Vaiṣṇava, or devotee, who is trying to advance in the transcendental loving service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

It is important to note in this regard that the word *abhimata-mūrti*, meaning “one’s most desirable form,” does not indicate that one may concoct a form of the Lord by one’s own whim. *Advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam*. All the forms of the Supreme Lord are *anādim*, or eternal. Thus there is no question of concocting a form, because such a concoction would be *ādi*, or the origin of the concocted form. *Abhimata-mūrti* means that among the eternal forms of the Lord one should select that form which most inspires one’s love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such love cannot be imitated, but it is automatically aroused when one follows the prescribed rules and regulations given by the bona fide spiritual master and submissively hears these descriptions of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 4.2

śrī-drumila uvāca
yo vā anantasya guṇān anantān
anukramiṣyan sa tu bāla-buddhiḥ
rajāṁsi bhūmer gaṇayet kathañcit
kālena naivākhila-śakti-dhāmaḥ

śrī-drumilaḥ uvāca – Śrī Drumila said; *yaḥ* – who; *vai* – indeed; *anantasya* – of the unlimited Lord; *guṇān* – the transcendental qualities; *anantān* – which are unlimited; *anukramiṣyan* – trying to enumerate; *saḥ* – he; *tu* – certainly; *bāla-buddhiḥ* – is a person of childish intelligence; *rajāṁsi* – the particles of dust; *bhūmeḥ* – on the earth; *gaṇayet* – one may count; *kathañcit* – somehow; *kālena* – in time; *na eva* – but not; *akhila-śakti-dhāmaḥ* – (the qualities) of the reservoir of all potencies.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Drumila said: Anyone trying to enumerate or describe fully the unlimited qualities of the unlimited Supreme Lord has the intelligence of a foolish child. Even if a great genius could somehow or other, after a time-consuming endeavor, count all the particles of dust on the surface of the earth, such a genius could never count the attractive qualities of the Personality of Godhead, who is the reservoir of all potencies.

PURPORT

In reply to King Nimi's request that the *nava-yogendras* describe all the qualities and pastimes of the Lord, Śrī Drumila here explains that only the most foolish person would even attempt such a comprehensive description of the unlimited qualities and pastimes of the Personality of Godhead. Such foolish, childish persons, however, are far more advanced than ignorant materialistic scientists who actually try to describe all knowledge without even referring to the Personality of Godhead. In other words, although it is impossible to describe the Lord fully, foolish atheistic scientists attempt to describe all knowledge without even having reached the most preliminary knowledge of the Personality of Godhead. Such atheistic persons should be understood to be shortsighted and of very weak intelligence, despite their showy material achievements, which ultimately end in great suffering and destruction. It is said that Lord Anantadeva Himself, with His innumerable tongues, cannot even begin to vibrate completely the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The example given in this verse is very nice. No human being can hope to count the number of particles on the surface of the earth; therefore no one should foolishly try to understand the Supreme Lord by his own tiny endeavor. One should submissively hear knowledge of God as it is spoken by God Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā*, and thus one should gradually be elevated to the stage of hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. According

to Caitanya Mahāprabhu, by tasting a drop of seawater one can get a general idea of the flavor of the entire ocean. Similarly, by submissively hearing about the Personality of Godhead one can acquire a qualitative understanding of the Absolute Truth, although quantitatively one's knowledge can never be complete.

TEXT 4.3

*bhūtair yadā pañcabhir ātma-sṛṣṭaiḥ
puram virājam viracayya tasmīn
svāmśena viṣṭaḥ puruṣābhidhānam
avāpa nārāyaṇa ādi-devaḥ*

bhūtaiḥ – by the material elements; *yadā* – when; *pañcabhiḥ* – five (earth, water, fire, air and ether); *ātma-sṛṣṭaiḥ* – created by Himself; *puram* – the body; *virājam* – of the universe in its subtle form; *viracayya* – having constructed; *tasmīn* – within that; *sva-amśena* – in the manifestation of His own plenary expansion; *viṣṭaḥ* – entering; *puruṣa-abhidhānam* – the name Puruṣa; *avāpa* – assumed; *nārāyaṇaḥ* – Lord Nārāyaṇa; *ādi-devaḥ* – the original Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

When the primeval Lord Nārāyaṇa created His universal body out of the five elements produced from Himself and then entered within that universal body by His own plenary portion, He thus became known as the Puruṣa.

PURPORT

The words *bhūtaiḥ pañcabhiḥ* in this verse refer to the five gross material elements – earth, water, fire, air and sky – which form the basic building blocks of the material world. When the conditioned living entity enters within these five elements, consciousness becomes manifest, along with the functions of the mind and intelligence. Unfortunately, the consciousness manifest under the modes of material nature is governed by *ahaṅkāra*, or false ego, in which the living entity wrongly considers himself the enjoyer of the material elements. Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Puruṣottama, enjoys His pure transcendental existence in the spiritual sky, the material elements are also meant for His enjoyment, through the process of *yajña*, or sacrifice. This material world is called *Devī-dhāma*, or the abode of the illusory energy of the Lord, *Māyādevī*. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* explains that the Supreme Person is not at all attracted to His inferior energy, *māyā*, but when the material creation is used in the devotional service of the Lord, the Lord becomes attracted by the devotion and sacrifice of the living entities, and thus, indirectly, He is also the enjoyer of the material world. We should not think that the pastimes of Lord Nārāyaṇa as the Supersoul and creator of this universe are on a lower spiritual level than Nārāyaṇa's eternal pastimes in the spiritual world. Were Lord Nārāyaṇa in any way to diminish His transcendental bliss and knowledge in His activities of material creation, He would have to be considered a conditioned soul, affected by

contact with the illusory potency. But since Lord Nārāyaṇa is eternally aloof from the influence of *māyā*, His activities as the Supersoul of this universe are exactly on the same transcendental level as His activities in the spiritual world. All the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are part and parcel of His unlimited spiritual pastimes.

TEXT 4.4

*yat-kāya eṣa bhuvana-traya-sanniveśo
yasyendriyais tanu-bhṛtām ubhayendriyāṇi
jñānaṁ svataḥ śvasanato balam oja īhā
sattvādibhiḥ sthiti-layodbhava ādi-kartā*

yat-kāye – within whose body; *eṣaḥ* – this; *bhuvana-traya* – of the three planetary systems making up the universe; *sanniveśaḥ* – the elaborate arrangement; *yasya* – of whom; *indriyaiḥ* – by the senses; *tanu-bhṛtām* – of the embodied living beings; *ubhaya-indriyāṇi* – both kinds of senses (knowledge-acquiring and active); *jñānam* – knowledge; *svataḥ* – directly from Him; *śvasanataḥ* – from His breathing; *balam* – strength of the body; *ojaḥ* – strength of the senses; *īhā* – activities; *sattva-ādibhiḥ* – by nature's modes of goodness, passion and ignorance; *sthiti* – in maintenance; *laya* – destruction; *udbhava* – and creation; *ādi-kartā* – the original doer.

TRANSLATION

Within His body are elaborately arranged the three planetary systems of this universe. His transcendental senses generate the knowledge-acquiring and active senses of all embodied beings. His consciousness generates conditioned knowledge, and His powerful breathing produces the bodily strength, sensory power and conditioned activities of the embodied souls. He is the prime mover, through the agency of the material modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. And thus the universe is created, maintained and annihilated.

PURPORT

When a conditioned soul becomes completely exhausted by his strenuous activities, or when he is overcome by disease, death or fear, he loses all power to manifest practical knowledge or activities. Thus we should understand that independent of the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead we can neither work nor cultivate knowledge. By the mercy of the Personality of Godhead the conditioned soul acquires a material body, which is a perverted reflection of the unlimited spiritual body of the Lord. Thus the living entity engages in ignorant materialistic activities for society, friendship and love. But the entire program suddenly vanishes with the unforeseen dissolution of the material body. Similarly, our material knowledge is always subject to become null and void within an instant, since the material nature is itself constantly changing. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the prime mover behind the birth, maintenance and destruction of the universe. And the living entity should try to understand that Personality of Godhead

who has given him so much facility for illusion. The Personality of Godhead actually wants the conditioned soul to surrender to Him and regain an eternal life of bliss and knowledge at the Lord's side. The conditioned soul should reason, "If the Lord is giving me so much facility to merge into ignorance, surely He will give even more facility to come out of this ignorance if I humbly follow His direction without foolish speculations." This verse describes Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, the second phase of the *puruṣa* incarnations of the Lord. This Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who is glorified in the *Puruṣa-sūkta* prayers, expands Himself as the Supersoul to enter the heart of every living being. Through chanting the holy names of the Lord - Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare - even in this degraded age one can find the Supreme Lord within one's heart. The Lord is a person as much as we are, but He is unlimited. Still, a personal loving relationship exists between the tiny living entity and the unlimited Supreme Lord. In consideration of this personal relationship, *bhakti-yoga* is the only suitable process by which to come to the ultimate understanding of our constitutional position as eternal servants of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 4.5

*ādāv abhūc chata-dhṛtī rajasāsya sarge
viṣṇuḥ sthitau kratu-patir dvija-dharma-setuḥ
rudro'pyayāya tamasā puruṣaḥ sa ādya
ity udbhava-sthiti-layāḥ satatam prajāsu*

ādau - in the beginning; *abhūt* - He became; *śata-dhṛtiḥ* - Lord Brahmā; *rajasā* - by the material mode of passion; *asya* - of this universe; *sarge* - in the creation; *viṣṇuḥ* - Lord Viṣṇu; *sthitau* - in maintenance; *kratu-patiḥ* - the Lord of sacrifice; *dvija* - of the twice-born *brāhmaṇas*; *dharma* - of the religious duties; *setuḥ* - the protector; *rudraḥ* - Lord Śiva; *apyayāya* - for annihilation; *tamasā* - by the mode of ignorance; *puruṣaḥ* - the Supreme Person; *saḥ* - He; *ādyaḥ* - original; *iti* - thus; *udbhava-sthiti-layāḥ* - creation, maintenance and destruction; *satatam* - always; *prajāsu* - among created beings.

TRANSLATION

In the beginning, the original Supreme Personality manifested the form of Brahmā through the material mode of passion in order to create this universe. The Lord manifested His form as Viṣṇu, the Lord of sacrifice and protector of the twice-born brāhmaṇas and their religious duties, to maintain the universe. And when the universe is to be annihilated the same Supreme Lord employs the material mode of ignorance and manifests the form of Rudra. The created living beings are thus always subject to the forces of creation, maintenance and destruction.

PURPORT

In the previous verse the Supreme Personality of Godhead was described as *ādi-kartā*, the original person responsible for the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material world. According to Śrīdhara Svāmī, *ādi-kartā*, or “the original doer,” implies subsequent creators, maintainers and annihilators. Otherwise there would be no meaning to the word *ādi*, or “original.” Therefore this verse describes that the Absolute Truth expands Himself into the *guṇāvatāras*, or incarnations who carry out the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the universe through the modes of passion, goodness and ignorance respectively.

It is significant here that although this verse mentions creation through the material mode of passion and annihilation through the material mode of ignorance, it does not mention maintenance by Viṣṇu through the material mode of goodness. That is because Viṣṇu is *viśuddha-sattva*, or existing on the platform of unlimited transcendental goodness. Although Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are somewhat affected by their prescribed duties as superintendents of the modes of nature, Lord Viṣṇu is *viśuddha-sattva*, completely beyond contamination even by the material mode of goodness. As described in the *Vedas*, *na tasya kāryam karaṇam ca vidyate*: the Lord has no occupational duty. Whereas Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are understood to be servants of the Lord, Viṣṇu is completely transcendental. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Viṣṇu, described in this verse as *kratu-patiḥ*, the Lord of sacrifice, is understood to have appeared in a previous age as the incarnation Suyajña, the son of Prajāpati Ruci. Whereas Brahmā and Śiva faithfully engage in service to the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu is the Supreme Lord Himself, and therefore His activities of maintaining the *brāhmaṇas* and religious principles, as mentioned in this verse (*dvija-dharma-setuḥ*), are not occupational duties but *līlā*. So in addition to being a *guṇāvatāra*, Viṣṇu is also a *līlāvatāra*, according to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. The *Mahābhārata* (*Śānti-parva*) describes the birth of Lord Brahmā from the lotus flower emanating from Viṣṇu and the subsequent birth of Lord Śiva from the angry eyes of Lord Brahmā. Viṣṇu, however, is the self-manifested Personality of Godhead who enters the material universe by His own internal potency, as stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.8.15):

*tal loka-padmaṁ sa u eva viṣṇuḥ
prāvīśat sarva-guṇāvabhāsam*

In conclusion, Lord Viṣṇu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the supreme controller whose personal form is full of eternal existence, knowledge and bliss, who is beginningless but is the beginning of everything, who is known as Govinda, and who is the original cause of all causes, as stated in *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Still, that same eternal Lord manifests Himself as Brahmā and Śiva in the sense that the primeval controllers Brahmā and Śiva manifest the potency and supreme will of the Lord, although they themselves are not supreme.

TEXT 4.6

*dharmasya dakṣa-duhitary ajaniṣṭa mūrtyām
nārāyaṇo nara ṛṣi-pravaraḥ praśāntaḥ
naiṣkarmya-lakṣaṇam uvāca cacāra karma
yo'dyāpi cāsta ṛṣi-varya-niṣevitāṅghriḥ*

dharmasya – (the wife) of Dharma; *dakṣa-duhitari* – by the daughter of Dakṣa; *ajaniṣṭa* – was born; *mūrtyām* – by Mūrtil; *nārāyaṇaḥ naraḥ* – Nara-Nārāyaṇa; *ṛṣi-pravaraḥ* – the best of sages; *praśāntaḥ* – perfectly peaceful; *naiṣkarmya-lakṣaṇam* – characterized by the cessation of all material work; *uvāca* – He spoke; *cacāra* – and performed; *karma* – the duties; *yaḥ* – who; *adya api* – even today; *ca* – also; *āste* – is living; *ṛṣi-varya* – by the greatest sages; *niṣevita* – being served; *aṅghriḥ* – His feet.

TRANSLATION

Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, who is perfectly peaceful and is the best of sages, was born as the son of Dharma and his wife Mūrtil, the daughter of Dakṣa. Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi taught the devotional service of the Lord, by which material work ceases, and He Himself perfectly practiced this knowledge. He is living even today, His lotus feet served by the greatest of saintly persons.

PURPORT

It is understood that Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi spoke transcendental knowledge to great saintly persons such as Nārada Muni. On the basis of these teachings, Nārada was able to describe *naiṣkarmyam*, or the devotional service of the Lord, which eradicates material work, as mentioned in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.8): *tantram sāvratam ācaṣṭa naiṣkarmyam karmaṇām yataḥ*. The *ātma-svarūpa*, or eternal form of the living entity, is devotional service to the Personality of Godhead. But our perception of our eternal form is covered by a material concept of life, just as our normal understanding of our life is covered by a dream. *Naiṣkarmyam*, or the cessation of material work, is possible only by the devotional service of the Lord, as stated by Nārada Muni himself: *naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam na śobhate jñānam alam nirañjanam* (*Bhāg.* 1.5.12). The process of transforming ordinary *karma* into *naiṣkarmya*, or transcendental work, is summarized by Śrīla Prabhupāda in his commentary on this verse spoken by Nārada Muni. “Fruitive work, in which almost all people in general are engaged, is always painful either in the beginning or at the end. It can be fruitful only when made subservient to the devotional service of the Lord. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* also it is confirmed that the result of such fruitive work may be offered for the service of the Lord, otherwise it leads to material bondage. The bona fide enjoyer of the fruitive work is the Personality of Godhead, and thus when it is engaged for the sense gratification of the living beings, it becomes an acute source of trouble.” According to the *Matsya Purāṇa* (3.10), Dharma, the father of Nara-

Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, was born from the right breast of Brahmā and later married thirteen of the daughters of Prajāpati Dakṣa. The Lord Himself appeared from the womb of Mūrtidevī.

TEXT 4.7

*indro viśaṅkya mama dhāma jighṛkṣatīti
kāmaṁ nyayuṅkta sa-gaṇaṁ sa badary-upākhyam
gatvāpsaro-gaṇa-vasanta-sumanda-vātaiḥ
strī-prekṣaṇeṣubhir avidhyad atan-mahi-jñāḥ*

indraḥ – Lord Indra; *viśaṅkya* – fearing; *mama* – my; *dhāma* – kingdom; *jighṛkṣati* – He wants to devour; *iti* – thinking thus; *kāmam* – Cupid; *nyayuṅkta* – he engaged; *sa-gaṇam* – with his associates; *saḥ* – he (Cupid); *badarī-upākhyam* – to the āśrama named Badarikā; *gatvā* – going; *apsaraḥ-gaṇa* – with the heavenly society girls; *vasanta* – the spring season; *sumanda-vātaiḥ* – and the gentle breezes; *strī-prekṣaṇa* – (consisting of) the glances of women; *iṣubhiḥ* – with his arrows; *avidhyat* – attempted to pierce; *atan-mahi-jñāḥ* – not knowing His greatness.

TRANSLATION

King Indra became fearful, thinking that Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi would become very powerful by His severe penances and seize Indra’s heavenly kingdom. Thus Indra, not knowing the transcendental glories of the incarnation of the Lord, sent Cupid and his associates to the Lord’s residence in Badarikāśrama. As the charming breezes of spring created a most sensuous atmosphere, Cupid himself attacked the Lord with arrows in the form of the irresistible glances of beautiful women.

PURPORT

This verse and the following nine verses illustrate the Personality of Godhead’s opulence of supreme renunciation. The word *atan-mahi-jñāḥ*, “not understanding the glories of the Lord,” indicates that King Indra was placing the Personality of Godhead on the same level as he himself, considering the Lord an ordinary enjoyer who would be attracted by mundane sex life. Indra’s plot to cause the falldown of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi could not affect the Lord, but it reveals the shortsightedness of Indra himself. Because Indra is attached to his heavenly kingdom, he took it for granted that the Supreme Lord was performing austerities to acquire such flickering phantasmagoria as the kingdom of heaven (*tridaśa-pūr ākāśa-puṣpāyate*).

TEXT 4.8

*vijñāya śakra-kṛtam akramam ādi-devaḥ
prāha prahasya gata-vismaya ejaṁnān
mā bhair vibho madana māruta deva-vadhvo
grhṇīta no balim aśūnyam imaṁ kurudhvam*

vijñāya – understanding perfectly; *śakra* – by Indra; *kṛtam* – committed; *akramam* – the offense; *ādi-devaḥ* – the original Personality of Godhead;

prāha – He spoke; *prahasya* – laughing; *gata-vismayaḥ* – free from pride; *ejamānān* – to those who were trembling; *mā bhaiḥ* – please have no fear; *vibho* – O mighty one; *madana* – Cupid; *māruta* – O god of the wind; *deva-vadhvaḥ* – O wives of the demigods; *gr̥hṇīta* – please accept; *naḥ* – from Us; *balim* – these gifts; *aśūnyam* – not empty; *imam* – this (*āśrama*); *kurudhvam* – please make.

TRANSLATION

The primeval Lord, understanding the offense committed by Indra, did not become proud. Instead He spoke laughingly as follows to Cupid and his followers, who were trembling before Him: “Do not fear, O mighty Madana, O wind-god and wives of the demigods. Rather, please accept these gifts I am offering you and kindly sanctify My āśrama by your presence.”

PURPORT

The word *gata-vismayaḥ*, or “free from false pride,” is very significant. If one becomes proud by performing severe penances, such penances are considered material. One should not think, “I am a great, austere personality.” Śrī Nara-Nārāyaṇa could immediately understand the foolishness of Indra, and thus He was amused by the whole situation. Cupid and the heavenly women, understanding their great offense, were trembling before Nara-Nārāyaṇa in fear of receiving a powerful curse. But the Lord, exhibiting most sublime saintly behavior, reassured them by saying, *mā bhaiḥ* – “Don’t worry about it” – and actually offered them nice *prasādam* and articles of worship. “If you do not give Me the opportunity to act as host to the demigods and other respectable personalities,” He said, “what will be the use of My *āśrama*? My *āśrama* will be void without the opportunity to receive respectable personalities such as you.”

Similarly, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness is establishing beautiful centers in all the major cities of the world. In some of these centers, such as those in Los Angeles, Bombay, London, Paris and Melbourne, the Society has established very gorgeous preaching *āśramas*. But the Vaiṣṇavas who live in these beautiful buildings feel that the buildings are void if guests do not come to hear about Kṛṣṇa and chant His holy name. Thus, one may establish a beautiful *āśrama* not for one’s personal sense gratification but to execute Kṛṣṇa consciousness peacefully and encourage others to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness also.

TEXT 4.9

*ittham bruvatv abhaya-de nara-deva devāḥ
sa-vrīḍa-namra-śīrasaḥ sa-gr̥hṇaṁ tam ūcuḥ
naitad vibho tvayi pare’vikṛte vicitraṁ
svārāma-dhīra-nikarānata-pāda-padme*

ittham – in this way; *bruvatv* – when He had spoken; *abhaya-de* – the giver of fearlessness; *nara-deva* – O King (Nimi); *devāḥ* – the demigods (Cupid and his associates); *sa-vrīḍa* – out of shame; *namra* – bowed; *śīrasaḥ* – with their

heads; *sa-ghṛṇam* – begging for compassion; *tam* – to Him; *ūcuḥ* – they said; *na* – is not; *etat* – this; *vibho* – O almighty Lord; *tvayi* – for You; *pare* – the Supreme; *avikṛte* – unchanging; *vicitram* – anything surprising; *sva-ārāma* – of those who are self-satisfied; *dhīra* – and those who are sober-minded; *nikara* – by great numbers; *ānata* – bowed down to; *pāda-padme* – whose lotus feet.

TRANSLATION

My dear King Nimi, when Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi thus spoke, eradicating the fear of the demigods, they bowed their heads with shame and addressed the Lord as follows, to invoke His compassion: Our dear Lord, You are always transcendental, beyond the reach of illusion, and therefore You are forever changeless. Your causeless compassion toward us, despite our great offense, is not at all unusual in You, since innumerable great sages who are self-satisfied and free from anger and false pride bow down humbly at Your lotus feet.

PURPORT

The demigods said, “Our dear Lord, although ordinary living entities such as the demigods and ordinary men are always disturbed by material pride and anger, You are always transcendental. Therefore it is not surprising that we fallible demigods could not appreciate Your glories.”

TEXT 4.10

*tvām sevatām sura-kṛtā bahavo'ntarāyāḥ
svauko vilaṅghya paramam vrajatām padam te
nānyasya barhiṣi balīn dadataḥ sva-bhāgān
dhatte padam tvam avitā yadi vighna-mūrdhni*

tvām – You; *sevatām* – for those who are serving; *sura-kṛtāḥ* – made by the demigods; *bahavaḥ* – many; *antarāyāḥ* – disturbances; *sva-okaḥ* – their own abode (the planets of the demigods); *vilaṅghya* – crossing beyond; *paramam* – the supreme; *vrajatām* – who are going; *padam* – to the abode; *te* – Your; *na* – there are not such; *anyasya* – for another; *barhiṣi* – in ritual sacrifices; *balīn* – offerings; *dadataḥ* – for one who is giving; *sva-bhāgān* – the own shares (of the demigods); *dhatte* – (the devotee) places; *padam* – his foot; *tvam* – You; *avitā* – the protector; *yadi* – because; *vighna* – of the disturbance; *mūrdhni* – upon the head.

TRANSLATION

The demigods place many obstacles on the path of those who worship You to transcend the temporary abodes of the demigods and reach Your supreme abode. Those who offer the demigods their assigned shares in sacrificial performances encounter no such obstacles. But because You are the direct protector of Your devotee, he is able to step over the head of whatever obstacle the demigods place before him.

PURPORT

The demigods, headed by Kāmadeva, or Cupid, recognizing their offense at the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, here point out the insignificant position of the demigods in relation to the Supreme Lord. Just as a farmer must pay a specific percentage of his agricultural profit to the king or political head as tax money, all human beings must offer a percentage of their material wealth to the demigods in sacrifice. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, however, the Lord explains that the demigods are also His servants and it is He Himself who awards all benedictions, through the agency of the demigods. *Mayaiva vihitān hi tān*. Although a Vaiṣṇava, or devotee of the Lord, has no need to worship the demigods, the demigods, being proud of their exalted material position, sometimes resent the exclusive devotion of the Vaiṣṇava to the Lord and thus try to cause the devotee to fall down, as described in this verse (*sura-kṛtā bahavo 'ntarāyāḥ*). But the demigods here point out that Kṛṣṇa is directly the protector of His devotees. Therefore, so-called impediments become stimuli for further spiritual advancement for a sincere devotee.

The demigods here state, “We thought, our dear Lord, that we could disturb Your consciousness by our foolish tricks. But by Your mercy even Your devotees pay little regard to us, so why should You take our foolish behavior seriously?” The word *yadi* here is used to indicate the certainty that Kṛṣṇa is always the protector of His surrendered devotees. Although there may be many obstacles on the path of the sincere devotee who is preaching the glories of the Lord, such obstacles increase the determination of the devotee. Therefore, according to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the continuous obstacles presented by the demigods form a kind of ladder or stairway upon which the devotee steadily progresses back to the kingdom of God. A similar verse appears in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.33):

*tathā na te mādharma tāvakāḥ kvacid
bhraśyanti mārgāt tvayi baddha-sauhṛdāḥ
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā
vināyakānīkapa-mūrdhasu prabho*

“O Mādhava, Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the goddess of fortune, if devotees completely in love with You sometimes fall from the path of devotion, they do not fall like nondevotees, for You still protect them. Thus they fearlessly traverse the heads of their opponents and continue to progress in devotional service.”

TEXT 4.11

*kṣut-trṭ-tri-kāla-guṇa-māruta-jaihvā-śaiṣṇān
asmān apāra-jaladhīn atitīrya kecit
krodhasya yānti viphalasya vaśam pade gor
majjanti duścara-tapaś ca vṛthotsrjanti*

kṣut - hunger; *trṭ* - thirst; *tri-kāla-guṇa* - the manifestations of the three phases of time (such as heat and cold, rain and so on); *māruta* - wind; *jaihvā*

- enjoyment of the tongue; *śaiṣṇān* - and of the genitals; *asmān* - ourselves (in all these forms); *apāra* - limitless; *jala-dhīn* - oceans; *atitīrya* - having crossed over; *kecit* - some persons; *krodhasya* - of anger; *yānti* - they come; *viphalasya* - which is fruitless; *vaśam* - under the sway; *pade* - in the foot(print); *goḥ* - of a cow; *majjanti* - they drown; *duścara* - difficult to execute; *tapah* - their austerities; *ca* - and; *vṛthā* - without any good purpose; *utsṛjanti* - they throw away.

TRANSLATION

Some men practice severe penances to cross beyond our influence, which is like an immeasurable ocean with endless waves of hunger, thirst, heat, cold and the other conditions brought about by the passing of time, such as the sensuous wind and the urges of the tongue and sex organs. Nevertheless, although crossing this ocean of sense gratification through severe penances, such persons foolishly drown in a cow's hoofprint when conquered by useless anger. Thus they exhaust the benefit of their difficult austerities in vain.

PURPORT

Those who do not accept the devotional service of the Supreme Lord can be considered in two categories. Those engaged in sense gratification are easily conquered by the demigods through various weapons such as hunger, thirst, sexual desire, lamentation for the past and vain hoping for the future. Such materialistic fools, infatuated with the material world, are easily controlled by the demigods, who are the ultimate supplying agents of sense gratification. But according to Śrīdhara Svāmī, persons who attempt to subdue the desires of the material senses and thus avoid the control of the demigods without surrendering to the Supreme Lord are even more foolish than the sense gratifiers. Although crossing the ocean of sense gratification, those who perform severe penances without service to the Lord eventually drown in tiny puddles of anger. One who simply performs material penances does not actually purify his heart. By one's material determination one may restrict the activities of the senses although one's heart is still filled with material desires. The practical result of this is *krodha*, or anger. We have seen artificial performers of penance who have become very bitter and angry through denial of the senses. Being indifferent to the Supreme Lord, such persons do not achieve ultimate liberation, nor can they enjoy material sense gratification; rather, they become angry, and through cursing others or enjoying false pride they uselessly exhaust the results of their painful austerities. It is understood that when a *yogī* curses he diminishes the mystic power he has accumulated. Thus, anger gives neither liberation nor material sense gratification but merely burns up all the results of material penances and austerities. Being useless, such anger is compared to a useless puddle found in a cow's hoofprint. Thus after crossing over the ocean of sense gratification the great *yogīs* who are indifferent to the Supreme Lord drown in puddles of anger. Although the demigods admit that the devotees of the

Lord actually conquer the miseries of material life, it is understood here that a similar result is not to be obtained by so-called *yogīs* who are not interested in devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 4.12

*iti pragṛṇatām teṣām
striyo'ty-adbhuta-darśanāḥ
darśayām āsa śuśrūṣām
sv-arcitāḥ kurvatīr vibhuḥ*

iti – thus; *pragṛṇatām* – who were offering praise; *teṣām* – in their presence; *striyaḥ* – women; *ati-adbhuta* – very wonderful; *darśanāḥ* – in appearance; *darśayām āsa* – He showed; *śuśrūṣām* – reverential service; *su-arcitāḥ* – nicely decorated; *kurvatīḥ* – performing; *vibhuḥ* – the almighty Lord.

TRANSLATION

While the demigods were thus praising the Supreme Lord, the all-powerful Lord suddenly manifested before their eyes many women, who were astonishingly gorgeous, decorated with fine clothes and ornaments, and all faithfully engaging in the Lord's service.

PURPORT

Lord Nara-Nārāyaṇa showed His causeless mercy toward the demigods by relieving them of their false prestige. Although the demigods were proud of their personal beauty and female companions, the Lord showed that He was already being adequately served by innumerable gorgeous females, each of whom was far more beautiful than any female companion imagined by the demigods. The Lord manifested such uniquely attractive women through His own mystic potency.

TEXT 4.13

*te devānucarā dṛṣṭvā
striyaḥ śrīr iva rūpiṇīḥ
gandhena mumuḥus tāsām
rūpaudārya-hata-śriyaḥ*

te – they; *deva-anucarāḥ* – the followers of the demigods; *dṛṣṭvā* – seeing; *striyaḥ* – these women; *śrīḥ* – the goddess of fortune; *iva* – as if; *rūpiṇīḥ* – in person; *gandhena* – by the fragrance; *mumuḥuḥ* – they became bewildered; *tāsām* – of the women; *rūpa* – of the beauty; *audārya* – by the magnificence; *hata* – ruined; *śriyaḥ* – their opulence.

TRANSLATION

When the followers of the demigods gazed upon the fascinating mystic beauty of the women created by Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and smelled the fragrance of their bodies, the minds of these followers became bewildered. Indeed, upon seeing the beauty and magnificence of such women, the representatives of the demigods were completely diminished in their own opulence.

TEXT 4.14

*tān āha deva-deveśaḥ
praṇatān prahasann iva
āsām ekatamām vṛṇdhvam
sa-varṇām svarga-bhūṣaṇām*

tān – to them; *āha* – said; *deva-deva-īśaḥ* – the Supreme Lord of all lords; *praṇatān* – who had bowed down to Him; *prahasann iva* – almost smiling; *āsām* – of these women; *ekatamām* – one; *vṛṇdhvam* – please choose; *sa-varṇām* – suitable; *svarga* – of heaven; *bhūṣaṇām* – the ornament.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord of lords then smiled slightly and told the representatives of heaven, who were bowing down before Him, “Please choose one of these women, whomever you find suitable for you. She will become the ornament of the heavenly planets.”

PURPORT

Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi was almost laughing upon seeing the defeat of the demigods. However, being extremely grave, He did not actually laugh. Although the demigods might have thought, “We are simply low-class fools in comparison to these women,” the Lord encouraged them to choose one of the women, whomever they considered equal in character to themselves. The beauty thus selected would become the ornament of heaven.

TEXT 4.15

*om ity ādeśam ādāya
natvā taṁ sura-vandinaḥ
urvaśīm apsaraḥ-śreṣṭhām
puraskṛtya divaṁ yayuḥ*

om iti – chanting *om* to signify agreement; *ādeśam* – His order; *ādāya* – taking; *natvā* – offering obeisances; *taṁ* – to Him; *sura* – of the demigods; *vandinaḥ* – those servants; *urvaśīm* – Urvaśī; *apsaraḥ-śreṣṭhām* – the best of the Apsarās; *purah-kṛtya* – placing in front (out of respect); *divam* – to heaven; *yayuḥ* – they returned.

TRANSLATION

Vibrating the sacred syllable om, the servants of the demigods selected Urvaśī, the best of the Apsarās. Placing her in front of them out of respect, they returned to the heavenly planets.

TEXT 4.16

*indrāyānamya sadasi
śṛṇvatām tri-divaukasām
ūcur nārāyaṇa-balaṁ
śakras tatrāsa vismitaḥ*

indrāya – to Lord Indra; *ānamya* – bowing down; *sadasi* – in his assembly; *śṛṅvatām* – while they were listening; *tri-diva* – the three heavens; *okasām* – whose residents; *ūcuḥ* – they told; *nārāyaṇa-balam* – about the strength of Lord Nārāyaṇa; *śakraḥ* – Indra; *tatra* – at that; *āsa* – became; *vismitaḥ* – surprised.

TRANSLATION

The servants of the demigods reached the assembly of Indra, and thus, while all the residents of the three heavens listened, they explained to Indra the supreme power of Nārāyaṇa. When Indra heard of Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and became aware of his offense, he was both frightened and astonished.

TEXT 4.17

*haṁsa-svarūpy avadad acyuta ātma-yogaṁ
dattaḥ kumāra ṛṣabho bhagavān pitā naḥ
viṣṇuḥ śivāya jagatām kalayāvatīrṇas
tenāhṛtā madhu-bhidā śrutayo hayāsye*

haṁsa-svarūpī – assuming His eternal form of the swan incarnation; *avadat* – He spoke; *acyutaḥ* – the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ātma-yogaṁ* – self-realization; *dattaḥ* – Dattātreyā; *kumāraḥ* – the Kumāra brothers, headed by Sanaka; *ṛṣabhaḥ* – Ṛṣabhadeva; *bhagavān* – the Lord; *pitā* – father; *naḥ* – our; *viṣṇuḥ* – Lord Viṣṇu; *śivāya* – for the welfare; *jagatām* – of all the world; *kalayā* – by His secondary personal expansions; *avatīrṇaḥ* – descending to this world; *tena* – by Him; *āhṛtāḥ* – were brought back (from the depths of Pātālaloka); *madhu-bhidā* – by the killer of the demon Madhu; *śrutayaḥ* – the original texts of the Vedas; *haya-āsye* – in the horse-headed incarnation.

TRANSLATION

The infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, has descended into this world by His various partial incarnations such as Lord Haṁsa [the swan], Dattātreyā, the four Kumāras and our own father, the mighty Ṛṣabhadeva. By such incarnations, the Lord teaches the science of self-realization for the benefit of the whole universe. In His appearance as Hayagrīva He killed the demon Madhu and thus brought the Vedas back from the hellish planet Pātālaloka.

PURPORT

It is stated in the *Skanda Purāṇa* that the Lord of the universe, Hari Himself, once appeared in the form of a young *brahmacārī* named Kumāra and spoke transcendental knowledge to Sanat-kumāra.

TEXT 4.18

*gupto'pyaye manur ilauṣadhayaś ca māsye
krauḍe hato diti-ja uddharatāmbhasaḥ kṣmām*

*kaurme dhṛto'drir amṛtonmathane sva-pṛṣṭhe
grāhāt prapannam ibha-rājam amuñcad ārtam*

guptaḥ – was protected; *apyaye* – during the annihilation; *manuḥ* – Vaivasvata Manu; *ilā* – the earth planet; *oṣadhayaḥ* – the herbs; *ca* – and; *mātsye* – in His incarnation as a fish; *krauḍe* – in His incarnation as a boar; *hataḥ* – was killed; *diti-jaḥ* – the demoniac son of Diti, Hiraṇyākṣa; *uddharatā* – by Him who was delivering; *ambhasaḥ* – from the waters; *kṣmām* – the earth; *kaurme* – as a tortoise; *dhṛtaḥ* – was held; *adriḥ* – the mountain (Mandara); *amṛta-unmathane* – when the nectar was being churned (by the demons and demigods together); *sva-pṛṣṭhe* – upon His own back; *grāhāt* – from the crocodile; *prapannam* – surrendered; *ibha-rājam* – the king of the elephants; *amuñcat* – He freed; *ārtam* – distressed.

TRANSLATION

In His appearance as a fish, the Lord protected Satyavrata Manu, the earth and her valuable herbs. He protected them from the waters of annihilation. As a boar, the Lord killed Hiraṇyākṣa, the son of Diti, while delivering the earth from the universal waters. And as a tortoise, He lifted Mandara Mountain on His back so that nectar could be churned from the ocean. The Lord saved the surrendered king of the elephants, Gajendra, who was suffering terrible distress from the grips of a crocodile.

TEXT 4.19

*saṁstunvato nipatitān śramaṇān ṛṣīmś ca
śakram ca vṛtra-vadhataḥ tamasi praviṣṭam
deva-striyo'sura-grhe pihitā anāthā
jaghne'surendram abhayāya satām nṛsimhe*

saṁstunvataḥ – who were offering prayers; *nipatitān* – fallen (into the water in a cow's hoofprint); *śramaṇān* – the ascetics; *ṛṣīn* – sages (the Vālakhilyas); *ca* – and; *śakram* – Indra; *ca* – and; *vṛtra-vadhataḥ* – from killing Vṛtrāsura; *tamasi* – in darkness; *praviṣṭam* – absorbed; *deva-striyaḥ* – the wives of the demigods; *asura-grhe* – in the palace of the demons; *pihitāḥ* – imprisoned; *anāthāḥ* – helpless; *jaghne* – He killed; *asura-indram* – the king of the demons, Hiraṇyakaśipu; *abhayāya* – for the sake of giving fearlessness; *satām* – to the saintly devotees; *nṛsimhe* – in the incarnation of Nṛsimha.

TRANSLATION

The Lord also delivered the tiny ascetic sages called the Vālakhilyas when they fell into the water in a cow's hoofprint and Indra was laughing at them. The Lord then saved Indra when Indra was covered by darkness due to the sinful reaction for killing Vṛtrāsura. When the wives of the demigods were trapped in the palace of the demons without any shelter, the Lord saved them. In His incarnation as Nṛsimha, the Lord killed Hiraṇyakaśipu, the king of demons, to free the saintly devotees from fear.

TEXT 4.20

*devāsura yudhi ca daitya-patīn surārthe
hatvāntareṣu bhuvanāny adadhāt kalābhiḥ
bhūtvātha vāmana imām aharad baleḥ kṣmām
yācñā-cchalena samadāt aditeḥ sutebhyaḥ*

deva-asura – of the demigods and demons; *yudhi* – in the battle; *ca* – and; *daitya-patīn* – the leaders of the demons; *sura-arthe* – for the sake of the demigods; *hatvā* – by killing; *antareṣu* – during the reign of each Manu; *bhuvanāni* – all the worlds; *adadhāt* – protected; *kalābhiḥ* – by His various appearances; *bhūtvā* – becoming; *atha* – moreover; *vāmanaḥ* – the incarnation as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa* boy; *imām* – this; *aharat* – took away; *baleḥ* – from Bali Mahārāja; *kṣmām* – earth; *yācñā-chalena* – on the excuse of begging for charity; *samadāt* – gave; *aditeḥ* – of Aditi; *sutebhyaḥ* – to the sons (the demigods).

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord regularly takes advantage of the wars between the demons and demigods to kill the leaders of the demons. The Lord thus encourages the demigods by protecting the universe through His various incarnations during the reigns of each Manu. The Lord also appeared as Vāmana and took the earth away from Bali Mahārāja on the plea of begging three steps of land. The Lord then returned the entire world to the sons of Aditi.

TEXT 4.21

*niḥkṣatriyām akṛta gām ca triḥ-sapta-kṛtvo
rāmas tu haihaya-kulāpyaya-bhārgavāgniḥ
so'bdhim babandha daśa-vaktram ahan sa-laṅkaṁ
sītā-patir jayati loka-mala-ghna-kīrtiḥ*

niḥkṣatriyām – devoid of members of the warrior class; *akṛta* – He made; *gām* – the earth; *ca* – and; *triḥ-sapta-kṛtvaḥ* – three times seven (twenty-one) times; *rāmaḥ* – Lord Paraśurāma; *tu* – indeed; *haihaya-kula* – of the dynasty of Haihaya; *apyaya* – the destruction; *bhārgava* – descending from Bhṛgu Muni; *agniḥ* – the fire; *saḥ* – He; *abdhim* – the ocean; *babandha* – brought under subjection; *daśa-vaktram* – the ten-headed Rāvaṇa; *ahan* – killed; *sa-laṅkaṁ* – along with all the soldiers of his kingdom, Laṅkā; *sītā-patiḥ* – Lord Rāmacandra, the husband of Sītā; *jayati* – is always victorious; *loka* – of the entire world; *mala* – the contamination; *ghna* – which destroys; *kīrtiḥ* – the recounting of whose glories.

TRANSLATION

Lord Paraśurāma appeared in the family of Bhṛgu as a fire that burned to ashes the dynasty of Haihaya. Thus Lord Paraśurāma rid the earth of all kṣatriyas twenty-one times. The same Lord appeared

as Rāmacandra, the husband of Sītādevī, and thus He killed the ten-headed Rāvaṇa, along with all the soldiers of Laṅkā. May that Śrī Rāma, whose glories destroy the contamination of the world, be always victorious.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, Lord Rāmacandra was more or less a contemporary incarnation for the nine Yogendras. Thus they have offered particular respect to Lord Rāmacandra, as indicated by the word *jayati*.

TEXT 4.22

*bhūmer bharāvatarāṇāya yaduṣv ajanmā
jātaḥ kariṣyati surair api duṣkarāṇi
vādair vimohayati yajña-kṛto'tad-arhān
śūdrān kalau kṣiti-bhujo nyahaniṣyad ante*

bhūmeḥ – of the earth; *bhara* – the burden; *avatarāṇāya* – to diminish; *yaduṣu* – in the Yadu dynasty; *ajanmā* – the unborn Lord; *jātaḥ* – taking birth; *kariṣyati* – He will perform; *suraiḥ* – by the demigods; *api* – even; *duṣkarāṇi* – difficult deeds; *vādaiḥ* – by speculative arguments; *vimohayati* – He will bewilder; *yajña-kṛtaḥ* – the performers of Vedic sacrifices; *atat-arhān* – who are unfit to be so engaged; *śūdrān* – the low-class men; *kalau* – in the degraded Age of Kali; *kṣiti-bhujaḥ* – rulers; *nyahaniṣyat* – He will kill; *ante* – at the end.

TRANSLATION

To diminish the burden of the earth, the unborn Lord will take birth in the Yadu dynasty and perform feats impossible even for the demigods. Propounding speculative philosophy, the Lord, as Buddha, will bewilder the unworthy performers of Vedic sacrifices. And as Kalki the Lord will kill all the low-class men posing as rulers at the end of the Age of Kali.

PURPORT

It is understood that in this verse the description of the Lord's appearance in the Yadu dynasty refers to the appearance of both Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, who together removed the demoniac rulers who were burdening the earth. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has pointed out that the description of the incarnations to deal with *śūdrān*, or low-class men, refers to both Buddha and Kalki. Those who misuse Vedic sacrifice to engage in gross sense gratification, such as the sinful killing of animals, are certainly in the category of *śūdra*, as are the so-called political leaders of Kali-yuga who perform many atrocities in the name of state management.

TEXT 4.23

*evam-vidhāni janmāni
karmāṇi ca jagat-pateḥ
bhūrīṇi bhūri-yaśaso
varṇitāni mahā-bhuja*

evam-vidhāni – just like these; *janmāni* – appearances; *karmāṇi* – activities; *ca* – and; *jagat-pateḥ* – of the Lord of the universe; *bhūrīṇi* – innumerable; *bhūri-yaśasaḥ* – very glorious; *varṇitāni* – described; *mahā-bhuja* – O mighty-armed King Nimi.

TRANSLATION

O mighty-armed King, there are innumerable appearances and activities of the Supreme Lord of the universe similar to those I have already mentioned. In fact, the glories of the Supreme Lord are unlimited.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Fourth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Drumila Explains the Incarnations of Godhead to King Nimi.”

CHAPTER FIVE

Nārada Concludes His Teachings to Vasudeva

In this chapter the destination of persons who are inimical to the worship of Lord Hari, who are unable to control their own senses and who are not peaceful is examined, along with the different names, forms and modes of worship of the Personality of Godhead in each *yuga*.

From the face, arms, thighs and feet of the primeval person Lord Viṣṇu are born (correspondingly and in order of the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance) the four *varṇas* – *brāhmaṇa* and so on – and also the four different *āśramas*. If the members of the four *varṇas* and four *āśramas* do not worship Lord Śrī Hari, who is Himself directly the origin of their own creation, they will simply fall down. Among these classes, women and *śūdras*, who generally have no contact with the hearing and chanting of *hari-kathā*, are on account of their very ignorance special candidates for the mercy of great souls. The members of the other three *varṇas*, becoming fit for achieving the lotus feet of Hari by second birth through Vedic initiation (*śrauta-janma*), nevertheless become confused by concocted interpretations of the *Vedas*. Presuming themselves to be great scholars, although not understanding the essential meaning of *karma*, they become flatterers of other deities in their greed for fruitive results and ridicule the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are fixed in family life, attached to mundane gossip and indifferent to the devotional service of Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavas. They are maddened by material opulences and pleasures, devoid of real discrimination and intelligence and always function on the mental platform. But such attachment to family life and so on is most natural for the mass of people, even though it is against the best advice of *śāstra*. To become disentangled from such life in all respects is the principal teaching of the *Vedas*. Real wealth is that conducive to the faithful execution of the duty of the soul, not that which exists simply for selfish sense gratification. As a consequence of the desire to indulge the senses, men and women couple together to produce children. Engaging in animal slaughter apart from that necessary for performance of sacrifice, these human animals themselves suffer violence in the next life. If because of excessive greed for one's own pleasure one commits violence against living beings, he is also attacking Lord Śrī Hari, who is present in the bodies of all living entities as the Supersoul. Opposed to Lord Vāsudeva, ignorant self-cheaters completely carry out their own ruination and enter into hell.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Hari, accepts in each of the different *yugas* various colors, names and forms and is worshiped by various prescribed processes. In Satya-yuga the Supreme Lord is white in complexion, has four arms, dresses as a *brahmacārī*, is known by such names as Haṁsa and is served by the practice of meditational *yoga*. In Tretā-yuga He is red in color and four-armed, is the personification of sacrifice, is characterized by the symbols of the sacrificial spoon, ladle, etc., is called by such names as Yajña and is worshiped by Vedic sacrifices. In Dvāpara-yuga He is of dark blue complexion, wears a yellow garment, is marked by Śrīvatsa and other signs, has such names as Vāsudeva and is

worshiped in His Deity form by the regulations of the *Vedas* and *tantras*. In Kali-yuga He is golden in color, is accompanied by associates who are His primary and secondary limbs and His weapons, is absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* and is worshiped by the performance of *saṅkīrtana-yajña*. Since in Kali-yuga all the goals of human life can be achieved simply by the glorification of the holy name of Lord Śrī Hari, those who can appreciate the real essence of things praise Kali-yuga. In Kali-yuga many people in South India (Draviḍa-deśa), in places where the Tāmraparṇī, Kṛtamālā, Kāverī and Mahānadī rivers flow, will be dedicated to the devotional service of the Supreme Lord.

Persons who give up all false ego and take full shelter of Lord Hari are no longer debtors to the demigods or anyone else. The Personality of Godhead, Śrī Hari, appears in the hearts of devotees who know no other shelter than Him and causelessly drives away all evil desires from the devotees' hearts. Videharāja Nimi, having heard elaborate descriptions of *bhāgavata-dharma* from the mouths of the *nava-yogendras*, offered worship to them with a satisfied mind. They then disappeared.

Devarṣi Nārada thereupon instructed Vasudeva about the ultimate shelter of devotional service. He told Vasudeva that although Lord Kṛṣṇa had become his son, having appeared in this world to free the earth of its burden, he still should not think of Lord Kṛṣṇa as his child, but rather as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even by meditating upon Kṛṣṇa in a spirit of enmity, such kings as Śiśupāla attained an equal status to Him. So to attempt to say anything more about the perfect achievement of great souls such as Vasudeva, who enjoy intimate loving relations with Kṛṣṇa, would be a useless endeavor.

TEXT 5.1

śrī-rājavāca
bhagavantam hariṁ prāyo
na bhajanty ātma-vittamāḥ
teṣām aśānta-kāmānām
kā niṣṭhāvijitātmanām

śrī-rājā uvāca – King Nimi inquired; *bhagavantam* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *harim* – Hari; *prāyaḥ* – for the most part; *na* – never; *bhajanti* – who worship; *ātma-vittamāḥ* – all of you are most perfect in knowledge of the science of the self; *teṣām* – of them; *aśānta* – unquenched; *kāmānām* – material desires; *kā* – what; *niṣṭhā* – destination; *avijita* – who are not able to control; *ātmanām* – themselves.

TRANSLATION

King Nimi further inquired: My dear Yogendras, all of you are most perfect in knowledge of the science of the self. Therefore, kindly explain to me the destination of those who for the most part never worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who are unable to quench their material desires and who are not in control of their own selves.

PURPORT

In the Fifth Chapter of the Eleventh Canto, Camasa Ṛṣi describes the inauspicious path of those who are unfavorable to the devotional service of Lord Viṣṇu, and the sage Karabhājana explains the *yuga-dharmāvatāras*, the incarnations of the Lord who present the authorized process of religion for each different age.

In the previous chapter it was explained that although the demigods place obstacles in the path of the Lord's devotees, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord the devotees are able to place their feet on the head of such obstacles and thus pass beyond them to the supreme destination. However, for the nondevotees there is no such facility. As soon as the conditioned soul becomes indifferent to the devotional service of the Supreme Lord, he is immediately attracted by the temporary varieties of matter and becomes a slave of inauspicious desires. Thus the conditioned soul, devoid of devotion for the Lord, completely forgets the transcendental bliss of the spiritual world, which is enjoyed in five transcendental *rasas*. Although the devotees are not overcome by the sense gratification offered by the demigods, the demigods themselves become absorbed in material form, taste and smell. And similarly, those who are nondevotees also become bound by material form, taste and other sense perceptions, such as the sensuous experience of sex life. Thus they remain hovering in a dreamlike state, imagining different types of material sense gratification, and forget their eternal relationship with the Personality of Godhead. Videharāja Nimi now inquires from Camasa Muni about the goal attained by such bewildered persons.

TEXT 5.2

*śrī-camasa uvāca
mukha-bāhūru-pādebhyaḥ
puruṣasyāśramaiḥ saha
catvāro jajñire varṇā
guṇair viprādayaḥ pṛthak*

śrī-camasaḥ uvāca – Śrī Camasa said; *mukha* – face; *bāhu* – arms; *ūru* – thighs; *pādebhyaḥ* – from the feet; *puruṣasya* – of the Supreme Lord; *āśramaiḥ* – the four spiritual orders; *saha* – with; *catvāraḥ* – four; *jajñire* – were born; *varṇāḥ* – the social orders; *guṇaiḥ* – by the modes of nature; *vipra-ādayaḥ* – headed by the *brāhmaṇas*; *pṛthak* – various.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Camasa said: Each of the four social orders, headed by the brāhmaṇas, was born through different combinations of the modes of nature, from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Supreme Lord in His universal form. Thus the four spiritual orders were also generated.

PURPORT

Those who are not spontaneously attracted to the devotional service of the Lord can be gradually purified by observing the *varṇāśrama* system of four

social orders and four spiritual orders. According to Śrīdhara Svāmī, the *brāhmaṇas* are born of the mode of goodness, the *kṣatriyas* of a combination of goodness and passion, the *vaiśyas* of a combination of passion and ignorance and the *sūdras* of the mode of ignorance. Just as the four social orders are born from the face, arms, thighs and feet of the Lord’s universal form, similarly the *brahmacārīs* are generated from the heart of the Lord, the householder order from His loins, the *vānaprasthas* from His chest and the *sannyāsa* order from His head.

A similar verse is found in the *Ṛk-saṁhitā* (8.4.19), as well as the *Śukla-yajur Veda* (34.11) and the *Atharva Veda* (19.66):

*brāhmaṇo’sya mukham āsīd
bāhū rājanyaḥ kṛtaḥ
ūrū tad asya yad vaiśyaḥ
padbhyāṁ sūdro’jāyata*

“The *brāhmaṇa* appeared as His face, the king as His arms, the *vaiśya* as His thighs, and the *sūdra* was born from His feet.”

It is understood that pure devotional service to the Lord has already been described by two of the Yogendras, Drumila and Āvirhotra. Camasa Muni now describes the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, because this system is meant to gradually purify those who are inimical to the Supreme Lord, bringing them back to their constitutional position of love of Godhead. Similarly, the *virāṭ-rūpa*, or universal form of the Lord, is an imaginary form meant to help the gross materialists gradually understand the position of the Personality of Godhead. Since the foolish materialist cannot understand anything beyond matter, he is encouraged to see the entire universe as a personal form of the Supreme Lord’s body. The impersonal conception of formlessness is a mere negation of temporary material variety without any concept of the Lord’s spiritual potency. The impersonal view is another kind of material speculative conception. The Supreme Lord is full of spiritual potencies under the principal headings *hlādinī*, or unlimited bliss, *sandhinī*, or eternal existence, and *saṁvit*, or omniscience. It is understood from this verse that the *varṇāśrama-dharma* system generated from the universal form of the Lord is a program offered by the Lord to engage the conditioned souls in a complete social and religious system that gradually brings them back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 5.3

*ya eṣāṁ puruṣaṁ sākṣād
ātma-prabhavam īśvaram
na bhajanty avajānanti
sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ*

yaḥ – one who; *eṣāṁ* – of them; *puruṣaṁ* – the Supreme Lord; *sākṣāt* – directly; *ātma-prabhavam* – the source of their own creation; *īśvaram* – the supreme controller; *na* – do not; *bhajanti* – worship; *avajānanti* – disrespect;

sthānāt – from their position; *bhraṣṭāḥ* – fallen; *patanti* – they fall; *adhaḥ* – down.

TRANSLATION

If any of the members of the four varṇas and four āśramas fail to worship or intentionally disrespect the Personality of Godhead, who is the source of their own creation, they will fall down from their position into a hellish state of life.

PURPORT

The words *na bhajanti* in this verse refer to those who out of ignorance do not worship the Supreme Lord, whereas the word *avajānanti* refers to those who have actually been informed of the supreme position of the Lord but still show Him disrespect. It has already been described that the four spiritual and occupational orders of life are generated from the body of the Lord. In fact, the Supreme Lord is the source of everything, as described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.8): *ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavaḥ*. Those who foolishly do not inquire into the position of the Personality of Godhead, as well as those who disrespect the Lord in spite of having heard of His transcendental position, will certainly fall down from the *varṇāśrama-dharma* system, as described by the words *sthānād brahṣṭāḥ*. The words *patanty adhaḥ* indicate that one who falls from the *varṇāśrama* system will have no means of avoiding sinful activities; nor will such a person receive any credit for performing sacrifice, and thus he will gradually sink down into lower and lower species of life in hellish conditions. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has pointed out that the original cause of offending the Lord and falling down from one's position is one's not learning how to properly worship a bona fide spiritual master. One who is trained to offer respectful obeisances and worship to the bona fide spiritual master automatically offers proper worship to the Supreme Lord. Without the mercy of a bona fide spiritual master, even a so-called religious man will gradually become atheistic, offend the Lord by foolish speculation and fall into a hellish condition of life. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that the *puruṣa* mentioned in this verse is Lord Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who is glorified in the *Puruṣa-sūkta* prayers. If one is proud of his high social position and enviously thinks that the Lord is also a creation of nature and that there is no absolute entity who is the origin of all beings, then such a puffed-up fool will certainly fall down from the *varṇāśrama* system and become just like an unregulated animal.

TEXT 5.4

*dūre hari-kathāḥ kecid
dūre cācyuta-kīrtanāḥ
striyaḥ sūdrādayaś caiva
te'nukampyā bhavādṛśām*

dūre – far away; *hari-kathāḥ* – from discussion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari; *kecid* – many persons; *dūre* – far away; *ca* – and; *acyuta* – infallible; *kīrtanāḥ* – glories; *striyaḥ* – women; *sūdra-ādayaḥ* – *sūdras* and

other fallen classes; *ca* – and; *eva* – indeed; *te* – they; *anukampyāḥ* – deserve the mercy; *bhavādrśām* – of personalities like yourself.

TRANSLATION

There are many persons who have little opportunity to take part in discussions about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, and thus it is difficult for them to chant His infallible glories. Persons such as women, śūdras and other fallen classes always deserve the mercy of great personalities like yourself.

PURPORT

In the previous verse it was explained that some persons are ignorant of the glories of the Personality of Godhead (*na bhajanti*), whereas others, although aware of the Lord, ridicule Him or state that the Lord is also material (*avajānanti*). In this verse the first class, namely the ignorant, are described as fit candidates for the mercy of a pure devotee. The word *dūre* indicates those who have little opportunity to hear and chant the glories of the Lord. According to Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura they can be explained as *ye sādhu-saṅga-bhāgya-hīnāḥ*, those who are bereft of the association of saintly persons and pure devotees. Generally, those who are advanced in the spiritual science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness avoid contact with women and low-class men. In general, women are lusty, and *śūdras* and other low-class men are habitually addicted to materialistic habits such as smoking, drinking and woman hunting. Therefore, Caitanya Mahāprabhu warned the *sādhus*, or saintly persons, to avoid intimate connection with women and low-class men. The practical result of such a restriction is that women and lower-class men are often bereft of the opportunity to hear the glories of the Lord chanted by saintly persons; thus Śrī Camasa Muni instructs the King that he should especially give his mercy to such fallen persons.

Our spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, was severely criticized in India for giving all classes of men and women the opportunity to take part in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Indeed, the caste *brāhmaṇas* of India and other persons concerned only with ritualistic formalities were shocked that Śrīla Prabhupāda allowed women and persons born in low-class families to take part freely in the Vaiṣṇava culture and even become initiated as bona fide *brāhmaṇas*. However, Śrīla Prabhupāda could understand that in this age practically everyone is fallen. He saw that if spiritual life were to be limited to the so-called higher classes, there would be no possibility of spreading a genuine spiritual movement all around the world. The mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu is so great and the holy name of Kṛṣṇa so potent that any man, woman, child or even animal can become purified by chanting Kṛṣṇa's name and taking *prasādam*, the sanctified remnants of Kṛṣṇa's food. In Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement, no sincere person is restricted from achieving the highest perfection of self-realization. Whereas the impersonalists and *yogīs* tend to be selfishly concerned with their individual realization and achievement of mystic power, it has always

been the custom of the Vaiṣṇavas to be merciful to all classes of living entities.

It is understood that the conversation between the *nava-yogendras* and King Nimi took place approximately at the time of Lord Rāmacandra, many hundreds of thousands of years ago. But in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, which was spoken only five thousand years ago, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself also states that any person, despite his material situation of life, can become the most dear devotee of the Lord by full surrender to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the fallen people of Kali-yuga should take advantage of the special mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas and join the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement to perfect their lives and go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 5.5

*vipro rājanya-vaiśyau vā
hareḥ prāptāḥ padāntikam
śrautena janmanāthāpi
muhyanty āmnāya-vādinaḥ*

vipraḥ - the *brāhmaṇas*; *rājanya-vaiśyau* - of the royal order and the *vaiśyas*; *vā* - or; *hareḥ* - of the Supreme Lord, Hari; *prāptāḥ* - after being allowed to approach; *pada-antikam* - near the lotus feet; *śrautena janmanā* - by having received the second birth of Vedic initiation; *atha* - then; *api* - even; *muhyanti* - bewildered; *āmnāya-vādinaḥ* - adopting various materialistic philosophies.

TRANSLATION

On the other hand, brāhmaṇas, members of the royal order and vaiśyas, even after being allowed to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, Hari, by receiving the second birth of Vedic initiation, can become bewildered and adopt various materialistic philosophies.

PURPORT

It is said that a little knowledge can be very dangerous. Those who are falsely proud of material social status and who thus neglect to perfect their worship of the Personality of Godhead are condemned in this verse. *Muhyanty āmnāya-vādinaḥ*: becoming attracted by the sense gratification of high status within the *varṇāśrama* social system, such persons become more attracted to illusory material philosophy than to the Absolute Truth, which is not material. Within the Vedic system, *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas*, as mentioned in this verse, are all offered initiation into the Gāyatrī *mantra* and are considered twice-born, or highly civilized men. By studying Vedic literature, chanting Vedic *mantras*, executing ritualistic ceremonies and worshiping the spiritual master and the Personality of Godhead such persons gradually come near to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. If one in such an exalted position becomes proud of his status or fascinated by the heavenly material enjoyment that is undoubtedly available to the followers of the *varṇāśrama* system, then one so bewildered returns to the illusory material

platform of birth and death. Even the highly posted demigods become victims of *māyā's* enticement, as described in the first verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: *muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ*.

In order to justify their illusory desire to enjoy dead matter, such foolish persons condemn themselves by minimizing the necessity of worshiping the Personality of Godhead (*avajānanti*) and falsely try to give equal importance to the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas*, which awards heavenly sense gratification in exchange for the performance of prescribed ritualistic ceremonies. Such bogus rationalizers are described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.42):

*yām imām puṣpitām vācam
pravadanty avipaścitaḥ
veda-vāda-ratāḥ pārtha
nānyad astīti vādinaḥ*

“Men of small knowledge are very much attached to the flowery words of the *Vedas*, which recommend various fruitive activities for elevation to the heavenly planets, resultant good birth, power and so on. Being desirous of sense gratification and opulent life, they say that there is nothing more than this.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to this verse of *Bhagavad-gītā* gives a clear picture of the offensive class of men described therein. “People in general are not very intelligent, and due to their ignorance they are most attached to the fruitive activities recommended in the *karma-kāṇḍa* portions of the *Vedas*. They do not want anything more than sense gratificatory proposals for enjoying life in heaven, where wine and women are available and material opulence is very common. In the *Vedas* many sacrifices are recommended for elevation to the heavenly planets, especially the *jyotiṣṭoma* sacrifices. In fact, it is stated that anyone desiring elevation to heavenly planets must perform these sacrifices, and men with a poor fund of knowledge think that this is the whole purpose of Vedic wisdom. It is very difficult for such inexperienced persons to be situated in the determined action of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As fools are attached to the flowers of poisonous trees without knowing the results of such attractions, similarly, unenlightened men are attracted by such heavenly opulence and the sense enjoyment thereof.

“In the *karma-kāṇḍa* sections of the *Vedas* it is said that those who perform the four monthly penances become eligible to drink the *soma-rasa* beverage to become immortal and happy forever. Even on this earth some are very eager to have *soma-rasa* to become strong and fit to enjoy sense gratification. Such persons have no faith in liberation from material bondage, and they are very much attached to the pompous ceremonies of Vedic sacrifices. They are generally sensual, and they do not want anything other than the heavenly pleasures of life. It is understood that there are gardens called Nandana-kānana, in which there is good opportunity for association with angelic, beautiful women and having a profuse supply of *soma-rasa* wine. Such bodily happiness is certainly sensual; therefore there are those

who are purely attached to material, temporary happiness, as lords of the material world.”

The significant point in this verse is that such bewildered materialists who have become attracted to the materialistic portions of the *Vedas* (*muhyanty āmnāya-vādinah*) desire to ignore the supreme proprietorship of the Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme enjoyer (*bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasām*). And at the same time they wish to preserve their exalted status as followers of the Vedic principles. Such duplicitous persons take shelter of materialistic philosophers, such as Jaimini, who deny the existence of God as a tangible principle (*īśvarāsiddheḥ*) and therefore recommend material fruitive activities as the highest knowable truth. Such so-called Vedic philosophers amount to little more than polished atheists and are therefore understood to be *anīśvara-vādinah*, or those who preach against the supremacy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although foolish materialistic followers of the *varṇāśrama* system desire to maintain their exalted status as Āryans, or twice-born men, and at the same time neglect the Personality of Godhead, it is clearly stated in the *Bhāgavatam* (11.5.3), *sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ*: such persons inevitably fall from their position into a degraded condition of life. As confirmed in this verse by the word *muhyanti*, they fall into the darkness of ignorance. Sometimes such pompous persons even present themselves as *gurus*. However, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that they are actually *laghu*, or flimsy, rather than *guru*, or heavy with Vedic knowledge. It is one’s ultimate duty to oneself (*svārtha-gati*) and to the Personality of Godhead to give up all materialistic activities characterized by *karma* and *jñāna* and surrender fully at the lotus feet of the Lord. Only the most unfortunate person will consider that there is a higher pleasure than ecstatic surrender at the lotus feet of Gokulānanda, the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 5.6

*karmaṇy akovidāḥ stabdhā
mūrkhāḥ paṇḍita-māninaḥ
vadanti cāṭukān mūḍhā
yayā mādhvyā girotsukāḥ*

karmaṇi – about the facts of fruitive work; *akovidāḥ* – ignorant; *stabdhāḥ* – puffed up by false pride; *mūrkhāḥ* – fools; *paṇḍita-māninaḥ* – thinking themselves great scholars; *vadanti* – they speak; *cāṭukān* – flattering entreaties; *mūḍhāḥ* – bewildered; *yayā* – by which; *mādhvyā* – sweet; *girā* – words; *utsukāḥ* – very eager.

TRANSLATION

Ignorant of the art of work, such arrogantly proud fools, enchanted and enlivened by the sweet words of the Vedas, pose as learned authorities and offer flattering entreaties to the demigods.

PURPORT

The words *karmaṇy akovidāḥ* refer to those who are ignorant of the art of performing work in such a way that there will be no future bondage. This art is described in *Bhagavad-gītā*: *yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra loko 'yaṁ karma-bandhanaḥ*. Work must be performed for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, otherwise work is the cause of future bondage in the cycle of repeated birth and death. The word *stabdhāḥ*, “puffed up by false pride,” indicates that although ignorant persons do not know the art of working properly, they do not inquire from learned devotees, nor do they accept the advice of the Lord’s own men. Being infatuated by the fruitive results offered in the *Vedas*, such *mūrkhas*, or fools, think, “We are learned Vedic scholars; we have understood everything perfectly.” Thus they are attracted to such Vedic statements as *apāma somam amṛtā abhūma* (“We have drunk the *soma* juice and now we are immortal”), *akṣayyaṁ ha vai cāturmāsya-yājinaḥ sukṛtaṁ bhavati* (“For one who executes the *cāturmāsya* sacrifice there is inexhaustible pious reaction”), and *yatra noṣṇaṁ na śītaṁ syān na glānir nāpy arātayaḥ* (“Let us go to that material planet where there is no heat, no cold, no diminution and no enemies”). Such foolish persons are unaware that even Lord Brahmā, the creator of the universe, will die at the end of universal time, what to speak of materialistic followers of the *Vedas* who jump like frogs to the different celestial planets, seeking the highest standard of sense gratification. Such bewildered Vedic scholars dream of frolicking with the *Apsarās*, the gorgeous society girls of the heavenly planets who are expert in singing, dancing and in general stimulating uncontrollable lusty desires. Thus, those who are carried away by the heavenly phantasmagoria offered in the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas* gradually develop an atheistic mentality. Actually, the entire universe is meant to be offered to Lord Viṣṇu as sacrifice. The conditioned soul can thereby gradually elevate himself to the eternal kingdom beyond the hallucination of material sense gratification. However, being puffed up by false pride, the materialistic followers of the *Vedas* remain perpetually ignorant of the supremacy and beauty of Lord Viṣṇu.

TEXT 5.7

rajasā ghora-saṅkalpāḥ
kāmukā ahi-manyavaḥ
dāmbhikā māninaḥ pāpā
vihasanty acyuta-priyān

rajasā – by the prominence of the mode of passion; *ghora-saṅkalpāḥ* – having horrible desires; *kāmukāḥ* – lusty; *ahi-manyavaḥ* – their anger like that of a snake; *dāmbhikāḥ* – deceitful; *māninaḥ* – overly proud; *pāpāḥ* – sinful; *vihasanti* – they make fun; *acyuta-priyān* – of those who are dear to the infallible Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

Due to the influence of the mode of passion, the materialistic followers of the Vedas become subject to violent desires and are

excessively lusty. Their anger is like that of a snake. Deceitful, overly proud, and sinful in their behavior, they mock the devotees who are dear to Lord Acyuta.

PURPORT

Ghora-saṅkalpāḥ refers to ghastly desires, such as thinking, “He is my enemy, let him die.” Due to the mode of passion, waves of lust overcome the conditioned soul, who then becomes furious like a snake. Such a person, filled with pride and arrogance, cannot appreciate the humble efforts of the Lord’s devotees to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He thinks, “These beggars worship Lord Viṣṇu to fill their bellies, but they will never be happy.” Such a materialistic rascal cannot appreciate the transcendental status of the devotees of the Lord, who are personally protected and encouraged by the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 5.8

*vadanti te’nyonyam upāsita-striyo
gṛheṣu maithunya-pareṣu cāśiṣaḥ
yajanty asṛṣṭāna-vidhāna-dakṣiṇam
vṛtṭyai param ghnanti paśūn atat-vidaḥ*

vadanti – speak; *te* – they; *anyonyam* – among each other; *upāsita-striyaḥ* – who are engaged in worshiping women; *gṛheṣu* – in their homes; *maithunya-pareṣu* – which are dedicated to sex only; *ca* – and; *āśiṣaḥ* – blessings; *yajanti* – they worship; *asṛṣṭa* – without discharging; *anna-vidhāna* – distribution of food; *dakṣiṇam* – gifts in payment to the priests; *vṛtṭyai* – for their own livelihood; *param* – only; *ghnanti* – they murder; *paśūn* – animals; *atat-vidaḥ* – in ignorance of the consequences of such behavior.

TRANSLATION

The materialistic followers of Vedic rituals, giving up the worship of the Lord, instead practically worship their wives, and thus their homes become dedicated to sex life. Such materialistic householders encourage one another in such whimsical behavior. Understanding ritualistic sacrifice as a necessary item for bodily maintenance, they perform unauthorized ceremonies in which there is no distribution of foodstuffs or charity to the brāhmaṇas and other respectable persons. Instead, they cruelly slaughter animals such as goats without any understanding of the dark consequences of their activities.

PURPORT

False pride is certainly not complete without sex indulgence. Thus, lusty materialistic householders are not attracted to worshiping saintly persons, but rather worship their wives as a source of constant sex pleasure. The mentality of such condemned persons is described by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.13):

*idam adya mayā labdham
imam prāpsyē manoratham*

*idam astīdam api me
bhaviṣyati punar dhanam*

“So much wealth do I have today, and I will gain more according to my schemes. So much is mine now, and it will increase in the future, more and more.”

Generally, materialistic householders consider themselves to be very religious. In fact, by earning money to support a band of relatives they consider themselves to be more pious than the “irresponsible” *sādhus*, who do not struggle to maintain family members. Worshiping the material body, they are contemptuous of the humble *brāhmaṇas*, who are generally not very advanced in economic development. They consider such so-called beggars to be unworthy objects of charity and instead perform sacrifices only for the enhancement of the false prestige of their own family members. Madhvācārya has stated in this regard, *upekṣya vai harim te tu bhūtvā yājyāḥ patanty adhaḥ*. In spite of proudly considering themselves to be great performers of religious ceremonies, those who neglect the Lord and His devotees certainly fall down. Such foolish persons sometimes bless each other by saying, “May you be blessed with the wealth of gorgeous flower garlands, sandalwood pulp and beautiful women.”

Men who are controlled by the nature of women become exactly like women. Materialistic women are uninterested in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord and strive for their own selfish happiness. Therefore they eagerly take service from their husbands and become most discouraged if the husband prefers to serve the Personality of Godhead. Being lost in such a fool’s paradise, both husband and wife mutually encourage each other in temporary happiness. They do not like to speak or hear about the pastimes of the Lord, but prefer to discuss their own families. Still, the devotees of the Lord, being mature in the mode of goodness, are always ready to act mercifully toward such conditioned souls, who are just like vain animals. When the devotees of the Lord preach that human beings should not slaughter animals, materialistic householders are very often astonished and inquire if it is actually possible to subsist on a vegetarian diet. Thus being completely ignorant of the material mode of goodness, what to speak of spiritual knowledge, such condemned materialists have no hope beyond the mercy of the devotees of the Lord.

TEXT 5.9

*śriyā vibhūtyābhijanena vidyayā
tyāgena rūpeṇa balena karmaṇā
jāta-smayenāndha-dhiyaḥ saheśvarān
sato’vamanyanti hari-priyān khalāḥ*

śriyā – by their opulence (wealth, etc.); *vibhūtyā* – special abilities; *abhijanena* – aristocratic heritage; *vidyayā* – education; *tyāgena* – renunciation; *rūpeṇa* – beauty; *balena* – strength; *karmaṇā* – performance of Vedic rituals; *jāta* – which is born; *smayena* – by such pride; *andha* – blinded;

dhiyaḥ – whose intelligence; *saha-īśvarān* – along with the Supreme Lord Himself; *sataḥ* – the saintly devotees; *avamanyanti* – they disrespect; *hari-priyān* – who are very dear to Lord Hari; *khalāḥ* – cruel persons.

TRANSLATION

The intelligence of cruel-minded persons is blinded by false pride based on great wealth, opulence, prestigious family connections, education, renunciation, personal beauty, physical strength and successful performance of Vedic rituals. Being intoxicated with this false pride, such cruel persons blaspheme the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His devotees.

PURPORT

The attractive qualities exhibited by the conditioned soul originally belong to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the reservoir of all attractive qualities. The moonshine is actually the reflected effulgence of the sun. Similarly, the living entity reflects for a brief time a particular quantity of the Lord's opulences. Not knowing this, atheistic persons become intoxicated by such reflected opulences, and thus blinded, they condemn themselves more and more by criticizing the Lord and His devotees. They are unable to understand how they have become abominable, and it is difficult to prevent them from going to hell.

TEXT 5.10

*sarveṣu śaśvat tanu-bhṛtsv avasthitaṁ
yathā kham ātmānam abhīṣṭam īśvaram
vedopagītam ca na śṛṇvate'budhā
mano-rathānām pravādanti vārtayā*

sarveṣu – in all; *śaśvat* – eternally; *tanu-bhṛtsu* – embodied living beings; *avasthitaṁ* – situated; *yathā* – just as; *kham* – the sky; *ātmānam* – the Supreme Soul; *abhīṣṭam* – most worshipable; *īśvaram* – ultimate controller; *veda-upagītam* – glorified by the Vedas; *ca* – also; *na śṛṇvate* – they do not hear; *abudhāḥ* – unintelligent persons; *manaḥ-rathānām* – of whimsical pleasures; *pravādanti* – they go on discussing; *vārtayā* – the topics.

TRANSLATION

The Personality of Godhead is eternally situated within the heart of every embodied being; still the Lord remains situated apart, just as the sky, which is all-pervading, does not mix with any material object. Thus the Lord is the supreme worshipable object and the absolute controller of everything. He is elaborately glorified in the Vedic literature, but those who are bereft of intelligence do not like to hear about Him. They prefer to waste their time discussing their own mental concoctions, which inevitably deal with gross material sense gratification such as sex life and meat-eating.

PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyāḥ*. The goal of all Vedic knowledge is to know the Lord, who is the Absolute Truth.

Although this purpose of the *Vedas* is clearly revealed both in the Vedic literature itself and by the self-realized *ācāryas*, foolish people cannot grasp this simple truth. They prefer to cultivate knowledge of illicit sex by discussing their sexual partners and experiences. They also eagerly describe and recommend to their friends the best restaurants for eating meat, and they are fond of glorifying drugs and liquor by elaborately describing the drunken and hallucinogenic effects of their sinful experiences. The materialistic sense gratifiers eagerly call one another on the telephone, congregate in clubs and committees, and enthusiastically go on hunting, drinking and gambling excursions, thus filling their lives with the mode of ignorance. They have neither the time nor the inclination to discuss the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa. Unfortunately, they neglect the Supreme Lord, who therefore severely punishes such foolish persons in order to bring them back to their senses. Everything belongs to the Lord, and everything is meant for the Lord's enjoyment. When the living entity dovetails his activities for the pleasure of the Lord, he experiences unlimited happiness. *Yena sattvaṁ śuddhyed yasmād brahma-saukhyaṁ tv anantam*. There is actually no happiness in material affairs, and the Lord mercifully punishes the intoxicated conditioned soul to bring him back to his real life.

Unfortunately, materialistic persons do not heed the advice of the Supreme Lord in *Bhagavad-gītā* or that of the Lord's representatives, who speak in allied literatures such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Instead, such sense gratifiers consider themselves to be most eloquent and learned. Every materialistic person actually feels that he is the most intelligent person, and thus he has no time to hear the actual truth. Nevertheless, the Personality of Godhead, as described in this verse, waits patiently within the heart of the conditioned soul, encouraging him to recognize the Lord, who is sitting beside him. Such recognition of the Personality of Godhead is the beginning of all auspiciousness and happiness for the conditioned soul.

TEXT 5.11

*loke vyavāyāmiṣa-madya-sevā
nityā hi jantor na hi tatra codanā
vyavasthitis teṣu vivāha-yajña
surā-grahair āsu nivṛttir iṣṭā*

loke – in the material world; *vyavāya* – sex indulgence; *āmiṣa* – of meat; *madya* – and liquor; *sevāḥ* – the taking; *nityāḥ* – always found; *hi* – indeed; *jantoḥ* – in the conditioned living being; *na* – not; *hi* – indeed; *tatra* – in regard to them; *codanā* – any command of scripture; *vyavasthitiḥ* – the prescribed arrangement; *teṣu* – in these; *vivāha* – by sacred marriage; *yajña* – the offering of sacrifice; *surā-grahaiḥ* – and the acceptance of ritual cups of wine; *āsu* – of these; *nivṛttiḥ* – cessation; *iṣṭā* – is the desired end.

TRANSLATION

In this material world the conditioned soul is always inclined to sex, meat-eating and intoxication. Therefore religious scriptures never

actually encourage such activities. Although the scriptural injunctions provide for sex through sacred marriage, for meat-eating through sacrificial offerings and for intoxication through the acceptance of ritual cups of wine, such ceremonies are meant for the ultimate purpose of renunciation.

PURPORT

Those who are not situated in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness are always inclined toward material sense gratification in the form of illicit sex, meat-eating and intoxication. They simply desire a party life of eat, drink and be merry. Such materialistic persons are unwilling to give up such temporary gratification because they are firmly bound up in the bodily concept of life. For such persons there are numerous Vedic injunctions for rituals that bestow material sense pleasure in a regulated manner. The conditioned soul thereby becomes accustomed to indirectly worshiping the Supreme Lord by accepting the austerity of regulated sense gratification in obedience to the Vedic way of life. Through purification the living entity gradually develops a higher taste and becomes directly attracted to the spiritual nature of the Lord.

Sometimes the fallen practitioners of the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas* assert that the material fruitive results of Vedic ceremonies should never be given up, because they are prescribed by religious scriptures. For example, there is a Vedic injunction that in the proper season a husband must approach his wife at night at least five days after her menstrual period, if the wife has properly bathed and cleansed herself. Thus, a responsible householder should engage in religious sex life.

The injunction that one must approach his wife for sex life is explained by the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* as follows. Within the material world almost every man is very lusty and desires passionate sex life with every attractive woman he meets, or with any woman at all. Actually, for an ordinary materialistic man it is an accomplishment if he can restrict himself to relationships with his lawfully wedded wife. But because familiarity breeds contempt, the natural tendency is for the husband to gradually become envious or resentful of the wife and desire illicit connections with other women. Such a mentality is most sinful and abominable, and the Vedic scripture therefore orders that one must approach his actual wife, with a desire to beget children, and thus curtail the tendency toward illicit sexual connection with other women. Were there no such Vedic injunction ordering one to approach his wife, many men would naturally be inclined to neglect their wives and pollute other women by illicit connection.

However, such an injunction for conditioned souls does not apply to great souls who are fixed on the spiritual platform and are transcendental to material sex desire. As stated in this verse, *nivṛttir iṣṭā*: the actual purpose of the Vedic scriptures is to bring one back home, back to Godhead, back to the spiritual world. It is clearly stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *yaṁ yaṁ*

vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajaty ante kalevaram: whatever we think of at the time of death will determine our next body.

*anta-kāle ca mām eva
smaran muktvā kalevaram
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ
yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ*

(Bg. 8.5)

If one remembers Kṛṣṇa, he is immediately transferred to the eternal planet of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, since all the Vedic scriptures are meant for knowing Kṛṣṇa (*vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyaḥ*), the ultimate goal of the *Vedas* cannot be any type of absorption in the material senses, either licit or illicit. The Vedic regulations governing married sex life are actually meant to prevent sinful illicit sex. However, one should not foolishly conclude that a lusty attraction to his wife's naked body is the perfection of self-realization and Vedic elevation. The actual perfection of spiritual life is to become free from all material desires, *nivṛtti*, and to fix the mind on Kṛṣṇa.

Similarly there are other injunctions, governing the regulated consumption of liquor and meat. Those who are mad after meat-eating are instructed to perform Vedic ceremonies by which they are permitted to consume five types of five-clawed animals, namely the rhinoceros, turtle, rabbit, porcupine and lizard. Similarly, the consumption of specific liquors is allowed during highly restricted sacrifices performed on specific days of the year at great expense. In this way, other types of drunkenness and cruel animal slaughter are prohibited. One is gradually purified by performing such sacrifices, and he develops a distaste for such foolish activities as meat-eating and the drinking of liquor. The Vedic rules and regulations that gradually restrict sense gratification are called *vidhi*. The word *niyama* refers to injunctions governing activities that human beings ordinarily would not be inclined to perform. For example, it is said, *ahar ahaḥ sandhyām upāsīta*: "One should chant Gāyatrī *mantra* at the three junctions of the day, every day." It is also stated, *māgha-snānaṁ prakurvīta*: "One must take bath daily, even during the coldest months of winter." Such injunctions prescribe activities that ordinarily would be neglected.

Although it has been mentioned above that there are injunctions against neglecting one's lawful wife, there is no injunction against totally neglecting meat-eating. In other words, killing of animals is considered most abominable, and although some concession is made for the more violent class of men, one should actually completely give up this cruel activity because even a slight discrepancy in animal sacrifices will cause havoc in one's life.

It should be understood that those who have become spiritually advanced by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* under the guidelines of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are expected to completely give up material sense gratification. If a devotee of Kṛṣṇa duplicitously tries to take advantage of the scriptural allowances for meat-eating, intoxication or sex enjoyment, then he commits

the tenth offense against chanting. Especially if one has accepted the renounced order of life called *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa*, it is most abominable and reprehensible to become attracted to the Vedic injunctions prescribing regulated sex life for householders. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī there is no such allowance for one in the renounced order of life. The Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsīs* should not foolishly become bewildered by statements in the Vedic literature such as the following verse from *Manu-saṁhitā*:

*na māṁsa-bhakṣaṇe doṣo
na madye na ca maithune
pravṛttir eṣā bhūtānām
nivṛttis tu mahā-phalā*

“It may be considered that meat-eating, intoxication and sex indulgence are natural propensities of the conditioned souls, and therefore such persons should not be condemned for these activities. But unless one gives up such sinful activities, there is no possibility of achieving the actual perfection of life.”

In the *Kriyā-vidhāna* it is explained that sex is permitted only during the *vāmadeva* sacrifice, or the *garbhādhāna-saṁskāra* for begetting of religious children. It is also stated that sometimes certain types of meat are used in worshiping Lord Hari through sacrifices to the forefathers and demigods. Similarly, there is a form of intoxication available through drinking the *soma* beverage. But if a so-called *brāhmaṇa* becomes attracted to such offerings, he immediately becomes polluted. Actually, the *brāhmaṇas* who performed such offerings would not personally accept any type of liquor or meat. These things would be consumed by the *kṣatriyas*, who were not considered at fault in accepting such remnants of sacrifice.

However, in the movement of Caitanya Mahāprabhu it can be observed that those who desire to become advanced devotees of Kṛṣṇa immediately give up all such fruitive sacrifices. There is no scope in pure devotional service for any type of fruitive sacrifices. Caitanya Mahāprabhu demanded that all of His sincere followers engage twenty-four hours a day in *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*, hearing and chanting the glories of the Personality of Godhead. Those who claim to be followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and who are seriously planning on going back home, back to Godhead, in the near future should not become mindlessly attracted by Vedic fruitive rituals that are meant to attract those who are hopelessly bound up in the material, bodily concept of life. The followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu always remain aloof from such tainted rituals.

TEXT 5.12

*dhanam ca dharmika-phalam yato vai
jñanam sa-vijñanam anuprasānti
grheṣu yuñjanti kalevarasya
mṛtyum na paśyanti duranta-vīryam*

dhanam – wealth; *ca* – also; *dharma-eka-phalam* – whose only proper fruit is religiosity; *yataḥ* – from which (religious life); *vai* – indeed; *jñānam* – knowledge; *sa-vijñānam* – along with direct realization; *anupraśānti* – and subsequent liberation from suffering; *gṛheṣu* – in their homes; *yuñjanti* – they utilize; *kalevarasya* – of their material body; *mṛtyum* – the death; *na paśyanti* – they cannot see; *duranta* – insurmountable; *vīryam* – the power of which.

TRANSLATION

The only proper fruit of acquired wealth is religiosity, on the basis of which one can acquire a philosophical understanding of life that eventually matures into direct perception of the Absolute Truth and thus liberation from all suffering. Materialistic persons, however, utilize their wealth simply for the advancement of their family situation. They fail to see that insurmountable death will soon destroy the frail material body.

PURPORT

Those things that come under the control of the proprietor are called *dhanam*, or wealth. When a foolish person becomes addicted to spending all of his hard-earned money to increase the prestige of his material body and family, he is no longer able to see how death is steadily approaching his own body as well as the temporary bodies of his family and friends. *Mṛtyuḥ sarva-haraś cāham*: the Supreme Lord appears as all-powerful death, which destroys all material situations. Actually, even in family life one should use one's wealth for spiritual advancement of oneself and one's family. In the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement there are many religious householders who live a simple, peaceful life and use their wealth for arranging Kṛṣṇa conscious activities at home and for helping the renounced *brahmacārīs* and *sannyāsīs* who are actively preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness in public places. Such householders, even those who are not able to dedicate one hundred percent of their energy to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, gradually acquire a very solid understanding of the spiritual principles of life and eventually become transcendentalists firmly fixed at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Thus they free themselves from all of the anxieties of conditional life, namely birth, old age, disease and death.

Life without Kṛṣṇa consciousness is actually poverty, but the poverty-stricken materialist, whose intelligence is limited, cannot perceive that real wealth is the expansion of consciousness up to the highest level of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, love of Godhead. Such persons raise their children to be just like animals, having as their only goal false prestige and material sense gratification. Such materialistic householders fear that excessive interest in spiritual life may damage the ambition of their children to acquire false material prestige. Actually, death will smash all of the endeavors and plans of such spiritually impoverished materialists. If family life and wealth are used for Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one will learn to discriminate between the eternal and the noneternal, between spirit and matter, between bliss and anxiety, and thus the living entity will become liberated and go beyond mere

theoretical knowledge to acquire the highest perfectional benediction of eternal Kṛṣṇa conscious life. Limited sensory knowledge, *pratyakṣa-jñāna*, is useless without theoretical spiritual knowledge, *parokṣa-jñāna*, which gradually matures, with careful cultivation, into direct realized knowledge of the soul, *aparokṣa-jñāna*.

The word *anuprasānti* in this verse indicates that by spiritual knowledge (*vijñānam*) one achieves the most sublime state of eternal peace and bliss, far beyond the dreams of the materialistic conditioned soul.

TEXT 5.13

*yad ghrāṇa-bhakṣo vihitaḥ surāyās
tathā paśor ālabhanam na himsā
evam vyavāyaḥ prajayā na ratyā
imam viśuddham na viduḥ sva-dharmam*

yat – because; *ghrāṇa* – by smell; *bhakṣaḥ* – the taking; *vihitaḥ* – is enjoined; *surāyāḥ* – of wine; *tathā* – similarly; *paśoḥ* – of a sacrificial animal; *ālabhanam* – prescribed killing; *na* – not; *himsā* – wanton violence; *evam* – in the same way; *vyavāyaḥ* – sex; *prajayā* – for the purpose of begetting children; *na* – not; *ratyai* – for the sake of sense enjoyment; *imam* – this (as pointed out in the previous verse); *viśuddham* – most pure; *na viduḥ* – they do not understand; *sva-dharmam* – their own proper duty.

TRANSLATION

According to the Vedic injunctions, when wine is offered in sacrificial ceremonies it is later to be consumed by smelling, and not by drinking. Similarly, the sacrificial offering of animals is permitted, but there is no provision for wide-scale animal slaughter. Religious sex life is also permitted, but only in marriage for begetting children, and not for sensuous exploitation of the body. Unfortunately, however, the less intelligent materialists cannot understand that their duties in life should be performed purely on the spiritual platform.

PURPORT

Madhvācārya has given the following statement in regard to animal sacrifice:

*yajñeṣv ālabhanam proktam
devatoddeśataḥ paśoḥ
himsā nāma tad-anyatra
tasmāt tām nācared budhaḥ
yato yajñe mṛtā ūrdhvaḥ
yānti deve ca paitṛke
ato lābhād ālabhanam
svargasya na tu māraṇam*

According to this statement, the *Vedas* sometimes prescribe animal sacrifice in ritual performances for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord or a particular demigod. If, however, one whimsically slaughters animals without rigidly following the Vedic prescriptions, such killing is actual violence and should

not be accepted by any intelligent person. If the animal sacrifice is perfectly performed, the sacrificed animal immediately goes to the heavenly planets of the demigods and the forefathers. Therefore such a sacrifice is not for killing animals but for demonstrating the potency of Vedic *mantras*, by the power of which the sacrificed creature is immediately promoted to a higher situation.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu, however, has forbidden such animal sacrifice in this age because there are no qualified *brāhmaṇas* to chant the *mantras*, and the so-called sacrificial arena becomes an ordinary butcher shop. And in an earlier era, when unscrupulous persons tried to establish that animal killing and meat-eating are acceptable by misinterpreting the Vedic sacrifices, Lord Buddha personally appeared and rejected their heinous proposition. This is described by Jayadeva Gosvāmī:

*nindasi yajña-vidher ahaha śruti-jātaṁ
sadaya-hṛdaya darśita-paśu-ghātaṁ
keśava dhṛta-buddha-śarīra
jaya jagad-īśa hare*

Unfortunately, the conditioned souls are afflicted by four imperfections, one of which is the cheating propensity, and thus they tend to exploit the concessions that the Lord mercifully gives to them in religious scriptures for their gradual purification. Rather than follow the Vedic injunctions for simultaneously satisfying their senses and gradually elevating themselves, the conditioned souls reject the actual purpose of such apparently materialistic ceremonies and simply become more and more degraded in the ignorance of the bodily concept of life. Thus they fall down altogether from the *varṇāśrama* system and, taking birth in violent non-Vedic societies, foolishly presume the small fragments of universal religious principles prevalent there to be the exclusive religion of the soul. As a result, they fall into fanaticism, embracing merely sectarian, dogmatic views of religion. Such unfortunate persons are completely out of touch with their own eternal function in life and consider things to be vastly different than they are in reality.

TEXT 5.14

*ye tv anevam-vido'santaḥ
stabdhāḥ sad-abhimāninaḥ
paśūn druhyanti viśrabdhāḥ
pretya khādanti te ca tān*

ye - those who; *tu* - but; *anavam-vidaḥ* - not knowing these facts; *asantaḥ* - very impious; *stabdhāḥ* - presumptuous; *sat-abhimāninaḥ* - considering themselves saintly; *paśūn* - animals; *druhyanti* - they harm; *viśrabdhāḥ* - being innocently trusted; *pretya* - after leaving this present body; *khādanti* - they eat; *te* - those animals; *ca* - and; *tān* - them.

TRANSLATION

Those sinful persons who are ignorant of actual religious principles, yet consider themselves to be completely pious, without compunction commit violence against innocent animals who are fully trusting in them. In their next lives, such sinful persons will be eaten by the same creatures they have killed in this world.

PURPORT

In this verse we can clearly see the great discrepancies in those persons who do not surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His law. As stated in the *Bhāgavatam*, *harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇāḥ*: those who do not accept the supremacy of the Supreme Lord gradually become infected with the most sinful propensities that bring, in their turn, terrible suffering upon the nondevotees. In the Western countries such as America, many people proudly proclaim themselves to be most pious religionists and sometimes even prophets or representatives of God. Boasting of their religiosity, such foolish people experience no fear or doubt in cruelly slaughtering innumerable animals in slaughterhouses or on hunting trips for their whimsical sense gratification. In the state of Mississippi there are sometimes pig-killing festivals, in which entire families enjoy watching a pig cruelly butchered before their eyes. Similarly, a former president of the United States from Texas did not consider any social occasion complete without the slaughtering of a cow. Such persons mistakenly consider themselves to be perfectly observing the laws of God and due to such arrogant foolishness lose all touch with reality. When a man is raising an animal for slaughter, he feeds the animal nicely and encourages it to grow fat. Thus the animal gradually accepts its would-be killer as its protector and master. When the master finally approaches the helpless animal with a sharp knife or gun, the animal thinks, "Oh, my master is joking with me." Only at the last minute does the animal understand that the so-called master is death personified. It is clearly stated in Vedic literature that cruel masters who kill innocent animals will undoubtedly be killed in the next life by a similar process.

*mām sa bhakṣayitāmutra
yasya māmśam ihādmī aham
etan māmśasya māmśatvaṁ
pravadanti manīṣiṇaḥ*

"That creature whose flesh I am eating here and now will consume me in the next life.' Thus meat is called *māmśa*, as described by learned authorities." In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* this grisly fate of animal killers is described by Nārada Muni to King Prācīnabarhi, who was excessively killing animals in so-called sacrifices.

*bho bhoḥ prajāpate rājan
paśūn paśya tvayādhvare
samjñāpitān jīva-saṅghān
nirghṛṇena sahasraśaḥ*

*ete tvāṁ sampratīkṣante
smaranto vaiśasaṁ tava
samparetam ayaḥ-kūṭaiś
chindanty utthita-manyavaḥ*

“O ruler of the citizens, my dear King, please see in the sky those animals which you have sacrificed, without compassion and without mercy, in the sacrificial arena. All these animals are awaiting your death so that they can avenge the injuries you have inflicted upon them. After you die, they will angrily pierce your body with iron horns.” (*Bhāg.* 4.25.7-8) Such punishment of animal killers may take place under the jurisdiction of Yamarāja on the planet of the lord of death. In other words, one who kills an animal or who eats meat undoubtedly acquires a debt to the living entity who has contributed his body for the satisfaction of the meat-eater. The meat-eater must pay his debt by contributing his own body to be consumed in the next life. Such payment of one’s debt by offering one’s own body to be eaten is confirmed in the Vedic literature.

TEXT 5.15

*dviṣantaḥ para-kāyeṣu
svātmānaṁ harim īśvaram
mṛtake sānubandhe’smin
baddha-snehāḥ patanty adhaḥ*

dviṣantaḥ – envying; *para-kāyeṣu* – (the souls) within the bodies of others; *sva-ātmānam* – their own true self; *harim īśvaram* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari; *mṛtake* – in the corpse; *sa-anubandhe* – together with its relations; *asmin* – this; *baddha-snehāḥ* – their affection being fixed; *patanti* – they fall; *adhaḥ* – downward.

TRANSLATION

The conditioned souls become completely bound in affection to their own corpse-like material bodies and their relatives and paraphernalia. In such a proud and foolish condition, the conditioned souls envy other living entities as well as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, who resides in the heart of all beings. Thus enviously offending others, the conditioned souls gradually fall down into hell.

PURPORT

Materialistic persons express their envy of animals by cruelly killing them. Similarly, the conditioned souls become envious even of other human beings and of the Lord Himself, who dwells within everyone’s body. They express their envy of God by preaching atheistic science or pseudophilosophy in which they ridicule the fact that everyone is an eternal servant of God. Envious persons express their bitter feelings toward other human beings by creating wars, terrorism, cruel governments and cheating business enterprises. The sinful bodies of such envious persons are just like corpses. Still, envious persons are enamored by the corpse of their material body and

become further fascinated by their children and other bodily extensions. Such feelings are based in false pride. Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted the following verse from *Hari-varṁśa*:

*āptatvād ātma-śabdoktāṁ
svasminn api pareṣu ca
jīvād anyarṁ na paśyanti
śrutvaivaṁ vidviṣanti ca
etāṁs tvam āsurān viddhi
lakṣaṇaiḥ puruṣādhamān*

“The Supreme is called *ātmā* because He is found both in oneself and within others. Some persons become agitated by hearing descriptions of the Supreme Lord, and they openly state that there is no superior living being beyond themselves. Such persons are to be known as demons. By their practical symptoms they are to be understood as the lowest class of men.”

TEXT 5.16

*ye kaivalyam asamprāptā
ye cātītāś ca mūḍhatām
trai-vargikā hy akṣaṇikā
ātmānaṁ ghātayanti te*

ye - those who; *kaivalyam* - knowledge of the Absolute Truth; *asamprāptāḥ* - have not achieved; *ye* - who; *ca* - also; *atītāḥ* - have transcended; *ca* - also; *mūḍhatām* - gross foolishness; *trai-vargikāḥ* - dedicated to the three goals of pious life, namely *dharma* (religiosity), *artha* (economic development) and *kāma* (sense gratification); *hi* - indeed; *akṣaṇikāḥ* - not having even a moment to reflect; *ātmānam* - their own selves; *ghātayanti* - murder; *te* - they.

TRANSLATION

Those who have not achieved knowledge of the Absolute Truth, yet who are still beyond the darkness of complete ignorance, generally follow the threefold path of pious material life, namely religiosity, economic development and sense gratification. Not having time to reflect on any higher purpose, they become the killers of their own soul.

PURPORT

Those who are completely in the darkness of ignorance and thus bereft even of material pious life commit innumerable sinful activities and suffer greatly. Due to such intense suffering such persons sometimes seek the shelter of the devotees of the Lord and, being blessed by such transcendental association, are sometimes elevated to the highest perfectional stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Those who are not completely sinful experience some mitigation of the miseries of material life and thus develop a false sense of well-being within the material world. Because those who are materially pious generally obtain worldly prosperity, bodily beauty and a pleasant family situation, they

become falsely proud of their position and are not inclined to associate with or accept instructions from the devotees of the Lord. Unfortunately, all material activities, whether pious or impious, are inevitably contaminated by sinful activity. Those who are proud of their piety and do not like to hear about Kṛṣṇa sooner or later fall down from their artificial position. Every living entity is an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, until we surrender to Kṛṣṇa, our position is actually always impious. The word *akṣaṇikāḥ* (“not having even a moment to reflect”) is significant in this verse. Materialistic persons cannot spare a single moment for their eternal self-interest. This is a symptom of misfortune. Such persons are considered to be killing their own souls because by their obstinacy they are preparing a dark future for themselves from which they will not escape for a very long time.

A sick man receiving medical treatment may be encouraged by the preliminary results of the doctor’s care. But if the patient becomes falsely proud of the preliminary progress in his treatment and prematurely gives up the doctor’s orders, thinking himself already cured, there will undoubtedly be a relapse. The words *ye kaivalyam asamprāptāḥ* in this verse clearly indicate that material piety is a long way from perfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth. If one gives up his spiritual progress before achieving the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, he will undoubtedly fall back down into the most unpleasant material situation, even if he has achieved impersonal realization of the Brahman effulgence. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *āruhya kṛcchreṇa param̐ padam̐ tataḥ patanty adhaḥ*.

TEXT 5.17

*eta ātma-hano’śāntā
ajñāne jñāna-māninaḥ
sīdanty akṛta-kṛtyā vai
kāla-dhvasta-manorathāḥ*

ete – these; *ātma-hanaḥ* – killers of the self; *aśāntāḥ* – devoid of peace; *ajñāne* – in ignorance; *jñāna-māninaḥ* – presuming to have knowledge; *sīdanti* – they suffer; *akṛta* – failing to perform; *kṛtyāḥ* – their duty; *vai* – indeed; *kāla* – by time; *dhvasta* – destroyed; *manorathāḥ* – their fanciful desires.

TRANSLATION

The killers of the soul are never peaceful, because they consider that human intelligence is ultimately meant for expanding material life. Thus neglecting their real, spiritual duties, they are always in distress. They are filled with great hopes and dreams, but unfortunately these are always destroyed by the inevitable march of time.

PURPORT

There is a similar verse in *Śrī Īśopaniṣad* (3):

*asuryā nāma te lokā
andhena tamasāvṛtāḥ
tāms te pretyābhigacchanti
ye ke cātma-hano janāḥ*

“The killer of the soul, whoever he may be, must enter into the planets known as the worlds of the faithless, full of darkness and ignorance.”

TEXT 5.18

*hitvātma-māyā-racitā
gṛhāpatya-suhṛt-striyaḥ
tamo viśanty anicchanto
vāsudeva-parāṅ-mukhāḥ*

hitvā – giving up; *ātma-māyā* – by the illusory energy of the Supreme Soul; *racitāḥ* – manufactured; *gṛha* – homes; *apatya* – children; *suhṛt* – friends; *striyaḥ* – wives; *tamaḥ* – into darkness; *viśanti* – they enter; *anicchantaḥ* – without desiring; *vasudeva-parāk-mukhāḥ* – those who have turned away from Lord Vāsudeva.

TRANSLATION

Those who have turned away from the Supreme Lord, Vāsudeva, being under the spell of the Lord’s illusory energy, are eventually forced to give up their so-called homes, children, friends, wives and lovers, which were all created by the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord, and enter against their will into the darkest regions of the universe.

PURPORT

The living entity turns his back on the Supreme Personality of Godhead and tries instead to enjoy temporary sense gratification. The result is simply anxiety as the conditioned soul struggles to maintain his temporary wife, children, friends, home, nation, etc. Finally all of these things are taken away, and the bewildered soul, in great frustration, sometimes tries to take shelter of an impersonal concept of God and liberation. Thus the conditioned soul is always in ignorance, either pursuing illusory sense gratification or trying to avoid sense gratification by merging into the impersonal aspect of the Lord, called Brahman. But the actual position of the living entity is to serve the Supreme Person, who is his master. And unless one gives up one’s inimical feelings toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no question of peace or happiness.

*kṛṣṇa-bhakta – niṣkāma, ataeva ‘śānta’
bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kāmī – sakali ‘aśānta’*

(Cc. Madhya 19.149)

TEXT 5.19

*śrī-rājovāca
kasmin kāle sa bhagavān
kiṁ varṇaḥ kīḍṛśo ṅbhiḥ*

*nāmnā vā kena vidhinā
pūjyate tad ihocyatām*

śrī-rājā uvāca - the King said; *kasmin* - in what; *kāle* - time; *saḥ* - He; *bhagavān* - the Supreme Lord; *kim varṇaḥ* - having what color; *kīdṛśaḥ* - having what form; *nṛbhiḥ* - by men; *nāmnā* - by (what) names; *vā* - and; *kena* - by what; *vidhinā* - processes; *pūjyate* - is worshiped; *tat* - that; *iha* - in our presence; *ucyatām* - please speak.

TRANSLATION

King Nimi inquired: In what colors and forms does the Supreme Personality of Godhead appear in each of the different ages, and with what names and by what types of regulative principles is the Lord worshiped in human society?

PURPORT

It has been clearly established in the previous verses that human life is spoiled if one does not surrender unto the Supreme Lord and engage in His loving devotional service. Therefore the King is now requesting the sages to give specific details about the worship of the Lord because this devotional process has clearly been described as the only practical means of delivering the conditioned soul.

TEXT 5.20

*śrī-karabhājana uvāca
kṛtam tretā dvāparam ca
kalir ity eṣu keśavaḥ
nānā-varṇābhidhākāro
nānaiva vidhinejyate*

śrī-karabhājanaḥ uvāca - Śrī Karabhājana said; *kṛtam* - Satya; *tretā* - Tretā; *dvāparam* - Dvāpara; *ca* - and; *kaliḥ* - Kali; *iti* - thus named; *eṣu* - in these ages; *keśavaḥ* - the Supreme Lord, Keśava; *nānā* - various; *varṇa* - having complexions; *abhidhā* - names; *ākāraḥ* - and forms; *nānā* - various; *eva* - similarly; *vidhinā* - by processes; *ijyate* - is worshiped.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Karabhājana replied: In each of the four yugas, or ages - Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali - Lord Keśava appears with various complexions, names and forms and is thus worshiped by various processes.

TEXT 5.21

*kṛte śuklaś catur-bāhur
jaṭilo valkalāmbaraḥ
kṛṣṇājinopavitākṣān
bibhrad daṇḍa-kamaṇḍalū*

kṛte - in Satya-yuga; *śuklaḥ* - white; *catuḥ-bāhuḥ* - having four arms; *jaṭilaḥ* - with matted locks; *valkala-ambaraḥ* - wearing a garment of tree bark; *kṛṣṇa-ajina* - a black deerskin; *upavīta* - a brāhmaṇa's sacred thread; *akṣān*

- prayer beads made of *akṣa* seeds; *bibhrat* - carrying; *danda* - a rod; *kamaṇḍalū* - and waterpot.

TRANSLATION

In Satya-yuga the Lord is white and four-armed, has matted locks and wears a garment of tree bark. He carries a black deerskin, a sacred thread, prayer beads and the rod and waterpot of a brahmacārī.

TEXT 5.22

*manuṣyās tu tadā śāntā
nirvairāḥ suhṛdaḥ samāḥ
yajanti tapasā devam
śamena ca damena ca*

manuṣyāḥ - human beings; *tu* - and; *tadā* - then; *śāntāḥ* - peaceful; *nirvairāḥ* - free from envy; *suhṛdaḥ* - friendly to all; *samāḥ* - equipoised; *yajanti* - they worship; *tapasā* - by the austerity of meditation; *devam* - the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *śamena* - by controlling the mind; *ca* - also; *damena* - by controlling the external senses; *ca* - and.

TRANSLATION

People in Satya-yuga are peaceful, nonenvious, friendly to every creature and steady in all situations. They worship the Supreme Personality by austere meditation and by internal and external sense control.

PURPORT

In Satya-yuga the Supreme Lord incarnates as a four-armed *brahmacārī* described in the previous verse and personally introduces the process of meditation.

TEXT 5.23

*haṁsaḥ suparṇo vaikuṅṭho
dharmo yogeśvaro'malaḥ
īśvaraḥ puruṣo'vyaktaḥ
paramātmēti gīyate*

haṁsaḥ - the transcendental swan; *su-parṇaḥ* - whose wings are very beautiful; *vaikuṅṭhaḥ* - the Lord of the spiritual kingdom; *dharmāḥ* - the maintainer of religion; *yoga-īśvaraḥ* - the master of all mystic perfection; *amalaḥ* - immaculate; *īśvaraḥ* - the supreme controller; *puruṣaḥ* - the supreme enjoying male; *avyaktaḥ* - the unmanifest; *parama-ātmā* - the Supersoul in the heart of every living being; *iti* - thus; *gīyate* - His names are variously chanted.

TRANSLATION

In Satya-yuga the Lord is glorified by the names Haṁsa, Suparṇa, Vaikuṅṭha, Dharma, Yogeśvara, Amala, Īśvara, Puruṣa, Avyakta and Paramātmā.

PURPORT

The sage Karabhājana Muni is replying to Videharāja Nimi's questions about the varieties of the Lord's incarnations. In Satya-yuga the Lord's color is white, and He wears tree bark and a black deerskin as an ideal meditative *brahmacārī*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has explained the Lord's various names in Satya-yuga as follows. Those who are self-realized know this supreme reality of the Personality of Godhead as Paramātmā. Those souls who are situated in the religious system of *varṇāśrama* glorify Him as the *haṁsa* who is transcendental to all the *varṇas* and *āśramas*. Persons absorbed in gross matter consider Him to be *Suparṇa*, "the beautifully winged" basis of the conceptions of cause and effect who flies within the subtle sky of the soul, as described in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. Persons accustomed to wandering within this universe of subtle and gross matter created by the Lord's illusory potency chant His name *Vaikuṅṭha*. Persons deprived of the power of transcendental meditation (*dhāraṇā*), who are thus subject to falling from the path of religion, glorify Him as *Dharma*, or religion personified. Those who are forced to submit to the illusory modes of material nature and whose minds are uncontrolled and disturbed glorify Him as the most perfectly self-controlled *Yogeśvara*. Persons tainted by a mixture of the modes of passion and ignorance call Him *Amala*, or the uncontaminated. Persons devoid of potency call Him *Īśvara*, and those who consider themselves to be under His shelter chant His glories by the name *Uttama Puruṣa*. Those who know that this material manifestation is only temporary call Him *Avyakta*. In this way, in Satya-yuga Lord *Vāsudeva* appears in various four-armed transcendental forms, and the *jīva* souls worship Him, each by their own particular process of devotional service. Therefore the Supreme Lord has many different names.

TEXT 5.24

*tretāyām rakta-varṇo'sau
catur-bāhus tri-mekhalah
hiraṇya-keśas trayy-ātmā
sruk-sruvādy-upalakṣaṇah*

tretāyām – in Tretā-yuga; *rakta-varṇah* – red-complexioned; *asau* – He; *catur-bāhuḥ* – four-armed; *tri-mekhalah* – wearing three belts (representing three phases of Vedic initiation); *hiraṇya-keśah* – having golden hair; *trayi-ātmā* – personifying the knowledge of the three *Vedas*; *sruk-sruva-ādi* – the sacrificial wooden ladle, spoon and so on; *upalakṣaṇah* – having as His symbols.

TRANSLATION

In Tretā-yuga the Lord appears with a red complexion. He has four arms, golden hair, and wears a triple belt representing initiation into each of the three Vedas. Embodying the knowledge of worship by sacrificial performance, which is contained in the Ṛg, Sāma and

Yajur Vedas, His symbols are the ladle, spoon and other implements of sacrifice.

PURPORT

The *sruk* is a particular implement for pouring ghee in sacrifices. It is about an arm's length long and is made of a particular type of wood called *vikaṅkata*. The *sruk* has a rodlike handle and a spout with a shallow groove at its tip that resembles a swan's beak. Its front part is a carved-out spoon the size of a fist. The *sruva* is another implement used in sacrificial oblations. It is made of *khadira* wood, is smaller than the *sruk* and is used to pour ghee into the *sruk*. It is also sometimes used instead of the *sruk* to pour ghee directly into the sacrificial fire. These are the Lord's symbols in Tretā-yuga, when the Lord incarnates to introduce the *yuga-dharma* of *yajña*, or sacrifice.

TEXT 5.25

*taṁ tadā manujā devam
sarva-deva-mayaṁ harim
yajanti vidyayā trayyā
dharmiṣṭhā brahma-vādināḥ*

taṁ – Him; *tadā* – then; *manujāḥ* – human beings; *devam* – the Personality of Godhead; *sarva-deva-mayaṁ* – who contains within Himself all the demigods; *harim* – Śrī Hari; *yajanti* – they worship; *vidyayā* – with the rituals; *trayyā* – of the three main *Vedas*; *dharmiṣṭhāḥ* – fixed in religiosity; *brahma-vādināḥ* – seekers of the Absolute Truth.

TRANSLATION

In Tretā-yuga, those members of human society who are fixed in religiosity and are sincerely interested in achieving the Absolute Truth worship Lord Hari, who contains within Himself all the demigods. The Lord is worshiped by the rituals of sacrifice taught in the three Vedas.

PURPORT

The residents of the earth in Satya-yuga are described as having all good qualities. In Tretā-yuga human society is described as *dharmiṣṭhāḥ*, or thoroughly religious, and *brahma-vādināḥ*, or faithfully seeking the Absolute Truth through the Vedic injunctions. However, it should be noted that all of the exalted qualities of the people of Satya-yuga are not mentioned in this verse. In other words, in Satya-yuga people are automatically perfect, whereas in Tretā-yuga people are inclined to become perfect through performing Vedic sacrifice. In Tretā-yuga human society is not automatically Kṛṣṇa conscious, as it was in Satya-yuga, but people are still highly inclined to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, and thus they strictly follow the Vedic injunctions.

TEXT 5.26

*viṣṇur yajñāḥ pṛśnigarbhaḥ
sarvadeva urukramaḥ*

*vṛṣākapiṛ jayantaś ca
urugāya itīryate*

viṣṇuḥ – the all-pervading Supreme Lord; *yajñaḥ* – the supreme personality of sacrifice; *ṛṣṇi-garbhaḥ* – the son of Ṛṣṇi and Prajāpati Sutapā; *sarva-devaḥ* – the Lord of all lords; *uru-kramaḥ* – the performer of wonderful deeds; *vṛṣākapiḥ* – the Lord, who dispels all suffering and rewards all desires simply by being remembered; *jayantaḥ* – the all-victorious; *ca* – and; *uru-gāyaḥ* – the most glorified; *iti* – by these names; *īryate* – He is called.

TRANSLATION

In Tretā-yuga the Lord is glorified by the names Viṣṇu, Yajña, Ṛṣṇigarbha, Sarvadeva, Urukrama, Vṛṣākapi, Jayanta and Urugāya.

PURPORT

Ṛṣṇigarbha refers to Kṛṣṇa's incarnation as the son of Ṛṣṇidevī and Prajāpati Sutapā. *Vṛṣākapi* indicates that if the living entities simply remember the Lord, He is inclined to shower all benedictions upon them, thus satisfying their desires and removing their miseries. Since the Lord is always victorious, He is called Jayanta.

TEXT 5.27

*dvāpare bhagavāñ śyāmaḥ
pīta-vāsā nijāyudhaḥ
śrīvatsādibhir aṅkaiś ca
lakṣaṇair upalakṣitaḥ*

dvāpare – in Dvāpara-yuga; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Lord; *śyāmaḥ* – dark blue; *pīta-vāsāḥ* – wearing a yellow garment; *nija-āyudhaḥ* – having His own particular weapons (the disc, club, conchshell and lotus flower); *śrīvatsa-ādibhiḥ* – by Śrīvatsa and others; *aṅkaiḥ* – bodily marks; *ca* – and; *lakṣaṇaiḥ* – by ornaments; *upalakṣitaḥ* – characterized.

TRANSLATION

In Dvāpara-yuga the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears with a dark blue complexion, wearing yellow garments. The Lord's transcendental body is marked in this incarnation with Śrīvatsa and other distinctive ornaments, and He manifests His personal weapons.

PURPORT

The Lord's transcendental body in Dvāpara-yuga can be compared to the color of a dark blue flower. The Lord exhibits His personal transcendental weapons such as Sudarśana *cakra*, and all of the limbs of His body, especially His hands and feet, are decorated with auspicious symbols such as a lotus flower and a flag. And on His chest, the Lord manifests the Kaustubha jewel as well as the auspicious Śrīvatsa, a whorl of hair curling from left to right on the right side of the Lord's chest. Actually, such auspicious marks as Kaustubha and Śrīvatsa, as well as the weapons of the Lord, are present in all of the *viṣṇu-tattva* incarnations. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that these universal characteristics of the Lord mentioned by the sage Karabhājana are

indications of the Kṛṣṇa *avatāra*. Because Kṛṣṇa is the source of all incarnations, all of the symptoms of all other incarnations are to be found in His transcendental body.

TEXT 5.28

*tam tadā puruṣam martyā
mahā-rājopalakṣaṇam
yajanti veda-tantrābhyām
param jijñāsavo nṛpa*

tam – Him; *tadā* – in that age; *puruṣam* – the supreme enjoyer; *martyāḥ* – mortal men; *mahā-rāja* – a great king; *upalakṣaṇam* – playing the role of; *yajanti* – they worship; *veda-tantrābhyām* – according to both the original *Vedas* and ritual *tantras*; *param* – of the Supreme; *jijñāsavaḥ* – those who want to gain knowledge; *nṛpa* – O King.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, in Dvāpara-yuga men who desire to know the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme enjoyer, worship Him in the mood of honoring a great king, following the prescriptions of both the Vedas and tantras.

PURPORT

When Lord Kṛṣṇa was leaving the city of Hastināpura, Arjuna personally held an umbrella over the Lord, and Uddhava and Sātyaki fanned the Lord with decorated fans (*Bhāg.* 1.10.17, 18). In this way, Emperor Yudhiṣṭhira and his followers worshiped Kṛṣṇa as the greatest of noble kings and as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, at the Rājasūya sacrifice all of the great souls of the universe elected Kṛṣṇa as the King of all kings, the greatest personality, deserving of first worship. Such reverential worship of the Lord is characteristic of Dvāpara-yuga, as described in this verse (*mahā-rājopalakṣaṇam*). With each successive *yuga*, namely Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali, the condition of human society deteriorates more and more. As mentioned in this verse, the only favorable qualification of the residents of Dvāpara-yuga is that they are *jijñāsavaḥ*, strongly desirous of knowing the Absolute Truth. Otherwise there is no good qualification mentioned. The inhabitants of Satya-yuga were described as *śāntāḥ*, *nirvairāḥ*, *suhṛdaḥ* and *samāḥ*, or peaceful, free from envy, the well-wishers of every living entity, and fixed on the spiritual platform beyond the modes of material nature. Similarly the inhabitants of Tretā-yuga were described as *dharmiṣṭhāḥ* and *brahma-vādinaḥ*, or thoroughly religious, and expert followers of the Vedic injunctions. In the present verse, the inhabitants of Dvāpara-yuga are said to be simply *jijñāsavaḥ*, desiring to know the Absolute Truth. Otherwise they are described as *martyāḥ*, or subject to the weakness of mortal beings. If the human society of even Dvāpara-yuga was clearly inferior to that of Satya and Tretā-yugas, we can hardly imagine the truly disastrous condition of human society in Kali-yuga. Therefore, as will be mentioned in the following verses, human beings who have taken their birth in the present Age of Kali should

attach themselves rigidly to the movement of Caitanya Mahāprabhu to free themselves from foolishness.

TEXTS 5.29-30

*namas te vāsudevāya
namaḥ saṅkarṣaṇāya ca
pradyumnāyāniruddhāya
tubhyaṁ bhagavate namaḥ
nārāyaṇāya ṛṣaye
puruṣāya mahātmāne
viśveśvarāya viśvāya
sarva-bhūtātmāne namaḥ*

namaḥ – obeisances; *te* – unto You; *vāsudevāya* – Vāsudeva; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *saṅkarṣaṇāya* – to Saṅkarṣaṇa; *ca* – and; *pradyumnāya* – to Pradyumna; *aniruddhāya* – to Aniruddha; *tubhyam* – to You; *bhagavate* – the Personality of Godhead; *namaḥ* – obeisances; *nārāyaṇāya ṛṣaye* – to Lord Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi; *puruṣāya* – the supreme enjoying male and the creator of the material universe; *mahā-ātmāne* – the supreme being; *viśva-īśvarāya* – the Lord of the universe; *viśvāya* – and Himself the very form of the universe; *sarva-bhūta-ātmāne* – the Supersoul of all living beings; *namaḥ* – obeisances.

TRANSLATION

“Obeisances to You, O Supreme Lord Vāsudeva, and to Your forms of Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. O Supreme Personality of Godhead, all obeisances unto You. O Lord Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi, O creator of the universe, best of personalities, master of this cosmos and original form of the universe, O Supersoul of all created entities, all homage unto You.”

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that although Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared at the end of Dvāpara-yuga, great sages chanted this verse from the beginning of that age in expectation of His appearance.

Ordinary living entities, although eternally subordinate to the Lord, become absorbed in attempting to dominate the material creation yet ultimately remain under the control of the Supreme Lord. The constitutional position of the living entity is engagement in the Lord’s service. It is further the constitutional position of the material nature to be engaged by the living entity in satisfying the transcendental desires of the Lord. Thus these prayers, as mentioned in this verse, are offered to the Supreme Lord in accordance with the *Pañcarātra* and the Vedic *mantras* so that one may become fixed in remembering his eternal subordination to the Absolute Truth.

The supreme living entity, Kṛṣṇa, eternally manifests Himself as the *catur-vyūha*, or quadruple plenary expansion. The purport of this prayer is that one should give up his false ego and pray to this *catur-vyūha* by offering Them obeisances. Although the Absolute Truth is one without a second, the

Absolute Truth displays His unlimited opulences and potencies by expanding Himself in innumerable plenary forms, of which the *catur-vyūha* is a principal expansion. The original being is Vāsudeva, the Personality of Godhead. When the Godhead manifests His primeval energies and opulences, He is called Saṅkarṣaṇa. Pradyumna is the basis of the Viṣṇu expansion who is the soul of the entire universe, and Aniruddha is the basis of the personal manifestation of Viṣṇu as the Supersoul of every individual entity within the universe. Among the four plenary expansions mentioned here, the original expansion is Vāsudeva, and the other three are considered to be particular manifestations of Him.

When the living entity forgets that both he himself as well as the material nature are meant for the Lord's service, the quality of ignorance becomes prominent, and the conditioned entity desires to become himself the master. Thus the conditioned soul imagines that he is a very important person within society or that he is a great philosopher. The Vedic *mantras* and *Pañcarātra* give mankind instructions about devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, which free one from the contamination of considering oneself a prestigious member of society or a great philosopher. One in knowledge should recognize himself as a tiny servant of the Supreme Absolute Truth. In Dvāpara-yuga, Deity worship of the Lord is prominent. Such Deity worship is ultimately aimed at the process of *śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*. Without hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord one cannot perform Deity worship. In Deity worship it is required that the worshiper glorify the names, forms, qualities, paraphernalia, entourage and pastimes of the Supreme Lord. When such glorification is complete, the worshiper becomes eligible to realize transcendental knowledge through hearing about the Lord.

TEXT 5.31

*iti dvāpara urv-īśa
stuvanti jagad-īśvaram
nānā-tantra-vidhānena
kalāv api tathā śṛṇu*

iti – thus; *dvāpare* – in the Dvāpara age; *uru-īśa* – O King; *stuvanti* – they praise; *jagad-īśvaram* – the Lord of the universe; *nānā* – various; *tantra* – of scriptures; *vidhānena* – by the regulations; *kalau* – in the Age of Kali; *api* – also; *tathā* – in which manner; *śṛṇu* – please hear.

TRANSLATION

O King, in this way people in Dvāpara-yuga glorified the Lord of the universe. In Kali-yuga also people worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead by following various regulations of the revealed scriptures. Now kindly hear of this from me.

PURPORT

The words *kalāv api*, “in Kali-yuga also,” are very important in this verse. It is well known that Kali-yuga is an irreligious age. Thus it is surprising that in such a completely irreligious age the Supreme Lord is worshiped. Therefore

it is stated *kalāv api*, “even in Kali-yuga.” In Kali-yuga the incarnation of the Personality of Godhead does not directly assert Himself to be the Personality of Godhead, but rather He is detected by expert devotees in accordance with the revealed Vedic scriptures. Similarly, Prahlāda Mahārāja states in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.9.38):

*itthaṁ nṛ-tiryag-ṛṣi-deva-jhaṣāvātāir
lokān vibhāvayasi haṁsi jagat pratīpān
dharmam mahā-puruṣa pāsi yugānuvṛttaś
channaḥ kalau yad abhavas tri-yugo'tha sa tvam*

“In this way, my Lord, You appear in various incarnations as a human being, an animal, a great saintly demigod, a fish or a tortoise, thus maintaining the entire creation in different planetary systems and killing the demoniac principles. According to the age, O my Lord, You protect the principles of religion. In the Age of Kali, however, You do not assert Yourself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore You are known as Triyuga, or the Lord who appears in three *yugas*.” Thus it is understood that it is difficult for common people in Kali-yuga to recognize the incarnation of the Lord since in this age the Lord’s appearance is slightly concealed.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura the word *nānā-tantra-vidhānena* indicates the importance in Kali-yuga of the Vaiṣṇava scriptures known as the *Pañcarātras* or *Sātvata-pañcarātras*. It is stated in the *Bhāgavatam*, *strī-sūdra-dvija-bandhūnām trayī na śruti-gocarā*: in Kali-yuga it is impossible for ordinary people to perform highly technical Vedic sacrifices or the unbearable penances of the mystic *yoga* system. Such standard Vedic processes are practically inaccessible for the spiritually retarded population of Kali-yuga. Therefore the simple process of glorifying the Personality of Godhead by chanting His holy names is essential in this age. Such devotional processes as chanting the holy names of the Lord and worshiping His Deity form are elaborately described in the Vaiṣṇava *śāstras* known as *Pañcarātras*. Such tantric scriptures are referred to in this verse, and it is stated that in Kali-yuga these devotional processes, taught by great *ācāryas* such as Nārada Muni, are the only practical means for worshiping the Lord. This will be more clearly explained in the following verse.

TEXT 5.32

*kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair
yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ*

kṛṣṇa-varṇam – repeating the syllables *kṛṣ-ṇa*; *tviṣā* – with a luster; *akṛṣṇam* – not black (golden); *sa-aṅga* – along with associates; *upa-aṅga* – servitors; *astra* – weapons; *pārṣadam* – confidential companions; *yajñaiḥ* – by sacrifice; *saṅkīrtana-prāyair* – consisting chiefly of congregational chanting; *yajanti* – they worship; *hi* – certainly; *su-medhasaḥ* – intelligent persons.

TRANSLATION

In the Age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Kṛṣṇa. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions.

PURPORT

This same verse is quoted by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā*, Chapter Three, verse 52. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has given the following commentary on this verse. “This text is from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.32). Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has explained this verse in his commentary on the *Bhāgavatam* known as the *Krama-sandarbhā*, wherein he says that Lord Kṛṣṇa also appears with a golden complexion. That golden Lord Kṛṣṇa is Lord Caitanya, who is worshiped by intelligent men in this age. That is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Garga Muni, who said that although the child Kṛṣṇa was blackish, He also appears in three other colors – red, white and yellow. He exhibited His white and red complexions in the Satya and Tretā ages respectively. He did not exhibit the remaining color, yellow-gold, until He appeared as Lord Caitanya, who is known as Gaurahari.

“Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that *kṛṣṇa-varṇam* means Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. *Kṛṣṇa-varṇam* and Kṛṣṇa Caitanya are equivalent. The name *Kṛṣṇa* appears with both Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya Kṛṣṇa. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but He always engages in describing Kṛṣṇa and thus enjoying transcendental bliss by chanting and remembering His name and form. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself appears as Lord Caitanya to preach the highest gospel. *Varṇayati* means ‘utters’ or ‘describes.’ Lord Caitanya always chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and describes it also, and because He is Kṛṣṇa Himself, whoever meets Him will automatically chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and later describe it to others. He injects one with transcendental Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which merges the chanter in transcendental bliss. In all respects, therefore, He appears before everyone as Kṛṣṇa, either by personality or by sound. Simply by seeing Lord Caitanya one at once remembers Lord Kṛṣṇa. One may therefore accept Him as *viṣṇu-tattva*. In other words, Lord Caitanya is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

“*Sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam* further indicates that Lord Caitanya is Lord Kṛṣṇa. His body is always decorated with ornaments of sandalwood and with sandalwood paste. By His superexcellent beauty He subdues all the people of the age. In other descents the Lord sometimes used weapons to defeat the demoniac, but in this age the Lord subdues them with His all-attractive figure as Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that His beauty is His *astra*, or weapon, to subdue the demons. Because He is all-attractive, it is to be understood that all the demigods lived with Him as His companions. His acts were uncommon and His associates wonderful. When He propagated the *saṅkīrtana* movement, He attracted many great scholars and *ācāryas*,

especially in Bengal and Orissa. Lord Caitanya is always accompanied by His best associates like Lord Nityānanda, Advaita, Gadādhara and Śrīvāsa. “Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī cites a verse from the Vedic literature that says that there is no necessity of performing sacrificial demonstrations or ceremonial functions. He comments that instead of engaging in such external, pompous exhibitions, all people, regardless of caste, color or creed, can assemble together and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa to worship Lord Caitanya. *Kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam* indicates that prominence should be given to the name Kṛṣṇa. Lord Caitanya taught Kṛṣṇa consciousness and chanted the name of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, to worship Lord Caitanya, everyone should together chant the *mahā-mantra* – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. To propagate worship in churches, temples or mosques is not possible because people have lost interest in that. But anywhere and everywhere, people can chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Thus worshiping Lord Caitanya, they can perform the highest activity and fulfill the highest religious purpose of satisfying the Supreme Lord.

“Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, a famous disciple of Lord Caitanya, said: ‘The principle of transcendental devotional service having been lost, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya has appeared to deliver again the process of devotion. He is so kind that He is distributing love of Kṛṣṇa. Everyone should be attracted more and more to His lotus feet, as humming bees are attracted to a lotus flower.’”

The incarnation of Caitanya Mahāprabhu is also described in the *Śrī Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma*, which appears in Chapter 189 of the *Dāna-dharma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted this reference as follows: *suvarṇa-varṇo hemāṅgo varāṅgaś candanāṅgadī*. “In His early pastimes He appears as a householder with a golden complexion. His limbs are beautiful, and His body, smeared with the pulp of sandalwood, seems like molten gold.” He has also quoted, *sannyāsa-kṛc chamaḥ śānto niṣṭhā-śānti-parāyaṇaḥ*: “In His later pastimes He accepts the *sannyāsa* order, and He is equipoised and peaceful. He is the highest abode of peace and devotion, for He silences the impersonalist nondevotees.”

TEXT 5.33

*dhyeyam sadā paribhava-ghnam abhīṣṭa-doham
tīrthāspadam śiva-viriñci-nutam śaraṇyam
bhṛtyārti-ham praṇata-pāla bhavābdhi-potam
vande mahā-puruṣa te caraṇāravindam*

dhyeyam – fit to be meditated upon; *sadā* – always; *paribhava* – the insults of material existence; *ghnam* – which destroy; *abhīṣṭa* – the true desire of the soul; *doham* – which amply reward; *tīrtha* – of all the holy places and great saintly personalities; *āspadam* – the abode; *śiva-viriñci* – by the greatest of demigods, Lord Śiva and Brahmā; *nutam* – which are bowed down to; *śaraṇyam* – most worthy of taking shelter of; *bhṛtya* – of Your servants; *ārti-ham* – which relieve the distress; *praṇata-pāla* – O protector of all who simply

offer respects to You; *bhava-abdhi* – of the ocean of birth and death; *potam* – which are a suitable boat (for crossing); *vande* – I offer my homage; *mahā-puruṣa* – O Lord Mahāprabhu; *te* – to Your; *caraṇa-aravindam* – lotus feet.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, You are the Mahā-puruṣa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and I worship Your lotus feet, which are the only eternal object of meditation. Those feet destroy the embarrassing conditions of material life and freely award the greatest desire of the soul, the attainment of pure love of Godhead. My dear Lord, Your lotus feet are the shelter of all holy places and of all saintly authorities in the line of devotional service and are honored by powerful demigods like Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā. My Lord, You are so kind that You willingly protect all those who simply bow down to You with respect, and thus You mercifully relieve all the distress of Your servants. In conclusion, my Lord, Your lotus feet are actually the suitable boat for crossing over the ocean of birth and death, and therefore even Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva seek shelter at Your lotus feet.”

PURPORT

The incarnation of the Personality of Godhead in Kali-yuga is described and worshiped in this verse. The sage Karabhājana, after describing the incarnation of Godhead in each of the three previous *yugas* – Satya, Tretā and Dvāpara – presented suitable prayers which are utilized for glorifying the Lord in each particular age. After describing the Lord’s manifestation in Kali-yuga with the verse *kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam*, this and the next verse are now presented to glorify the Lord’s appearance in Kali-yuga as Caitanya Mahāprabhu, *kṛṣṇa-varṇam*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu appears in Kali-yuga and teaches everyone to chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. The members of the ISKCON movement are so much absorbed in *kṛṣṇa-varṇam*, or chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, that sometimes ordinary persons refer to them as “the Kṛṣṇas.” Thus whoever comes into contact with Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s movement immediately begins to worship Kṛṣṇa by chanting His holy name. The words *dhyeyam sadā*, or “always to be meditated upon,” indicate that there are no hard-and-fast rules in this age for chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. In Kali-yuga the authorized process of meditation is to chant the holy names of the Lord, especially the *mantra* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. This process is to be executed constantly and always (*sadā*). Similarly, Caitanya Mahāprabhu stated, *nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktis tatrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ*: in Kali-yuga, the Supreme Lord has kindly invested all of His potencies in His holy name, and there are no hard-and-fast rules for chanting such names. The mention of such rules refers to *kāla-deśa-niyama*, or regulations of time and place. Normally there are strict regulations governing the time, season, place, conditions, etc., under which one may execute a particular Vedic ceremony or chant a particular *mantra*.

However, one should chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa everywhere and at all times, twenty-four hours a day. Thus there is no restriction in terms of time and place. This is the meaning of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's statement. The word *paribhava-ghnam* is significant in this verse. In Kali-yuga human society is infected with enviousness. There is great envy, even among members of the same family, who constantly quarrel in this age. Similarly, neighbors are envious of each other and of each other's possessions and status. And entire nations, burning with envy, go to war unnecessarily at the risk of genocide caused by terrible modern weapons. But all of these harassments caused by family members, strangers, so-called friends who are unfaithful, opposing nations, financial competition, social disgrace, cancer, etc., can be relieved by taking shelter of the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is not possible to save the material body, but one who takes shelter of Caitanya Mahāprabhu loosens the hard knot of the heart that psychologically binds him to the hallucination of identifying with the external body or the subtle material mind. Once this false identification is broken, one can be blissful in any adverse material condition. Those who foolishly try to make the temporary body eternal are wasting their time and neglecting the actual process for making life permanent, which is to take shelter of the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself.

In this verse the word *tīrthāspadam* means that the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu are the shelter of all holy places. As the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement spreads all over the world, we often find, especially in poor third-world countries, that it is very difficult for people to travel to India to visit the most exalted holy places such as Vṛndāvana and Māyāpur. Especially in South America it is very difficult for a large number of devotees to visit such places in India and purify themselves. But Caitanya Mahāprabhu is so merciful that simply by worshiping Him, Vaiṣṇavas throughout the world receive the benefit of having visited the supreme holy place, namely the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Thus there is no loss for the followers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, despite their external situation.

In this regard, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated, *kalau dravya-deśa-kriyādi-janitaṁ durvāram apāvityam api nāśaṅkanīyam iti bhāvaḥ*. In this age the world is so polluted by sinful life that it is very difficult to become free from all of the symptoms of Kali-yuga. Still, one who is faithfully serving in the missionary work of Caitanya Mahāprabhu need not fear occasional, unavoidable symptoms of Kali-yuga. The followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu strictly follow the four regulative principles of no illicit sex, no intoxication, no meat-eating and no gambling. They try to always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and engage in the service of the Lord. However, it may happen that by accident an occasional symptom of Kali-yuga such as envy, anger, lust, greed, etc., may momentarily appear in the life of a devotee. But if such a devotee is actually surrendered at the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, by His mercy such an unwanted symptom, or *anartha*, will quickly disappear. Therefore, a sincere follower of the Lord should never be discouraged in the

execution of his prescribed duty but should be confident that he will be protected by Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

It is also mentioned in this verse, *śiva-viriñci-nutam*. Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are undoubtedly the two most powerful personalities within this universe. Still, they meticulously worship the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Why? *Śaraṇyam*. Even Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are not safe without the shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord.

The words *bhṛtyārti-haṁ praṇata-pāla* indicate that if one simply bows down without duplicity at the lotus feet of the Lord (*praṇata*), then the Lord will give such a sincere candidate all protection. This verse does not mention that one need be an exalted devotee of the Lord. Rather, it is stated that if one simply bows down at the Lord's lotus feet he will get all protection, and this also applies to anyone who is trying to serve the mission of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Even the neophyte will get all protection by the mercy of the Lord.

In regard to the words *bhavābdhi-potam*, or “a suitable boat for crossing the ocean of material existence,” there is the following statement by Lord Brahmā and other demigods in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: *tvat-pāda-potena mahat-kṛtena kurvanti go-vatsa-padam bhavābdhim*. “By accepting Your lotus feet as the boat by which to cross the ocean of nescience, one follows in the footsteps of the *mahājanas* and can cross that ocean as easily as one steps over the hoofprint of a calf.” According to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, a follower of Caitanya Mahāprabhu is *jīvan-mukta*, or a liberated soul. Thus the devotee is not worried about his future destination, for he is confident that the Lord will quickly take him across the ocean of material existence. Such confidence is referred to in the *Upadeśāmṛta* by the word *niścayāt*, meaning firm conviction about the potency of the process of devotional service. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the statement *śiva-viriñci-nutam* is also understood to indicate that Caitanya Mahāprabhu is worshiped by Lord Śiva's incarnation Advaita Ācārya and by Lord Brahmā's incarnation Haridāsa Ṭhākura.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu is addressed in this verse as *mahā-puruṣa*, meaning *puruṣottama*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, there is reference to *mahāprabhu* in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (3.12), *mahān prabhur vai puruṣaḥ sattvasyaīṣa pravartakaḥ*: “The supreme *prabhu* is the Personality of Godhead, who is the initiator of the entire cosmos.” Similarly, Lord Śrī Gaurakṛṣṇa is addressed by the word *mahā-puruṣa* in this verse, and the whole intention of this verse is to offer obeisances at His lotus feet. Such lotus feet are the actual eternal object of meditation because they cut off the bondage of material life and fulfill the desires of the devotees. Although the conditioned souls laboring arduously under illusion pursue many temporary goals in life, there is no possibility of their achieving actual bliss or knowledge. Such eternal bliss and knowledge is actually wealth. One should not neglect the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, taking Him to be an

ordinary person, and instead accept the temporary, useless shelter offered by the illusory energy of the Lord.

Those *yogīs* who falsely select some other object of meditation besides the lotus feet of the Lord are simply creating obstructions to their own eternal life. When the meditator, the meditation and the object of meditation are all on the eternal platform of the Lord, then actual shelter has been achieved. Generally the conditioned souls are engaged in *bhoga-tyāga*. Sometimes they run madly after material prestige and sense gratification, and sometimes they desperately try to renounce these things. However, beyond this vicious cycle of alternating sense gratification and renunciation are the lotus feet of the Lord, which constitute the ultimate abode of peace and happiness for the living entity.

The following are additional notes on this verse given by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

dhyeyam - the object indicated by the word *dhīmahī* in the Gāyatrī *mantra*.
tīrthāspadam - the original shelter of holy places headed by Śrī Gauḍakṣetra and Vraja-maṇḍala; or the original shelter, namely the lotus feet of the Lord, of the great devotees of the Brahma *sampradāya* following in the succession of faithful hearing. The succession of faithful hearing begins with Śrīmad Ānandatīrtha (Madhvācārya) and is continued by the *rūpānuga mahā-bhāgavatas*, the highly elevated followers of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

śiva-viriñci-nutam - He who is worshiped by the incarnation of Lord Śiva, Śrīmad Advaitācārya Prabhu, and by the incarnation of Lord Viriñci, Śrīmān Ācārya Haridāsa Prabhu.

bhṛtyārti-ham - He who destroyed by His causeless mercy the misery of His own servant, the *brāhmaṇa* Vāsudeva, who was afflicted with leprosy in *caitanya-līlā*.

bhavābdhi-potam - the means of crossing over the ocean of *saṁsāra*; or the shelter of those who are freeing themselves from material existence, which afflicts the living entity in the form of hankering for liberation or material enjoyment. Such persons who took advantage of this transcendental boat of the Lord's lotus feet are Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, who was saved from *mukti-kāma*, or desire for liberation, and Pratāparudra Mahārāja, who was saved from *bhukti-kāma*, or the desire for material opulence.

TEXT 5.34

tyaktvā su-dustyaja-surepsita-rājya-lakṣmīm
dharmiṣṭha ārya-vacasā yad agād araṇyam
māyā-mṛgaṁ dayitayepsitam anvadhāvad
vande mahā-puruṣa te caraṇāravindam

tyaktvā - abandoning; *su-dustyaja* - most difficult to give up; *sura-īpsita* - anxiously desired by the demigods; *rājya-lakṣmīm* - the goddess of fortune and her opulence; *dharmiṣṭhaḥ* - most perfectly fixed in religiousness; *ārya-vacasā* - according to the words of a *brāhmaṇa* (who had cursed Him to be

deprived of all the happiness of family life); *yat* – He who; *agāt* – went; *araṇyam* – to the forest (taking to the renounced order of life); *māyā-mṛgam* – the conditioned soul, who is always searching out illusory enjoyment; *dayitayā* – out of sheer mercy; *īpsitam* – His desired object; *anvadhāvat* – running after; *vande* – I offer my homage; *mahā-puruṣa* – O Lord Mahāprabhu; *te* – to Your; *caraṇa-aravindam* – lotus feet.

TRANSLATION

O Mahā-puruṣa, I worship Your lotus feet. You gave up the association of the goddess of fortune and all her opulence, which is most difficult to renounce and is hankered after by even the great demigods. Being the most faithful follower of the path of religion, You thus left for the forest in obedience to a brāhmaṇa’s curse. Out of sheer mercifulness You chased after the fallen conditioned souls, who are always in pursuit of the false enjoyment of illusion, and at the same time engaged in searching out Your own desired object, Lord Śyāmasundara.

PURPORT

According to the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, this important verse of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is understood to describe Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Lord Kṛṣṇa and also Lord Śrī Rāmacandra. This verse appears within the discussion by the sage Karabhājana of the *yugāvatāras*, or the different incarnations of the Personality of Godhead who deliver the conditioned souls of each age. The prayers ending with the words *vande mahā-puruṣa te caraṇāravindam* are understood to glorify the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa in Kali-yuga known as Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Caitanya Mahāprabhu lived for twenty-four years in Navadvīpa as a householder and enjoyed immense popularity among both scholars and ordinary persons. His *saṅkīrtana* movement was completely supported by the local government, even though it was Muslim. And Caitanya Mahāprabhu had the pleasure of marrying the goddess of fortune. No ordinary woman of the material world, no matter how gorgeous she may be, can in any way compare with the beautiful goddess of fortune. Everyone in the universe, including Lord Brahmā, is searching after the goddess of fortune. Therefore it is stated here, *surepsita*.

However, Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Lord Kṛṣṇa appearing as a *brāhmaṇa*, and therefore He is certainly *dharmiṣṭhaḥ*, or the most religious. Actually the Supreme Personality of Godhead is always *dharmiṣṭhaḥ*, whether He appears as a cowherd boy, a great king or a *brāhmaṇa*, because the Lord Himself is the original source and personification of all religious principles. However, in the pastimes of Caitanya Mahāprabhu there are very few political or economic activities. Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared as a great philosopher-*brāhmaṇa*, and thus He is certainly *dharmiṣṭhaḥ*. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, in the Seventeenth Chapter of the *Ādi-līlā*, it is described that a certain *brāhmaṇa*, who was well known for being harsh and cursing others, could not enter the *kīrtana* hall where Caitanya Mahāprabhu was performing *kīrtana* because the door was locked. Being very agitated and breaking his

brāhmaṇa's thread, he cursed Caitanya Mahāprabhu the next day on the bank of the Ganges, saying, "I shall now curse You, for Your behavior has greatly aggrieved me. You shall be bereft of all material happiness." However, Caitanya Mahāprabhu felt great jubilation within Himself, since His mission was *vairāgya-vidyā-nija-bhakti-yoga* - to give up the illusion of material sense gratification and staunchly engage twenty-four hours a day in the devotional service of the Lord. Therefore, Caitanya Mahāprabhu took this curse as a blessing, and soon after, the Lord took *sannyāsa*. Thus it is stated in this verse that by the words of the Āryan, the *brāhmaṇa* (*ārya-vacasā*), Caitanya Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa* (*yad agād araṇyam*) and went traveling through the different forests of India on the way to Vṛndāvana, and later South India. Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted especially to preserve the prestige of the *brāhmaṇa* class, and therefore He decided to keep the *brāhmaṇa*'s curse intact.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has explained the word *māyā-mṛgam* as follows. *Māyā* means one's so-called wife, children and bank account, which keep one firmly bound up in the material bodily concept of life. The word *mṛgam* indicates *mṛgyati*, or "to search out." Thus, *māyā-mṛgam* indicates the conditioned living entity, who is always frantically searching for the latest up-to-the-minute sense gratification in the material bodily concept of society, friendship and love. *Anvadhāvat* indicates that Caitanya Mahāprabhu was always visibly going here and there, searching after the fallen conditioned souls. Caitanya Mahāprabhu would sometimes embrace the conditioned souls on the pretext of religious friendship or ecstasy. But actually, the Lord was touching the bodies of the conditioned souls to pull them out of the ocean of material existence and hurl them into the ocean of ecstatic love of Godhead. Thus Caitanya Mahāprabhu was the most merciful and munificent incarnation of the Lord, whose mercy surpassed the bounds of mundane discrimination in the matter of caste, color and creed.

The word *dayitayā* can be explained as follows. The Sanskrit word *dayā* means "mercy." Thus, by grammatical derivation, the word used in this verse, *dayitayā*, indicates that because of being the most merciful, Caitanya Mahāprabhu was busily engaged in rescuing the fallen conditioned souls, who are completely distracted and bewildered by the external illusory energy of the Lord. The quality of being the most merciful is part and parcel of the character of the *mahā-puruṣa*, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, this verse also describes the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself in His original blackish form. Thus the words *surepsita-rājya-lakṣmīm* indicate *śrī-mathurā-sampattim*, or the opulence of Mathurā. Mathurā is described in Vedic literature as the reservoir of all opulence because of the touch of the Lord's lotus feet in that precinct. But Kṛṣṇa, although taking birth in the opulent city of Mathurā, transferred Himself to the forest village of Vṛndāvana. In this case the word *ārya-vacasā* indicates the order of Lord Kṛṣṇa's original parents, Vasudeva and Devakī. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.3.22, 29) both Vasudeva and Devakī express their fear at

the threat of Kaṁsa, who had already killed all of Kṛṣṇa's elder brothers. The word *ārya-vacasā* thus indicates that with great love they requested Kṛṣṇa to kindly make some arrangement to avoid Kaṁsa. And Kṛṣṇa, to obey their order, transferred Himself to the forest village of Vṛndāvana (*yad agād araṇyam*).

In this context, the words *māyā-mṛgam* indicate the special, exalted relationship between Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Māyā* also indicates the internal potency of Kṛṣṇa, *yoga-māyā*. The original form of Kṛṣṇa's internal potency is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Due to the inconceivable love of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Lord Kṛṣṇa becomes easily controlled by Her. Thus, *mṛgam*, or "animal," in this case indicates *krīḍā-mṛgam*, or "a toy animal." Just as a beautiful young girl may play with so many dolls or stuffed animals, similarly Lord Kṛṣṇa becomes just like a doll in the hands of the most beautiful young girl, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī performed innumerable types of worship in order to bind Kṛṣṇa more and more to Her because Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī cannot live without Kṛṣṇa. Thus, due to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's *ārādhana*, or worship, Kṛṣṇa can never leave Vṛndāvana. He runs here and there in Vṛndāvana, protecting the cows, playing with His friends and engaging in countless intrigues of love with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs*. Thus the word *anvadhāvat* indicates Kṛṣṇa's boyish activities, His running throughout the transcendental land of Vṛndāvana, tightly under the control of the love of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has explained how this verse also describes the incarnation of Lord Śrī Rāmacandra. Although the Lord is completely independent and detached from everything, He becomes attached to His pure devotees due to their love for Him. In the great capital of Ayodhyā all of the citizens loved Rāmacandra more than can be described. In this context *ārya-vacasā* means that by the order of His father, who was just like His *guru*, Rāmacandra gave up everything and went to the forest. There He exhibited His great affection for mother Sītā and chased after *māyā-mṛgam*, or the illusory deer that had been created by the trick of Rāvaṇa. That this golden deer was especially desired by Śrīmatī Sītādevī is indicated by the word *dayitayepsitam*.

All of the limbs of the Lord's transcendental body are nondifferent and interchangeable, as stated in *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.32):

*aṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimanti
paśyanti pānti kalayanti ciraṁ jaganti
ānanda-cinmaya-sad-ujjala-vigrahasya
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

All of the limbs (*aṅgāni*) of the Supreme Lord are *sakalendriya-vṛttimanti*, or possessing all of the functions of all of the other limbs. Thus the two lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead are a plenary representation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and worshiping the Lord's lotus feet immediately places the worshiper in the ocean of transcendental bliss. There is no factual difference in spiritual quality between the incarnations of

Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Śrī Rāmacandra. As stated in Vedic literatures, *advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam*. Therefore there is no contradiction in the opinions of the *ācāryas* that this verse wonderfully glorifies three different manifestations of the one Absolute Truth. Caitanya Mahāprabhu is undoubtedly the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His transcendental attributes fulfill in every sense of the term the descriptions of the Absolute Truth as given in Vedic literature. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, in the Third Chapter of the *Ādi-līlā*, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī and Śrīla Prabhupāda have given elaborate explanations of the transcendental status of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, which the reader can refer to for further information.

Everyone should follow the example of the sage Karabhājana and worship the lotus feet of the Mahāprabhu, the *mahā-puruṣa*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. One should not rot on the platform of mental speculation and whimsical interpretation but should actually revive his lost relationship with the Absolute Truth by surrendering to Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Those who are worshipping Caitanya Mahāprabhu are deriving wonderful spiritual results and are tasting the fruit of love of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, *vande mahā-puruṣa te caraṇāravindam*: let us humbly bow down at the lotus feet of the original Personality of Godhead, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the *mahā-puruṣa* glorified within *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Corroborating the explanation of this verse, the followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu also worship Him in His six-armed form of *ṣaḍ-bhuja*. Two arms carry the waterpot and *daṇḍa* of the *sannyāsī* Caitanya Mahāprabhu, two arms carry the flute of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and two arms carry the bow and arrow of Śrī Rāmacandra. This *ṣaḍ-bhuja* form is the actual purport of this verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 5.35

*evam yugānurūpābhyām
bhagavān yuga-vartibhiḥ
manujair ijjate rājan
śreyasām īśvaro hariḥ*

evam – thus; *yuga-anurūpābhyām* – (by particular names and forms) suitable for each age; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *yuga-vartibhiḥ* – by those living in each of the different ages; *manujaiḥ* – human beings; *ijjate* – is worshiped; *rājan* – O King; *śreyasām* – of all spiritual benefit; *īśvaraḥ* – the controller; *hariḥ* – Lord Hari.

TRANSLATION

Thus, O King, the Supreme Lord Hari is the giver of all desirable benefits of life. Intelligent human beings worship the particular forms and names that the Lord manifests in different ages.

PURPORT

The word *yugānurūpābhyām* is significant here. *Anurūpa* means “suitable” or “appropriate.” The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, anxiously desires

that all conditioned living entities come back home, back to Godhead, for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge. Thus, the Lord reveals Himself in each of the four ages – Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali – in a form appropriate for worship by the human beings of that age. In his *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* (*Pūrva-khaṇḍa* 1.25), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states:

*kathyate varṇa-nāmābhyām
śuklaḥ satya-yuge hariḥ
raktaḥ śyāmaḥ kramāt kṛṣṇas
tretāyām dvāpare kalau*

“The Supreme Lord Hari is described in terms of His color and names as *śukla* [white, or the most pure] in Satya-yuga, and as red, dark blue and black respectively in Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali.” Thus, although in each age various names suitable for glorifying the Lord are given, such as Haṁsa and Suparṇa in Satya-yuga, Viṣṇu and Yajña in Tretā-yuga, and Vāsudeva and Saṅkarṣaṇa in Dvāpara-yuga, similar names are not given for Kali-yuga, although such names exist, in order to avoid disclosing cheaply the truth of the incarnation of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

In Kali-yuga human society is infested with hypocrisy and superficiality. There is a strong tendency toward imitation and fraud in this age. Therefore the incarnation of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is revealed in Vedic literature in a confidential, discrete way, so that it will be known to the authorized persons who can then propagate the mission of the Lord on the earth. We actually see in this modern age that many foolish and ordinary persons claim to be God or incarnations, *avatāras*, etc. There are many cheap philosophies and academies that promise, for a moderate fee, to make one God in a short time. In America one famous religious group promises its followers that they will all become the Supreme Lord in heaven. Such bogus preaching goes on in the name of Christianity. Thus, were Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s name widely spoken of in Vedic literature, there would soon be a veritable plague of imitation Caitanya Mahāprabhus infesting the world.

Therefore, to prevent this pandemonium, discretion is exercised in the Vedic literatures in Kali-yuga, and in a sober, concealed way the actual followers of Vedic culture are informed through the Vedic *mantras* of the descent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This discrete system, selected by the Lord Himself for His appearance in Kali-yuga, is proving to be greatly successful on the earth planet. And throughout the world millions of people are chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa without the unbearable harassment of hundreds and thousands of imitation Caitanya Mahāprabhus. Those who seriously desire to approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead can easily understand the Lord’s mission, whereas cynical materialistic rascals, puffed up by false prestige and madly considering their insignificant intelligence to be greater than the intelligence of Lord Kṛṣṇa, cannot understand the beautiful arrangements made by the Lord for His graceful descent into the material world. Thus, although Kṛṣṇa is *śreyasām īśvaraḥ*, or the Lord of all

benedictions, such foolish persons turn away from the Lord's mission and in this way deprive themselves of their own true benefit in life.

TEXT 5.36

*kalim sabhājayanty āryā
guṇa jñāḥ sāra-bhāgīnaḥ
yatra saṅkīrtanenaiva
sarva-svārtho'bhilabhyate*

kalim – the Age of Kali; *sabhājayanti* – they praise; *āryāḥ* – progressive souls; *guṇa-jñāḥ* – who know the true value (of the age); *sāra-bhāgīnaḥ* – who are able to pick out the essence; *yatra* – in which; *saṅkīrtanena* – by the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Supreme Lord; *eva* – merely; *sarva* – all; *sva-arthaḥ* – desired goals; *abhilabhyate* – are attained.

TRANSLATION

Those who are actually advanced in knowledge are able to appreciate the essential value of this Age of Kali. Such enlightened persons worship Kali-yuga because in this fallen age all perfection of life can easily be achieved by the performance of saṅkīrtana.

PURPORT

It is stated here that among the four ages – Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali – Kali-yuga is actually the best because in this age the Lord mercifully distributes the highest perfection of consciousness, namely Kṛṣṇa consciousness, very freely. The word *ārya* has been defined by Śrīla Prabhupāda as “one who is advancing spiritually.” The nature of an advanced person is to search for the essence of life. For example, the essence of the material body is not the body itself but the spirit soul that is within the body; therefore an intelligent person gives more attention to the eternal spirit soul than to the temporary body. Similarly, although Kali-yuga is considered to be an ocean of contamination, there is also an ocean of good fortune in Kali-yuga, namely the *saṅkīrtana* movement. In other words, all of the degraded qualities of this age are completely counteracted by the process of chanting the holy names of the Lord. Thus it is stated in the Vedic language,

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

“Whatever is achieved in Satya-yuga by meditation, in Tretā by offering ritual sacrifices and in Dvāpara by temple worship is achieved in Kali-yuga by chanting the names of Lord Keśava congregationally.”

The Vedic process gradually lifts the conditioned entity out of the darkness of *ahaṅkāra*, or false identification with the gross material body, and brings him to the platform of self-realization, or *ahaṁ brahmāsmi*, “I am spirit soul. I am eternal.” One has to make further progress to discover that although one is eternal, there is a superior eternal entity, who is the Lord Himself within

one's own heart and within every atom in the material universe. Beyond this second phase of self-realization there is the third and final stage of perfection, which is realization of Bhagavān, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His own abode.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is not primarily the superintendent of this world but rather the enjoyer of His own world, which is beyond the most fantastic dreams of the conditioned living entity. In other words, although the king or president of a country is ultimately the controller of the prison department, the king or president derives actual pleasure within his own palace and not in administering justice to the foolish prisoners. Similarly, the Lord appoints the demigods to administer the material creation on His behalf while He Himself personally enjoys the ocean of transcendental bliss in His own transcendental kingdom. Thus, realization of the Lord within His own kingdom is far superior to the primitive understanding that the Lord is the "creator" of the prison of the material world. This realization of Bhagavān begins with understanding that there are innumerable Vaikuṅṭha planets in the spiritual sky and that on each of them a particular expansion of Nārāyaṇa dwells with His innumerable devotees who are attached to that particular form. The central and chief planet in the spiritual sky is called Kṛṣṇaloka, and there the Personality of Godhead exhibits His supreme and original form of Govinda. As confirmed by Lord Brahmā, *govindam ādi-puruṣam tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*. Lord Brahmā also states:

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

(Brahma-saṁhitā 5.1)

Thus, love of Kṛṣṇa and entrance into Kṛṣṇa's planet in the spiritual sky is the most supremely perfect and exalted status of life available anywhere, at any time, throughout the totality of existence. That perfection is available in Kali-yuga simply by chanting the holy names of God: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Therefore every sane man, woman or child should deeply understand the unprecedented opportunity offered by Caitanya Mahāprabhu and seriously take up this chanting process. Only the most unfortunate and irrational person will neglect this transcendental opportunity.

TEXT 5.37

*na hy ataḥ paramo lābho
dehinām bhrāmyatām iha
yato vindeta paramām
śāntim naśyati saṁsṛtiḥ*

na - there is no; *hi* - indeed; *ataḥ* - than this (process of *saṅkīrtana*); *paramaḥ* - greater; *lābhaḥ* - thing to be gained; *dehinām* - for embodied souls; *bhrāmyatām* - who are being forced to wander; *iha* - throughout this

material universe; *yataḥ* – from which; *vindeta* – one obtains; *paramām* – the supreme; *śāntim* – peace; *naśyati* – and is destroyed; *saṁsṛtiḥ* – the cycle of repeated birth and death.

TRANSLATION

Indeed, there is no higher possible gain for embodied souls forced to wander throughout the material world than the Supreme Lord's saṅkīrtana movement, by which one can attain the supreme peace and free oneself from the cycle of repeated birth and death.

PURPORT

In the *Skanda Purāṇa*, as well as in other *Purāṇas*, there is the following statement: *mahā-bhāgavatā nityaṁ kalau kurvanti kīrtanam*. “During Kali-yuga the great devotees of the Lord always engage in *kīrtana*, chanting the Lord's holy names.” It is the nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to be merciful, and He is especially merciful to those who, in a helpless condition, take complete shelter of His lotus feet. One can immediately take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord by chanting His holy names. According to Śrīdhara Svāmī, even in previous ages such as Satya-yuga it was not possible for the living entities to achieve the perfection that is available in Kali-yuga. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has explained this as follows. In former ages such as Satya-yuga human beings were perfectly qualified and easily performed even the most difficult spiritual processes, meditating for many thousands of years practically without eating or sleeping. Thus, although in any age one who completely takes shelter of the Lord's holy name gets all perfection, the highly qualified inhabitants of Satya-yuga do not consider that merely moving the tongue and lips, chanting the Lord's holy name, is a complete process and that the Lord's holy name is the only shelter within the universe. They are more attracted to the difficult and elaborate *yoga* system of meditation, complete with sophisticated sitting postures, painstaking control of the breath and deep, extended meditations in trance on the Personality of Godhead within the heart. In Satya-yuga sinful life is practically unheard of, and therefore people are not afflicted with the terrible reactions seen in Kali-yuga, such as world war, famine, plague, drought, insanity, etc. Although in Satya-yuga people always worship the Personality of Godhead as the ultimate goal of life and meticulously follow His laws, called *dharma*, they do not feel themselves to be in a helpless condition, and thus they do not always experience intense love for the Lord.

However, in Kali-yuga living conditions are so unbearable, modern governments are so obnoxious, our bodies are so ridden by physical and mental disease, and even self-preservation is so troublesome, that the conditioned souls intensely cry out the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, begging for relief from the onslaught of this age. The members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement have vivid and unforgettable experiences of the terrible contradictions inherent in human society in this age, and thus they are firmly convinced that there is nothing to be achieved except the mercy of the Supreme Lord. In ISKCON centers throughout the world we observe

wonderfully ecstatic *kīrtana* performances in which men, women and children from all walks of life chant with startling enthusiasm the holy names of Kṛṣṇa and dance in ecstasy, becoming completely indifferent to so-called public opinion. In America a prominent professor from Oberlin College visited a Hare Kṛṣṇa center in California and was astonished by the enthusiasm with which the devotees chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in their congregational performances.

Thus, due to their helpless and pathetic condition, the living entities in Kali-yuga have great impetus to surrender fully to the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, putting all of their hope and faith in the Lord's holy name. Kali-yuga is therefore the best age because in this age, more than in Satya-yuga or other ages, the conditioned souls become disgusted with the kingdom of illusion and surrender fully to the Lord's holy name. This status of full surrender is called *paramām śāntim*, or supreme peace.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted a passage from the book called *Svābhāvya* to the effect that a bona fide spiritual master in disciplic succession is able to understand the mentality and capability of his disciples and engage them in worshiping the particular form of the Lord suitable for them. In this way the spiritual master destroys all obstacles in the path of his disciples. The general rule is that one must worship the particular form of the Lord that appears in the current *yuga*. One may also offer his love and worship to other forms of the Lord that appear in other ages, and specifically one is recommended to chant the holy names of Lord Nṛsimhadeva to get all protection. Practically all of these injunctions are being carried out within the ISKCON movement. Within the Kṛṣṇa consciousness society, men, women and children are all being engaged in worshiping the Lord according to their particular natures. In addition, according to Caitanya Mahāprabhu's order, we are worshiping Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, who appeared in Dvāpara-yuga, because They are the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, by chanting the *Daśāvatāra-stotra*, *jaya jagad-īśa hare*, and by reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the members of ISKCON worship all of the plenary expansions of the Personality of Godhead. And after every *ārati* performance devotional prayers are duly chanted to Lord Nṛsimhadeva for protection of this movement, which is so essential to human society.

TEXTS 5.38-40

*kṛtādiṣu prajā rājan
kalāv icchanti sambhavam
kalau khalu bhaviṣyanti
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇāḥ
kvacit kvacin mahā-rāja
draviḍeṣu ca bhūriśaḥ
tāmraparṇī nadī yatra
kṛtamālā payasvinī*

*kāverī ca mahā-puṇyā
pratīcī ca mahā-nadī
ye pibanti jalam tāsām
manujā manujeśvara
prāyo bhaktā bhagavati
vāsudeve'malāśayāḥ*

kṛta-ādiṣu – of Satya and the other earlier ages; *prajāḥ* – the inhabitants; *rājan* – O King; *kalau* – in Kali-yuga; *icchanti* – they want; *sambhavam* – birth; *kalau* – in Kali; *khalu* – certainly; *bhaviṣyanti* – there will be; *nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇāḥ* – devotees who dedicate their lives to the service of Lord Nārāyaṇa; *kvacit kvacit* – here and there; *mahā-rāja* – O great monarch; *draviḍeṣu* – in the provinces of South India; *ca* – but; *bhūriśaḥ* – especially plentifully; *tāmraparṇī* – named Tāmraparṇī; *nadī* – the river; *yatra* – where; *kṛtamālā* – Kṛtamālā; *payasvinī* – Payasvinī; *kāverī* – Kāverī; *ca* – and; *mahā-puṇyā* – extremely pious; *pratīcī* – named Pratīcī; *ca* – and; *mahā-nadī* – the Mahānadī; *ye* – those who; *pibanti* – drink; *jalam* – the water; *tāsām* – of these; *manujāḥ* – humans; *manuja-īśvara* – O lord of men (Nimi); *prāyaḥ* – for the most part; *bhaktāḥ* – devotees; *bhagavati* – of the Personality of Godhead; *vāsudeve* – Lord Vāsudeva; *amala-āśayāḥ* – having spotless hearts.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, the inhabitants of Satya-yuga and other ages eagerly desire to take birth in this Age of Kali, since in this age there will be many devotees of the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa. These devotees will appear in various places but will be especially numerous in South India. O master of men, in the Age of Kali those persons who drink the waters of the holy rivers of Draviḍa-deśa, such as the Tāmraparṇī, Kṛtamālā, Payasvinī, the extremely pious Kāverī and the Pratīcī Mahānadī, will almost all be purehearted devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva.

PURPORT

The *Vedas* contain information of past, present and future living conditions throughout the universe. This is not very wonderful. For example, although at present time in India we are experiencing spring weather, we know that in the future the torrid summer will come, followed by the rainy season, autumn and eventually winter and a new spring. Similarly, we know that these seasons have occurred repeatedly in the past. Thus, just as ordinary human beings can understand the past, present and future seasons of the earth, the liberated followers of Vedic culture can easily understand the past, present and future conditions of the seasonal ages of the earth and other planets. The inhabitants of Satya-yuga are certainly aware of the conditions of Kali-yuga. They know that in Kali-yuga the difficult material situation forces the living entity to take complete shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that the inhabitants of Kali-yuga therefore develop a high degree of love of Godhead. Therefore although the inhabitants of Satya-yuga

are far more sinless, truthful and self-controlled than the people of other ages, they desire to take birth in Kali-yuga in order to taste pure love of Kṛṣṇa.

Without associating with the devotees of the Lord no one can become an advanced devotee of the Lord. Therefore, since in Kali-yuga other Vedic processes collapse due to the unfavorable condition, and since the only authorized Vedic process is the devotional chanting of the Lord's holy name, which is available to everyone, there will undoubtedly be innumerable Vaiṣṇavas, or devotees of the Lord, in this age. Birth in this age is very favorable for one who is eager to associate with the devotees. In fact, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is establishing authorized Vaiṣṇava temples throughout the world so that in innumerable areas one may avail himself of association with pure Vaiṣṇavas.

Association with the devotees of the Lord is far more valuable than any amount of association with persons who are merely self-controlled, sinless or expert in Vedic scholarship. Therefore it is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.14.5):

*muktānām api siddhānām
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ
su-durlabhaḥ praśāntātmā
koṭiṣv api mahā-mune*

“O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa. Such devotees, who are fully peaceful, are extremely rare.” Similarly, it is stated in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.54):

*‘sādhu-saṅga’, ‘sādhu-saṅga’ – sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*

“The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.”

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī the words *kvacit kvacit* in this verse indicate that in Kali-yuga Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya will appear in Gauḍa-deśa, in the district of Nadia. And from this pivotal point, He will gradually expand the flood of love of Godhead to cover the entire earth. Many exalted devotees such as Śrī Advaitācārya also take birth in Gauḍa-deśa.

The process of chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, is not limited to Kali-yuga. In the *Viṣṇu-dharma*, in relation to the story of the fallen son of a *kṣatriya*, it is stated:

*na deśa-niyamas tatra
na kāla-niyamas tathā
nocchiṣṭādaḥ niṣedhaś ca
śrī-harer nāmni lubdhakaḥ*

“There is no restriction of place or time, nor any injunction forbidding the accepting of remnants of foods, etc., when one has become greedy to chant the name of Śrī Hari.” Similarly, it is stated in the *Skanda Purāṇa*, the *Viṣṇu-dharma* and the *Vaiśākha-māhātmya* section of the *Padma Purāṇa*,

cakrāyudhasya nāmāni sadā sarvatra kīrtayet: “The names of the Supreme Lord who has the disc as His weapon should be glorified always and everywhere.” Similarly, the *Skanda Purāṇa* states:

*na deśa-kālāvasthātma-
śuddhy-ādikam apekṣate
kintu svatantram evaitaṁ
nāma kāmīta-kāma-dam*

“The name of the Lord need not be chanted with regard to place, time, circumstantial conditions, preliminary self-purification or any other factors. Rather, it is completely independent of all other processes and rewards all the desires of those who eagerly chant it.” Similarly, it is stated in the *Viṣṇu-dharma*:

*kalau kṛta-yugaṁ tasya
kalis tasya kṛte yuge
yasya cetasi govindo
hṛdaye yasya nācyutaḥ*

“For one who has Lord Govinda in his heart, Satya-yuga becomes manifest in the midst of Kali, and conversely even Satya-yuga becomes Kali-yuga for one who does not have the infallible Lord in his heart.” The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is potent everywhere, at all times and in all circumstances; therefore one should always chant the holy names of the Lord, either in Kali-yuga, Satya-yuga, in heaven, in hell or in Vaikuṅṭha. Kṛṣṇa’s holy name is eternally nondifferent from Him, and Kṛṣṇa is eternally the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, it is not that the holy name is powerful in this age only because other processes are not effective.

It is also stated in the *Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa* that chanting the holy names of the Lord is far more potent than simply trying to remember the Lord through meditation. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.1.11), Śukadeva Gosvāmī has stated:

*etan nirvidyamānānām
icchatām akuto-bhayam
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītaṁ
harer nāmānukīrtanam*

“O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.” In his commentary on this verse in the *Bhāgavatam*, Śrīla Prabhupāda has written: “According to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, this way of attaining success [chanting the holy name] is an established fact, concluded not only by him, but also by all other previous *ācāryas*. Therefore there is no need of further evidence.” The reader may consult Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purport to this verse for a detailed explanation of the chanting of the holy name of the Lord and the offenses to be avoided in such chanting.

In the *Vaiṣṇava-cintāmaṇi* there is the following statement:

*agha-cchit smaraṇam viṣṇor
bahv-āyāsenā sādhyate
oṣṭha-spandana-mātreṇa
kīrtanam tu tato varam*

“Although capable of destroying all sins, the remembrance of Lord Viṣṇu is achieved only with extraordinary effort. On the other hand, one may perform *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* simply by moving one’s lips, and thus this process is superior.” Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has also quoted the following verse:

*yena janma-śataiḥ pūrvam
vāsudevaḥ samārcitaḥ
tan-mukhe hari-nāmāni
sadā tiṣṭhanti bhārata*

“O descendant of Bharata, the holy names of Lord Viṣṇu are always vibrating in the mouth of one who has previously worshiped Vāsudeva perfectly for hundreds of lifetimes.” The same idea is conveyed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Śrīmatī Devahūti in her statement to her son, Kapila:

*aho bata śva-paco'to garīyān
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā
brahmānūcur nāma grṇanti ye te*

“Oh, how glorious are they whose tongues are chanting Your holy name! Even if born in the families of dog-eaters, such persons are worshipable. Persons who chant the holy name of Your Lordship must have executed all kinds of austerities and fire sacrifices and achieved all the good manners of the Āryans. To be chanting the holy name of Your Lordship, they must have bathed at holy places of pilgrimage, studied the *Vedas* and fulfilled everything required.” (*Bhāg.* 3.33.7)

Therefore, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has concluded that it is possible to perform *kīrtana* equally in all ages. In Kali-yuga, however, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by His causeless mercy, personally induces the living entities to take the holy name. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has thus quoted the Lord as follows:

*enechi auṣadhi māyā nāśibāra lāgi'
hari-nāma mahā-mantra lao tumi māgi'*

“O conditioned souls who are foolishly sleeping on the lap of the witch Māyā, I have brought an excellent medicine to cure the disease of your illusion. This medicine is called *hari-nāma*. It is My holy name, and by taking this medicine you will get all perfection in life. Therefore, I sincerely request you to please take this medicine that I have personally brought for you.”

In verse 32 of this chapter it was stated, *yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ*. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī the words *saṅkīrtana-prāyaiḥ*, which mean “mainly by the process of *saṅkīrtana*,” indicate that although other processes such as Deity worship may be performed to some extent in Kali-yuga, such processes, in order to be successful, must be favorably connected with the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. One who is

performing worship of the Kṛṣṇa Deity should know that the most essential part of such Deity worship is constant chanting of the holy names of the Lord. On the other hand, one who has perfectly chanted the holy name of the Lord need not depend on other processes, as expressed in the following famous *mantra*:

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

“In this Age of Kali there is no alternative, there is no alternative, there is no alternative for spiritual progress other than the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord.” (*Bṛhan-nārādīya Purāṇa* 38.126) As proved by all of these evidences, the statement in the *Bhāgavatam* (*kalim sabhājayanty āryāḥ*) that spiritually advanced persons worship the Age of Kali due to the facilities offered in this age by the Lord is not at all contradictory.

At the end of verse 40 in this chapter it is stated, *prāyo bhaktā bhagavati vāsudeve 'malāśayāḥ*: in general those who are able to regularly drink the waters of the holy rivers of South India will be pure-hearted devotees of Lord Vāsudeva. The word *prāyaḥ*, or “in general,” indicates that those who are offensive to the Lord’s devotees, although claiming themselves to be devotees, are not included within the list of *amalāśayāḥ*, or purehearted souls. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that one should not be bewildered by seeing the apparently poverty-stricken condition of the inhabitants of South India. Even nowadays the inhabitants of the places mentioned in this verse generally spend their days with meager eating and clothing and live as great renounced devotees of the Supreme Lord. In other words, clothes do not make the man. To live as a polished animal, dressing oneself luxuriously and gratifying the tongue with rich foodstuffs, is not the actual symptom of an advanced transcendentalist. Although the residents of South India are generally Śrī Vaiṣṇavas, or devotees in the Lakṣmī *sampradāya*, they are recognized as devotees of the Lord by the followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, their austere living conditions should be taken as a good qualification, not a disqualification.

TEXT 5.41

*devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam*

deva – of the demigods; *ṛṣi* – of the sages; *bhūta* – of ordinary living entities; *āpta* – of friends and relatives; *nṛṇām* – of ordinary men; *pitṛṇām* – of the forefathers; *na* – not; *kiṅkaraḥ* – the servant; *na* – nor; *ayam* – this one; *ṛṇī* – debtor; *ca* – also; *rājan* – O King; *sarva-ātmanā* – with his whole being; *yaḥ* – a person who; *śaraṇam* – shelter; *śaraṇyam* – the Supreme Personality of

Godhead, who affords shelter to all; *gataḥ* – approached; *mukundam* – Mukunda; *parihṛtya* – giving up; *kartam* – duties.

TRANSLATION

O King, one who has given up all material duties and has taken full shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, who offers shelter to all, is not indebted to the demigods, great sages, ordinary living beings, relatives, friends, mankind or even one's forefathers who have passed away. Since all such classes of living entities are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, one who has surrendered to the Lord's service has no need to serve such persons separately.

PURPORT

One who has not fully surrendered to the devotional service of the Lord undoubtedly has many material duties to perform. Every ordinary conditioned soul is the recipient of innumerable benefits given by the demigods, who provide sun and moonshine, rain, wind, food and, ultimately, one's own material body. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is stated, *stena eva saḥ*: one who does not reciprocate with the demigods by offering them sacrifice is *stena*, or a thief. Similarly, other living entities such as cows are providing us with innumerable delicious and nutritious foodstuffs. When we wake up in the morning our mind is refreshed by the sweet singing of birds, and on a hot day we enjoy the cool shade and breeze of the forest trees. We are accepting service from innumerable living entities, and we are obligated to repay them. *Āpta* means one's own family members, to whom one is certainly obligated according to normal morality, and *nṛṇām* means human society. Until one becomes a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is certainly a product of his society. We receive mundane education, culture, tradition and protection from the society in which we live, and thus we owe a great debt to society. Of course, our debt to society is not simply to the present order but to all of our forefathers and ancestors who carefully preserved moral and social customs so that we, their descendants, could live peacefully. Therefore the word *pitṛṇām*, or "forefathers," indicates our debt to previous generations.

In fact, the members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness society are sometimes criticized by materialistic persons for giving too much attention to Kṛṣṇa rather than working to fulfill all of the above-mentioned obligations. In reply to this, the *Bhāgavatam* (4.31.14) states, *yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena tṛpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopaśākhāḥ*. If one waters the root of a tree, automatically all of the branches, twigs, leaves, etc., are also nourished. There is no need for, nor any effectiveness in, separately pouring water on the branches, twigs and leaves of a tree. The water has to be placed on the root. Similarly, *prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇām*: food must be placed in the stomach, from where it is automatically distributed to all of the limbs of the body. It is foolish to try to nourish the whole body by rubbing food separately on all the bodily limbs. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the source of all existence. Everything is emanating from Kṛṣṇa,

everything is maintained by Kṛṣṇa, and at the end, everything will merge to rest in Kṛṣṇa. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the supreme benefactor, friend, protector and well-wisher of every living entity, and if He is satisfied, then automatically the whole world will become satisfied, just as all of the bodily limbs are strengthened and satisfied when food is duly remitted to the stomach.

The example can be given that a man who is working as the personal secretary to a great king has no further obligation to petty minor kings. Undoubtedly an ordinary person has many obligations within this material world. But according to *Bhagavad-gītā*, *mayaiva vihitān hi tān*: it is actually the Supreme Lord who is giving all benedictions. For example, one receives one's body by the mercy of one's parents. However, sometimes we find that a particular man or woman may become impotent at a given moment. Sometimes a deformed child is born, and sometimes a child is born dead. Often the sexual act fails to produce pregnancy at all. So although all parents desire a beautiful, highly qualified child, this is often not the case. Thus it can be understood that ultimately it is by the mercy of the Supreme Lord that a man and woman are able to produce a child by the sexual act. It is by the Lord's mercy that the man's seminal injection is potent and the woman's ovum is fertile. Similarly, it is only by the mercy of the Lord that the child is born in a healthy condition and reaches physical maturity to pursue his own life. If at any stage in the evolution of a human being the Lord's mercy is withdrawn, sudden death or crippling disease occurs.

The demigods are also not independent. The words *parihṛtya kartam*, "giving up other duties," indicate that one should give up any concept that the demigods are separate from Kṛṣṇa. It is clearly stated in Vedic literature that the demigods are different limbs of the universal body of the Supreme Lord. Further, it is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* that the Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart and that He only is giving intelligence and memory. Thus, our forefathers who carefully preserved cultural traditions were acting with intelligence provided by the Supreme Lord. They certainly were not acting with their own independent intelligence. No one can be intelligent without a brain, and it is only by Kṛṣṇa's mercy that we receive a human brain.

Therefore, if we carefully analyze all of our multifarious obligations toward different classes of living entities, we shall find that in each and every case it is ultimately by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead that we have received a particular benediction in life. So although an ordinary person must methodically fulfill all of his various obligations by executing different types of sacrifices and charitable activities for the satisfaction of those who have benefited him, one who is directly serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, at once fulfills all such obligations because all benedictions ultimately have come from the Lord through the agency of family, forefathers, demigods, etc.

The example may be given that sometimes a state government may distribute benefits originally provided by the federal government. So one

who becomes the personal secretary or minister to the chief executive of the federal government has no further obligation to the less important representatives of the state government. Therefore, it is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.20.9):

*tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta
na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā
śraddhā yāvan na jāyate*

“As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by hearing and chanting about the Supreme Lord, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions.” The conclusion is that one who has fully surrendered to the devotional service of the Supreme Lord is a first-class human being. People in general are only eager to receive benedictions from demigods, family members and society because such benedictions are conducive to material sense gratification. Less intelligent persons consider such material progress to be the only goal of life and thus cannot appreciate the exalted position of pure devotional service to the Lord. *Bhakti-yoga*, or pure devotional service, is meant to directly please the senses of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Envious materialistic persons propose various arguments to deny that the Supreme Lord even has transcendental senses. The devotees, however, do not waste time doubting the inconceivable beauty, strength, wealth and geniality of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but directly please the Lord’s senses through loving service and thus receive the supreme benediction of going back home, back to Godhead. The devotees return to the Lord’s abode, where life is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge. No demigod, family member or forefather can give one an eternal life of bliss and knowledge. However, if one foolishly neglects the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord and instead accepts the temporary material body to be everything, then one must certainly perform elaborate sacrifices, austerities and charity and fulfill all of the obligations mentioned above. Otherwise, one becomes completely sinful and condemned, even from the material point of view.

TEXT 5.42

*sva-pāda-mūlam bhajataḥ priyasya
tyaktānya-bhāvasya hariḥ pareśaḥ
vikarma yac cotpatitaṁ kathañcid
dhunoti sarvaṁ hṛdi sanniviṣṭaḥ*

sva-pāda-mūlam – the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, the shelter of the devotees; *bhajataḥ* – who is engaged in worshiping; *priyasya* – who is very dear to Kṛṣṇa; *tyakta* – given up; *anya* – for others; *bhāvasya* – of one whose disposition or inclination; *hariḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *para-īśaḥ* – the Supreme Lord; *vikarma* – sinful activities; *yac* – whatever; *ca* – and;

utpatitam – occurred; *kathañcit* – somehow; *dhunoti* – removes; *sarvam* – all; *hṛdi* – in the heart; *sanniviṣṭaḥ* – entered.

TRANSLATION

One who has thus given up all other engagements and has taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is very dear to the Lord. Indeed, if such a surrendered soul accidentally commits some sinful activity, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated within everyone’s heart, immediately takes away the reaction to such sin.

PURPORT

In the previous verse it was clearly described that a fully surrendered devotee of the Supreme Lord has no need to perform ordinary, worldly duties. Now in this verse it is revealed that devotional service is so pure and potent that a surrendered devotee of the Lord has no need to perform any other purificatory process. As described in the Sixth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, a surrendered devotee has no need to perform *prāyaścitta*, or atonement for an accidental falldown into sinful activity. Since devotional service is itself the most purifying process, a sincere devotee who has accidentally stumbled on the path should immediately resume his pure devotional service at the lotus feet of the Lord. And thus the Lord will protect him, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.30):

*api cet su-durācāro
bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ
samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

The word *tyaktānya-bhāvasya* in this verse is very significant. As stated in the previous verse, a pure devotee realizes clearly that all living entities, including Brahmā and Śiva, are part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus have no separate or independent existence. Realizing that everything and everyone is part and parcel of the Lord, a devotee automatically is not inclined to commit sinful activities by violating the order of God. However, due to the powerful influence of material nature, even a sincere devotee may be temporarily overwhelmed by illusion and deviate from the rigid path of pure devotional service. In such a case, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, acting within the heart, removes such sinful activities. Even Yamarāja, the lord of death, has no power to punish a surrendered devotee who has accidentally committed sinful activities. As stated here, Kṛṣṇa is *pareśa*, or the Supreme Lord, and all secondary lords such as the demigods cannot threaten the Lord’s personal devotees. In his youth Ajāmila had been a pious *brāhmaṇa* engaged in the service of the Lord. Then, by bad association with a prostitute, he became practically the most degraded man in the world. At the end of his life, Yamarāja sent his Yamadūtas to drag away the soul of the sinful Ajāmila, but the Personality of Godhead immediately sent His personal associates to save Ajāmila and demonstrate to Yamarāja that no secondary personality can disturb the personal devotees

of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*,
kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati.

The argument may be raised that the *smṛti-śāstra* states, *śruti-smṛti mamaivājñe*: the Vedic scriptures are the direct orders of the Personality of Godhead. Therefore, one may ask, how can the Lord tolerate that His orders be occasionally neglected, even by His devotees? To answer this possible objection, the word *priyasya* is used in this verse. The devotees of the Lord are very dear to the Lord. Although the beloved child may accidentally commit an abominable activity, the loving father forgives the child, taking into consideration the actual good intentions of the child. Thus, although the devotee of the Lord does not try to exploit the Lord's mercy by requesting the Lord to free him from any future suffering, the Lord, by His own initiative, frees the devotee from the reactions to accidental falldowns.

This causeless mercy of the Lord upon His devotee is His *paramaiśvaram*, or supreme opulence. Gradually the faithful devotee becomes free, even from accidental falldown, because simply by remembering the lotus feet of the Lord, what to speak of by actively rendering service to Him, his heart is purified. Although the surrendered devotees of the Personality of Godhead may sometimes appear to be affected by mundane attitudes, they are inevitably protected by the merciful Lord and are never actually defeated in life.

TEXT 5.43

śrī-nārada uvāca
dharmān bhāgavatān ittham
śrutvātha mithileśvaraḥ
jāyanteyān munīn prītaḥ
sopādhyāyo hy apūjayat

śrī-nāradaḥ uvāca – Nārada Muni said; *dharmān bhāgavatān* – the science of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ittham* – in this manner; *śrutvā* – having heard; *atha* – then; *mithilā-īśvaraḥ* – the master of the kingdom of Mithilā, King Nimi; *jāyanteyān* – to the sons of Jayantī; *munīn* – sages; *prītaḥ* – being satisfied; *sa-upādhyāyaḥ* – along with the priests; *hi* – indeed; *apūjayat* – he offered worship.

TRANSLATION

Nārada Muni said: Having thus heard the science of devotional service, Nimi, the King of Mithilā, felt extremely satisfied and, along with the sacrificial priests, offered respectful worship to the sagacious sons of Jayantī.

PURPORT

The word *jāyanteyān* indicates the nine Yogendras, who were born from the womb of Jayantī, the wife of Ṛṣabhadeva.

TEXT 5.44

*tato'ntardadhire siddhāḥ
sarva-lokasya paśyataḥ
rājā dharmān upātiṣṭhann
avāpa paramām gatim*

tataḥ – then; *antardadhire* – they disappeared; *siddhāḥ* – the perfect sages headed by Kavi; *sarva-lokasya* – all those present; *paśyataḥ* – as they were watching; *rājā* – the King; *dharmān* – these principles of spiritual life; *upātiṣṭhan* – faithfully following; *avāpa* – he achieved; *paramām* – the supreme; *gatim* – destination.

TRANSLATION

The perfect sages then disappeared before the eyes of everyone present. King Nimi faithfully practiced the principles of spiritual life he had learned from them, and thus he achieved the supreme goal of life.

TEXT 5.45

*tvam apy etān mahā-bhāga
dharmān bhāgavatān śrutān
āsthitaḥ śraddhayā yukto
niḥsaṅgo yāsyase param*

tvam – you (Vasudeva); *api* – also; *etān* – these; *mahā-bhāga* – O most fortunate one; *dharmān* – principles; *bhāgavatān* – of devotional service; *śrutān* – which you have heard; *āsthitaḥ* – situated in; *śraddhayā* – with faith; *yuktaḥ* – endowed; *niḥsaṅgaḥ* – free from material association; *yāsyase* – you will go; *param* – to the Supreme.

TRANSLATION

O greatly fortunate Vasudeva, simply apply with faith these principles of devotional service which you have heard, and thus, being free from material association, you will attain the Supreme.

PURPORT

Nārada Muni related to Kṛṣṇa's father, Vasudeva, the story of the enlightenment of King Nimi. Now Nārada reveals that Vasudeva himself will also achieve the supreme perfection of life by practicing the same principles spoken long ago by the nine Yogendras. Actually, Vasudeva was already a personal associate of the Supreme Lord, but due to his natural humility as a great devotee, he was determined to perfect his love of Kṛṣṇa. Thus we can observe the exalted status of the parents of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Ordinary persons feel that the Supreme Lord is always to be worshiped as the supreme father who supplies everything for the living entities. Such an attitude is not the perfection of love of Godhead, because when a son is young he is incapable of giving much service to his mother and father. When the child is very young, it is rather the parents who are constantly serving the child. So when the devotee takes the role of mother or father of Kṛṣṇa, there is unlimited opportunity for rendering loving service to the Lord, whom

the devotee ecstatically accepts as his son. It was Vasudeva's good fortune that Nārada Muni personally revealed to him the wonderful teachings given by the *nava-yogendras* long, long ago to the saintly King Nimi.

TEXT 5.46

*yuvayoḥ khalu dampatyor
yaśasā pūritam jagat
putratām agamad yad vām
bhagavān īśvaro hariḥ*

yuvayoḥ - of the two of you; *khalu* - indeed; *dam-patyoḥ* - of the husband and wife; *yaśasā* - by the glories; *pūritam* - has become full; *jagat* - the earth; *putratām* - the state of being the son; *agamat* - assumed; *yad* - because; *vām* - your; *bhagavān* - the Personality of Godhead; *īśvaraḥ* - the Supreme Lord; *hariḥ* - Hari.

TRANSLATION

Indeed, the whole world has become filled with the glories of you and your good wife because the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, has taken the position of your son.

PURPORT

In this verse Nārada Muni hints at the glories of Vasudeva and Devakī, the parents of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, by the words *yaśasā pūritam jagat*, "the whole world is now filled with your glories." In other words, although Vasudeva inquired from Nārada about spiritual advancement, Nārada here states, "You are already completely glorious due to your extraordinary devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

TEXT 5.47

*darśanāliṅganālāpaiḥ
śayanāsana-bhojanaiḥ
ātmā vām pāvitaḥ kṛṣṇe
putra-sneham prakurvatoḥ*

darśana - by seeing; *āliṅgana* - embracing; *ālāpaiḥ* - and conversing; *śayana* - in taking rest; *āsana* - sitting; *bhojanaiḥ* - and eating; *ātmā* - the hearts; *vām* - of you two; *pāvitaḥ* - have become purified; *kṛṣṇe* - for Lord Kṛṣṇa; *putra-sneham* - the affection toward a son; *prakurvatoḥ* - who were manifesting.

TRANSLATION

My dear Vasudeva, you and your good wife Devakī have manifested great transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa, accepting Him as your son. Indeed, you are always seeing the Lord, embracing Him, speaking with Him, resting with Him, sitting together with Him and taking your meals with Him. By such affectionate and intimate association with the Lord, undoubtedly both of you have completely purified your hearts. In other words, you are already perfect.

PURPORT

The words *ātmā vām pāvitaḥ* in this verse are very significant. Ordinary conditioned souls are required to purify their existence by practicing the regulative principles of *bhakti-yoga* and learning how to offer all of their activities in the devotional service of the Lord. Such a regulative, gradual process, however, cannot be applied to those exalted souls who are personally attending the Lord as His parents, boyfriends, girlfriends, advisors, sons, etc. Due to Vasudeva and Devakī's intense love for Kṛṣṇa as their son, they had already achieved the highest perfectional stage of life. Although in the previous verse Śrī Nārada Muni informed Vasudeva that he and his wife had become glorious by Kṛṣṇa's taking birth as their son, Vasudeva might have argued that other personal associates of the Lord, such as Jaya and Vijaya, had fallen down due to offending the *brāhmaṇa* class. Therefore, in the present verse Nārada has used the word *pāvitaḥ*: "You are completely purified, and therefore you are completely free from the slightest trace of discrepancy in your devotional service, due to your intense love for Kṛṣṇa."

It is understood from the commentary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura that Śrī Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa's pastime father, is actually an eternally liberated *nitya-siddha* associate of the Personality of Godhead. Vasudeva has a spiritual body, just as Kṛṣṇa does, and he is always merged in the overwhelming ecstatic desire to serve Kṛṣṇa, his beautiful son. However, Nārada could understand that due to extreme humility, Vasudeva considered himself an ordinary human being and was feeling very anxious to receive transcendental instructions on the devotional service of the Lord. Accepting the ecstatic humility of Vasudeva, and to relieve his anxiety, Śrī Nārada Muni instructed him in the science of *bhakti-yoga* as one might instruct an ordinary human being. However, at the same time Nārada has revealed that actually Śrī Vasudeva and Devakī are already completely glorious by their unprecedented fortune of having Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma as their sons. Therefore, Nārada is telling Vasudeva, "My dear Vasudeva, do not in any way be discouraged or doubtful about your position. Undoubtedly you are immediately going back home, back to Godhead. And actually you and your good wife are the most fortunate persons."

In conclusion, everyone should become fortunate by fully developing his dormant love for Kṛṣṇa. Many terrible demons who opposed Kṛṣṇa eventually achieved a happy state of life by their association with Kṛṣṇa. Therefore there is no doubt about the supreme bliss achieved by the loving devotees of the Lord who day and night can only think of pleasing Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 5.48

*vaireṇa yaṁ nṛpatayaḥ śiśupāla-pauṇḍra-
śālvādayo gati-vilāsa-vilokanādyaiḥ
dhyāyanta ākṛta-dhiyaḥ śayanāsanādau
tat-sāmyam āpur anurakta-dhiyām punaḥ kim*

vaireṇa – with envy; *yam* – whom (Lord Kṛṣṇa); *nṛ-patayaḥ* – kings; *śiśupāla-pauṇḍra-śālva-ādayaḥ* – like Śiśupāla, Pauṇḍraka, Śālva, etc.; *gati* – upon His movements; *vilāsa* – sporting; *vilokana* – glances; *ādyaiḥ* – and so forth; *dhyāyantaḥ* – meditating; *ākṛta* – thus fixed; *dhiyaḥ* – their minds; *śayana* – in the activities of lying down; *āsana-ādau* – sitting, and so on; *tat-sāmyam* – a position on the same level with Him (that is, a position in the eternal, spiritual world); *āpuḥ* – they achieved; *anurakta-dhiyām* – for those whose minds are naturally attached in a favorable way; *punaḥ kim* – what to speak of in comparison.

TRANSLATION

Inimical kings like Śiśupāla, Pauṇḍraka and Śālva were always thinking about Lord Kṛṣṇa. Even while they were lying down, sitting or engaging in other activities, they enviously meditated upon the bodily movements of the Lord, His sporting pastimes, His loving glances upon His devotees, and other attractive features displayed by the Lord. Being thus always absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, they achieved spiritual liberation in the Lord’s own abode. What then can be said of the benedictions offered to those who constantly fix their minds on Lord Kṛṣṇa in a favorable, loving mood?

PURPORT

On the eve of the disappearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa from this world, Vasudeva became filled with lamentation thinking that he had not properly utilized the opportunity of the Lord’s personal presence to become perfectly Kṛṣṇa conscious. However, Nārada Muni assured Śrī Vasudeva that the glories of Vasudeva and his good wife Devakī were chanted throughout the universe because even the demigods worshiped the exalted status of the Lord’s own parents. Vasudeva was not only concerned about his own spiritual position, but he also lamented for the Yadu dynasty, which had left the world in an apparently inauspicious way, being cursed by great *brāhmaṇas* such as Nārada and dying in a fratricidal war. Although the members of the Yadu dynasty were personal associates of the Lord, their disappearance from the earth was apparently inauspicious, and therefore Vasudeva was concerned about their eventual destination. So Nārada here assures Vasudeva that even the demons who opposed Kṛṣṇa, such as Śiśupāla, Pauṇḍraka and Śālva, achieved promotion to the Lord’s own abode because of their constant absorption in thinking of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore what to speak of the exalted members of the Yadu dynasty who actually loved Kṛṣṇa more than anything (*anurakta-dhiyām punaḥ kim*)? Similarly, it is stated in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*:

*ajñāninaḥ sura-varaṁ samadhikṣipanto
yaṁ pāpino’pi śiśupāla-suyodhanādyāḥ
muktim gatāḥ smaraṇa-mātra-vidhūta-pāpāḥ
kaḥ saṁśayaḥ parama-bhaktimatām janānām*

“Even foolish sinners like Śiśupāla and Duryodhana who showered abuse upon the Lord were cleansed of all sins simply by remembering Lord Kṛṣṇa. Somehow or other their minds were absorbed in the Lord, and thus they

attained liberation. What doubt then is there about the destination of those who are overwhelmed with devotional feelings for the Lord?"

Vasudeva was also feeling anxiety because on the one hand he was aware that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but at the same time he treated the Lord as his beloved son. In the relationship between the father and son, sometimes the father must chastise the son and restrict him in various ways. In this way Vasudeva was feeling that undoubtedly he had offended the Lord in his attempt to train Lord Kṛṣṇa as his son. However, Lord Kṛṣṇa is actually pleased when a pure devotee becomes absorbed in parental love for Him and thus devotedly tries to care for Him just as loving parents care for a small child. Kṛṣṇa reciprocates the intense devotional feelings of such devotees by actually appearing before them as a young boy and acting just like their son.

As mentioned in this verse, the demons actually chastised Kṛṣṇa with feelings of enmity. Nevertheless, such demons attained liberation due to their absorption in Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, what to speak of the destination of Vasudeva, who chastised Kṛṣṇa due to his overwhelming parental love for Him? The conclusion is that the devotees of the Lord should never consider Vasudeva and Devakī to be ordinary, conditioned souls. Their relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa is completely on the transcendental platform of *vātsalya-rasa*, or parental love for the Personality of Godhead. It has nothing to do with the parental love of the material world, which is based on a mood of sense gratification, since the parents see their children as objects of material enjoyment.

TEXT 5.49

*māpatya-buddhim akṛthāḥ
kṛṣṇe sarvātmanīśvare
māyā-manuṣya-bhāvena
gūḍhaiśvare pare'vyaye*

mā – do not; *apatya-buddhim* – the idea of being your son; *akṛthāḥ* – impose; *kṛṣṇe* – on Kṛṣṇa; *sarva-ātmani* – the Supreme Soul of all; *īśvare* – the Personality of Godhead; *māyā* – by His power of illusion; *manuṣya-bhāvena* – appearing as if an ordinary person; *gūḍha-aiśvare* – hiding His opulence; *pare* – the Supreme; *avyaye* – infallible.

TRANSLATION

Do not think of Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary child, because He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, inexhaustible and the Soul of all beings. The Lord has concealed His inconceivable opulences and is thus outwardly appearing to be an ordinary human being.

PURPORT

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original source of all plenary incarnations of the Absolute Truth. *Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*. His unlimited transcendental opulences are inexhaustible, and thus He very easily brings the entire creation under His personal control. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the eternal well-wisher of

every living entity, so there was no need for Vasudeva to be anxious about his future destination, nor that of the other personal associates of Kṛṣṇa, such as the members of the Yadu dynasty. In verse 46 of this chapter, Nārada Muni told Vasudeva, *putratām agamad yad vām bhagavān īśvaro hariḥ*: “You and your good wife are now glorified throughout the universe because Lord Kṛṣṇa has personally become your son.” In this way Nārada is encouraging Vasudeva to continue to love Kṛṣṇa as his most beloved son, for such ecstatic devotional feelings are never to be given up. But at the same time, Nārada is removing Vasudeva’s doubts about the future by assuring him, “Due to your love for Kṛṣṇa you may think that He is an ordinary human being. You are appearing like a human being, and Lord Kṛṣṇa is simply reciprocating with you. In order to encourage you to love Him as your son, He is placing Himself under your control. And thus, His inconceivable power and opulences are being concealed from you. Don’t assume, however, that there is actually a dangerous situation because of the events of this material world. Although Kṛṣṇa appears to be under your control, He is eternally the supreme controller. Therefore, do not consider Him to be a human being. He is always the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

The word *māyā* in this verse indicates that Kṛṣṇa’s *manuṣya*, or humanlike, activities are actually misleading to the ordinary man because Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Māyā* also means “transcendental potencies.” As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā, sambhavāmy ātma-māyayā*: the Lord descends in His own transcendental form filled with transcendental potencies. And thus the words *māyā-manuṣya-bhāvena* here also indicate Kṛṣṇa’s original transcendental form, which resembles the humanlike forms experienced in this world. *Māyā* also indicates “mercy,” or “compassion,” according to the Sanskrit dictionary, and thus the Lord’s incarnation is understood to be His causeless mercy upon the conditioned souls. The Lord’s descent is also His causeless mercy upon the liberated souls, who take immense pleasure in joining the Lord in His pastimes and in chanting and hearing about such exalted spiritual activities (*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*). In order to reciprocate the love of Vasudeva for Him, Kṛṣṇa mostly concealed His unlimited opulences. In this way the devotee is fully encouraged in his particular loving relationship with the Lord. However, when Vasudeva was filled with anxiety due to the dangerous situation created by the *brāhmaṇa*’s curse, Nārada immediately reminded him that such anxiety was unnecessary, since all these events were under the direct control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, the Vaiṣṇava *paramahāṁsas* who take the position of the Lord’s parents remain under the shelter of the Lord at all times and never deviate from the loving devotional service of the Lord. They remain fixed in transcendence in all circumstances, unlike ordinary parents of the material world, who are constantly becoming bewildered by illusion due to the bodily concept of life.

TEXT 5.50

*bhū-bhārāsura-rājanya-
hantave guptaye satām
avatīrṇasya nirvṛtyai
yaśo loke vitanyate*

bhū-bhāra – who were the burden of the earth; *asura* – demons; *rājanya* – members of the kingly order; *hantave* – in order to kill; *guptaye* – for the protection; *satām* – of the saintly devotees; *avatīrṇasya* – of Him who has descended; *nirvṛtyai* – also for awarding liberation; *yaśaḥ* – the fame; *loke* – throughout the world; *vitanyate* – has become spread.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead descended to kill the demonic kings who were the burden of the earth and to protect the saintly devotees. However, both the demons and the devotees are awarded liberation by the Lord’s mercy. Thus, His transcendental fame has spread throughout the universe.

PURPORT

A doubt may arise as to how the Supreme Personality of Godhead descends to this material world. And since He is the omnipotent creator of millions of universes, why do the devotees glorify as wonderful the Lord’s activities such as His killing a witch named Pūtanā by sucking out her life through her breast? Although such activities are certainly beyond the scope of ordinary human beings, why should they be considered wonderful when executed by the omnipotent Personality of Godhead? The answer is given in this verse by the word *nirvṛtyai*. The Lord killed the demons not because He was envious of them, but in order to give them spiritual liberation. Thus the causeless mercy of the Personality of Godhead in liberating both the devotees and the demons by His inconceivable pastimes clearly distinguishes the Lord from any other living entity, either man or demigod. It is stated, *mukti-pradātā sarveṣāṃ viṣṇur eva na saṁśayaḥ*: only Viṣṇu can give liberation beyond birth and death. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has pointed out that generally the demons are awarded impersonal liberation in the Brahman effulgence, whereas the devotees are given the superior benediction of love of Godhead in the spiritual planets. Thus, the Lord exhibits His causeless mercy toward all classes of living entities, and His fame is spread throughout the universe. Because Kṛṣṇa is transcendental, His fame is not different from His personal incarnation, so as the Lord’s fame expands, the entire universe is gradually liberated. These are some of the unique characteristics of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 5.51

*śrī-śuka uvāca
etac chrutvā mahā-bhāgo
vasudevo’ti-vismitaḥ
devakī ca mahā-bhāgā
jahatur moham ātmanaḥ*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *etat* – this; *śrutvā* – having heard; *mahā-bhāgaḥ* – the greatly fortunate; *vasudevaḥ* – King Vasudeva; *ati-vismitaḥ* – extremely amazed; *devakī* – mother Devakī; *ca* – and; *mahā-bhāgā* – the greatly fortunate; *jahatuḥ* – they both gave up; *moham* – the confusion; *ātmanaḥ* – their own.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Having heard this narration, the greatly fortunate Vasudeva was completely struck with wonder. Thus he and his most blessed wife Devakī gave up all illusion and anxiety that had entered their hearts.

TEXT 5.52

*itihāsam imam puṇyam
dhārayed yaḥ samāhitaḥ
sa vidhūyeha śamalam
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

itihāsam – historical account; *imam* – this; *puṇyam* – pious; *dhārayet* – meditates upon; *yaḥ* – who; *samāhitaḥ* – with fixed attention; *saḥ* – he; *vidhūya* – cleaning off; *iha* – in this very life; *śamalam* – contamination; *brahma-bhūyāya* – the supreme spiritual perfection; *kalpate* – achieves.

TRANSLATION

Anyone who meditates on this pious historical narration with fixed attention will purify himself of all contamination in this very life and thus achieve the highest spiritual perfection.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Fifth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Nārada Concludes His Teachings to Vasudeva.”

CHAPTER SIX

The Yadu Dynasty Retires to Prabhāsa

This chapter describes how Brahmā and other demigods, after offering prayers to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, requested the Lord to return to His own abode and how Uddhava, anticipating separation from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was very distressed and prayed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa that he might accompany Him on His return to that abode.

Desiring to see Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His humanlike form, which enchants all the worlds, the Gandharvas, Apsarās, Nāgas, Ṛṣis, Pitās, Vidyādhara, Kinnaras and other demigods, all headed by Brahmā, Śiva and Indra, arrived at the city of Dvārakā. Covering the body of Kṛṣṇa with flower garlands from the Nandana gardens of heaven, they praised Him with statements about His transcendental power and qualities.

All living entities, beginning with Brahmā, are subordinate to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa creates the universe by empowering His expansion Mahā-Viṣṇu. Although Kṛṣṇa creates, maintains and destroys this world through His material energy, He remains transcendental to the material energy and perfectly self-satisfied. Even in the midst of His sixteen thousand queens, Lord Kṛṣṇa is undisturbed.

Performers of fruitive sacrifices and *yogīs* desiring mystic power contemplate the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to attain their materialistic objectives. But the most elevated devotees, who desire liberation from the bondage of material work, lovingly contemplate the Lord's lotuslike feet because those feet are the fire that destroys all desires for sense gratification. One cannot actually purify the mind by ordinary worship, penance and other such processes. One can purify the mind contaminated by sense gratification only through mature faith in the mode of goodness, which arises by hearing the glories of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, intelligent persons situated in the *varṇāśrama* system serve the two kinds of holy places: the nectarean rivers of the topics of Kṛṣṇa and the nectarean rivers flowing from the Lord's lotus feet.

By incarnating within the Yadu dynasty, Kṛṣṇa performed the highest welfare work for the entire universe by displaying His transcendental pastimes. Simply by hearing and chanting about these pastimes, pious persons in Kali-yuga can definitely cross over the ocean of material illusion. When the Lord had fulfilled the purpose of His descent and the Yadu dynasty was facing imminent destruction from the *brāhmaṇas'* curse, the Lord desired to wind up His pastimes. When Brahmā prayed to the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa for the deliverance of himself and all the other demigods, Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed in His reply that after the destruction of the Yadu dynasty He would return to His own abode.

Observing terrible disturbances indicating the imminent destruction of the world, Lord Kṛṣṇa called together the wise members of the Yadu dynasty and reminded them of the *brāhmaṇas'* curse. The Lord convinced them to go to Prabhāsa-tīrtha, where they could save themselves by the performance of ritual bathing, charity, and so on. The Yadus, in obedience to Kṛṣṇa's desire, prepared to journey to Prabhāsa.

Upon seeing and hearing the Lord's conversation with the Yadu dynasty, Uddhava approached Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a secluded place, offered Him full obeisances and, with folded hands, expressed his inability to tolerate separation from the Lord. He begged Kṛṣṇa to carry him to His own abode. If one tastes the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes with his ears, one loses all hankering for other things. Persons who engage constantly in Kṛṣṇa's service - while eating, sporting, sleeping, sitting, etc. - cannot tolerate separation from Kṛṣṇa. They honor all kinds of remnants from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and thus conquer the Lord's illusory energy. Peaceful members of the renounced order attain Brahmāloka after exhaustive and painful exertion, whereas the devotees of the Lord simply discuss Lord Kṛṣṇa among themselves, chant and remember His various pastimes and instructions, and thus automatically cross beyond the insurmountable material energy.

TEXT 6.1

*śrī-śuka uvāca
atha brahmātmajaiḥ devaiḥ
prajāśair āvṛto'bhyaḡāt
bhavaś ca bhūta-bhavyeśo
yayau bhūta-gaṇair vṛtaḡ*

śrī-śukaḡ uvāca - Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *atha* - then; *brahmā* - Lord Brahmā; *ātma-jaiḡ* - by his sons (headed by Sanaka); *devaiḡ* - by the demigods; *prajā-īśaiḡ* - and by the progenitors of universal population (headed by Marīci); *āvṛtaḡ* - surrounded; *abhyaḡāt* - went (to Dvārakā); *bhavaḡ* - Lord Śiva; *ca* - also; *bhūta* - to all living beings; *bhavya-īśaḡ* - the bestower of auspiciousness; *yayau* - went; *bhūta gaṇaiḡ* - by the hordes of ghostly creatures; *vṛtaḡ* - surrounded.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Brahmā then set off for Dvārakā, accompanied by his own sons as well as by the demigods and the great Prajāpatis. Lord Śiva, the bestower of auspiciousness to all living beings, also went, surrounded by many ghostly creatures.

TEXTS 6.2-4

*indro marudbhir bhagavān
ādityā vasavo'śvinau
ṛbhavo'ṅgirasorudrā
viśve sādhyāś ca devatāḡ
gandharvāpsarasor nāgāḡ
siddha-cāraṇa-guhyakāḡ
ṛṣayaḡ pitaraś caiva
sa-vidyādhara-kinnarāḡ
dvārakām upasaṅjagmuḡ
sarve kṛṣṇa-didrḡkṣavaḡ
vapuṣā yena bhagavān*

*nara-loka-manoramah
yaśo vitene lokeṣu
sarva-loka-malāpaham*

indraḥ – Lord Indra; *marudbhiḥ* – along with the wind-gods; *bhagavān* – the powerful controller; *ādityāḥ* – the twelve principal demigods, all sons of Aditi; *vasavaḥ* – the eight Vasu demigods; *aśvinau* – the two Aśvinī-kumāras; *ṛbhavaḥ* – the Ṛbhus; *aṅgirasaḥ* – the descendants of Aṅgirā Muni; *rudrāḥ* – the expansions of Lord Śiva; *viśve sādhyāḥ* – known as Viśvedevas and Sādhyas; *ca* – also; *devatāḥ* – other demigods; *gandharva-apsarasaḥ* – the heavenly musicians and dancing girls; *nāgāḥ* – the celestial snakes; *siddha-cāraṇa* – the Siddhas and Cāraṇas; *guhya-kāḥ* – and the hobgoblins; *ṛṣayaḥ* – the great sages; *pitarāḥ* – the departed forefathers; *ca* – also; *eva* – indeed; *sa* – along with; *vidyādhara-kinnarāḥ* – the Vidyādharas and Kinnaras; *dvārakām* – to Dvārakā; *upasañjagmuḥ* – they arrived together; *sarve* – all of them; *kṛṣṇa-didrṣavaḥ* – eager to see Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vapuṣā* – by the transcendental body; *yena* – which; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *nara-loka* – to all human society; *manaḥ-ramaḥ* – enchanting; *yaśaḥ* – His fame; *vitene* – He expanded; *lokeṣu* – throughout all the universe; *sarva-loka* – of all planets; *mala* – the impurities; *apaham* – which eradicates.

TRANSLATION

The powerful Lord Indra, along with the Maruts, Ādityas, Vasus, Aśvinīs, Ṛbhus, Aṅgirās, Rudras, Viśvedevas, Sādhyas, Gandharvas, Apsarās, Nāgas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Guhyakas, the great sages and forefathers and the Vidyādharas and Kinnaras, arrived at the city of Dvārakā, hoping to see Lord Kṛṣṇa. By His transcendental form, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, enchanted all human beings and spread His own fame throughout the worlds. The Lord’s glories destroy all contamination within the universe.

PURPORT

The Personality of Godhead descends within the material world to assist the demigods in the cosmic management; thus the demigods can normally see such forms of the Lord as Upendra. However, here it is indicated that although accustomed to seeing various Viṣṇu expansions of the Lord, the demigods were specifically eager to see the most beautiful form of the Lord as Kṛṣṇa. *Deha-dehi-vibhāgaś ca neśvare vidyate kvacit*: there is no distinction between the Supreme Lord and His personal body. The *jīva* soul is different from his body, but the beautiful, transcendental form of the Lord is identical with the Lord in all respects.

TEXT 6.5

*tasyām vibhrājamānāyām
samṛddhāyām maharddhibhiḥ
vyacakṣatāvitrptākṣāḥ
kṛṣṇam adbhuta-darśanam*

tasyām – in that (Dvārakā); *vibhrājamānāyām* – resplendent; *samṛddhāyām* – very rich; *mahā-ṛddhibhiḥ* – with great opulences; *vyacakṣata* – they saw; *avitṛpta* – unsatisfied; *akṣāḥ* – whose eyes; *kṛṣṇam* – Lord Kṛṣṇa; *adbhuta-darśanam* – wonderful to behold.

TRANSLATION

In that resplendent city of Dvārakā, rich with all superior opulences, the demigods beheld with unsatiated eyes the wonderful form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 6.6

*svargodyānopagair mālyaiś
chādayanto yudūttamam
gīrbhiś citra-padārthābhis
tuṣṭuvur jagad-īśvaram*

svarga-udyāna – from the gardens of the heavenly planets of the demigods; *upagaiḥ* – obtained; *mālyaiḥ* – with flower garlands; *chādayantaḥ* – covering; *yadu-uttamam* – the best of the Yadus; *gīrbhiḥ* – with verbal expressions; *citra* – charming; *pada-arthābhiḥ* – the words and ideas comprising which; *tuṣṭuvuḥ* – they praised; *jagat-īśvaram* – the Lord of the universe.

TRANSLATION

The demigods covered the Supreme Lord of the universe with flower garlands brought from the gardens of heaven. Then they praised Him, the best of the Yadu dynasty, with statements containing charming words and ideas.

TEXT 6.7

*śrī-devā ūcuḥ
natāḥ sma te nātha padāravindam
buddhīndriya-prāṇa-mano-vacobhiḥ
yac cintyate'ntar hṛdi bhāva-yuktair
mumukṣubhiḥ karma-mayoru-pāśāt*

śrī-devāḥ ūcuḥ – the demigods said; *natāḥ sma* – we are bowed down; *te* – Your; *nātha* – O Lord; *pada-aravindam* – to the lotus feet; *buddhi* – with our intelligence; *indriya* – senses; *prāṇa* – vital air; *manaḥ* – mind; *vacobhiḥ* – and words; *yac* – which; *cintyate* – are meditated upon; *antaḥ hṛdi* – within the heart; *bhāva-yuktaiḥ* – who are fixed in *yoga* practice; *mumukṣubhiḥ* – by those striving for liberation; *karma-maya* – of the reactions of fruitive work; *uru-pāśāt* – from the great bondage.

TRANSLATION

The demigods began to speak: Our dear Lord, advanced mystic yogīs, striving for liberation from the severe bondage of material work, meditate with great devotion upon Your lotus feet within their hearts. Dedicating our intelligence, senses, vital air, mind and power of speech to Your Lordship, we demigods bow down at Your lotus feet.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *sma* in this verse indicates *vismaya*, “astonishment.” The demigods were astonished that although great mystic *yogīs* are only able to contemplate the lotus feet of the Lord within their hearts, the demigods arriving in the city of Dvārakā were able to see before them the entire body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore the powerful demigods fell down like sticks before the Lord. Such full obeisances (called *daṇḍavat*, “like a stick”) are described as follows:

dorbhyāṁ padābhyāṁ jānubhyāṁ
urasā śīrasā dṛśā
manasā vacasā ceti
praṇāmo’ṣṭāṅga īritaḥ

“The obeisances offered with eight limbs are made with the two arms, the two legs, the two knees, the chest, the head, the eyes, the mind and the power of speech.”

The currents of material nature are very powerful, and one should therefore cling tightly to the lotus feet of the Lord. Otherwise, the violent waves of sense gratification and mental speculation will undoubtedly sweep one away from one’s eternal, constitutional position as the loving servitor of the Supreme Lord, and one will then fall down into the stringent bondage described here as *uru-pāśāt*, “a very powerful illusory network.”

TEXT 6.8

tvam māyayā tri-guṇayātmani durvibhāvyaṁ
vyaktaṁ sṛjasy avasi lumpasi tad-guṇa-sthaḥ
naitair bhavān ajita karmabhir alyate vai
yat sve sukhe’vyavahite’bhirato’navadyaḥ

tvam – You; *māyayā* – by the material energy; *tri-guṇayā* – made up of the three modes of nature; *ātmani* – within Yourself; *durvibhāvyaṁ* – inconceivable; *vyaktaṁ* – the manifest cosmos; *sṛjasi* – You create; *avasi* – protect; *lumpasi* – and destroy; *tad* – of that material nature; *guṇa* – within the modes (goodness, passion and ignorance); *sthaḥ* – situated; *na* – not; *etair* – by these; *bhavān* – You; *ajita* – O unconquerable Lord; *karmabhiḥ* – activities; *alyate* – are entangled; *vai* – at all; *yat* – because; *sve* – in Your own; *sukhe* – happiness; *avyavahite* – unimpeded; *abhirataḥ* – You are always absorbed; *navadyaḥ* – the unimpeachable Lord.

TRANSLATION

O unconquerable Lord, You engage Your illusory energy, composed of three modes, to unleash, maintain and devastate the inconceivable manifest cosmos, all within Your own self. As the supreme superintendent of māyā, You appear to be situated in the interaction of the modes of nature; however, You are never affected by material activities. In fact, You are directly engaged in Your own eternal, spiritual bliss, and thus You cannot be accused of any material infection.

PURPORT

The word *durvibhāvyam* is significant here. The ultimate cause of the creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material world is certainly inconceivable even for the greatest mundane scientists, who waste their lives in useless and fruitless speculation. Yet Mahā-Viṣṇu, who is the secondary expansion of an expansion of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, sees the entire cosmos to be like an insignificant atom. So what hope is there for foolish so-called scientists who try to understand Kṛṣṇa by their ridiculous experimental power? Thus the word *anavadya* is used. No one can find fault or discrepancy in the body, character, activities or instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord is never materially ignorant; therefore He never exhibits cruelty, laziness, foolishness, blindness or material intoxication. Similarly, because the Lord is never polluted by material passion, He never exhibits material pride, lamentation, yearning or violence. And since the Lord is free from material goodness, He never attempts to peacefully enjoy the material world with a sublime materialistic mentality.

Lord Kṛṣṇa, as stated here (*sve sukhe 'vyavahite 'bhirataḥ*), is eternally busy, day and night, in His transcendental abode, relishing the inconceivable loving devotion of His innumerable associates. The Lord is being embraced and is embracing. He is joking and is hearing the joking of His loved ones. The Lord is walking through forests full of fruits and flowers, playing in the nectarean river Yamunā and taking part in His most confidential transcendental loving affairs with the cowherd girls of Vṛndāvana. These pastimes in Kṛṣṇaloka and on other Vaikuṅṭha planets are eternal, faultless and an ocean of spiritual happiness. The Lord never descends to the dry platform of relative material happiness. The infinite Personality of Godhead has nothing to gain from anyone; thus fruitive activity cannot possibly exist within the Lord.

TEXT 6.9

*śuddhir nṛṇām na tu tathedya durāśayānām
vidyā-śrutādhyayana-dāna-tapaḥ-kriyābhiḥ
sattvātmanām ṛṣabha te yaśasi pravṛddha-
sac-chraddhayā śravaṇa-sambhṛtayā yathā syāt*

śuddhiḥ – purification; *nṛṇām* – of persons; *na* – is not; *tu* – but; *tathā* – in such a way; *īdya* – O worshipable one; *durāśayānām* – of those whose consciousness is contaminated; *vidyā* – by ordinary worship; *śruta* – hearing and obeying the injunctions of the *Vedas*; *adhyayana* – study of various *śāstras*; *dāna* – charity; *tapaḥ* – austere penances; *kriyābhiḥ* – and ritual activities; *sattva-ātmanām* – of those who are situated in pure goodness; *ṛṣabha* – O greatest of all; *te* – Your; *yaśasi* – in the glories; *pravṛddha* – fully matured; *sat* – transcendental; *śraddhayā* – by faith; *śravaṇa-sambhṛtayā* – which is reinforced by the process of hearing; *yathā* – as; *syāt* – there is.

TRANSLATION

O greatest of all, those whose consciousness is polluted by illusion cannot purify themselves merely by ordinary worship, study of the Vedas, charity, austerity and ritual activities. Our Lord, those pure souls who have developed a powerful transcendental faith in Your glories achieve a purified state of existence that can never be attained by those lacking such faith.

PURPORT

Even if a pure devotee is lacking the above qualifications, such as Vedic study and austerity, if he has unflinching faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa the Lord will save him because of his devotion. On the other hand, if one becomes falsely proud of one's material qualifications, including ordinary piety, but does not devote himself to hearing and chanting the glories of Kṛṣṇa, the result will ultimately be nil. The transcendental spirit soul cannot be purified by any amount of material piety, charity or scholarship. Only the transcendental Supreme Lord can purify the transcendental living entity by bestowing His mercy within the heart. The demigods were astonished at their good fortune. Even by hearing about Kṛṣṇa, one achieves all perfection, but they had entered the Lord's own city and were seeing Him standing before them.

TEXT 6.10

*syān nas tavāṅghrir aśubhāśaya-dhūmaketuḥ
kṣemāya yo munibhir ārdra-hṛdohyamānaḥ
yaḥ sātvatāiḥ sama-vibhūtaya ātmavadbhir
vyūhe'rcitaḥ savanaśaḥ svar-atikramāya*

syāt - may they be; *naḥ* - for us; *tava* - Your; *aṅghriḥ* - the lotus feet; *aśubha-āśaya* - of our inauspicious mentality; *dhūma-ketuḥ* - the annihilating fire; *kṣemāya* - for achieving real benefit; *yaḥ* - which; *munibhiḥ* - by sages; *ārdra-hṛdā* - with melted hearts; *ahyamānaḥ* - are being carried; *yaḥ* - which; *sātvatāiḥ* - by the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *sama-vibhūtaye* - for gaining opulence like His; *ātma-vadbhiḥ* - by those who are self-controlled; *vyūhe* - in the four-handed personal expansions of Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha; *arcitaḥ* - worshiped; *savanaśaḥ* - at the three junctions of each day; *svaḥ-atikramāya* - for crossing beyond the heavenly planets of this world.

TRANSLATION

Great sages, desiring the highest benefit in life, always cherish Your lotus feet within their hearts, which are melted by love for You. Similarly, Your self-controlled devotees, desiring to cross beyond the material kingdom of heaven to achieve opulence equal to Yours, worship Your lotus feet in the morning, at noon and in the evening. Thus, they meditate upon Your Lordship in Your quadruple expansion. Your lotus feet are just like a blazing fire that burns to ashes all the inauspicious desires for material sense gratification.

PURPORT

The conditioned living entity can purify his existence simply by having firm faith in the transcendental glories of the Personality of Godhead. What then can be said of the extraordinary good fortune of the demigods, who were directly seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet? Although we are presently afflicted by innumerable material desires, these desires are temporary. The eternal living entity is meant to experience a loving relationship with the supreme living entity, the Personality of Godhead; and by rendering pure devotional service to the Lord, the heart of the living entity is completely satisfied.

The word *dhūmaketu* in this verse indicates a flaming comet or fire, which represents Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva is the master of the mode of ignorance, and Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet are compared to the comet, a symbol of the potency of Śiva, which can destroy all ignorance within the heart. The word *sama-vibhūtaye* ("for achieving equal opulence") indicates that the pure devotees go back home, back to Godhead, and enjoy the infinite bliss of the spiritual world. Lord Kṛṣṇa is endowed with unlimited opulent paraphernalia for enjoyment, and a liberated soul who goes to Kṛṣṇa's abode is awarded all opulence for serving the Lord. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the word *vyūhe* in this verse indicates the three *puruṣa* incarnations, namely Mahā-Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu and Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, as well as Vāsudeva. If we can scientifically understand how Kṛṣṇa expands Himself to create the material world, we shall immediately experience that everything is the property of Kṛṣṇa and thus become free from the desire to exploit it for our own selfish purposes. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, the master of everyone and the reservoir of all opulences, and one should remember His lotus feet in the morning, at noon and in the evening. One who always remembers Kṛṣṇa and never forgets Him will experience real, blissful life beyond the pale shadow of material illusion.

TEXT 6.11

*yaś cintyate prayata-pāṇibhir adhvarāgnau
trayyā nirukta-vidhineśa havir gṛhītvā
adhyātma-yoga uta yogibhir ātma-māyām
jijñāsubhiḥ parama-bhāgavataiḥ pariṣṭaḥ*

yaḥ - which; *cintyate* - are meditated upon; *prayata-pāṇibhiḥ* - by those with folded hands; *adhvara-agnau* - in the fire of sacrifice; *trayyā* - of the three Vedas (*Ṛg*, *Yajur* and *Sāma*); *nirukta* - comprising the essential understanding presented in the *Nirukta*; *vidhinā* - by the process; *īśa* - O Lord; *haviḥ* - the ghee meant for offering; *gṛhītvā* - taking; *adhyātma-yoge* - in that *yoga* system meant for realization of one's true self; *uta* - also; *yogibhiḥ* - by the practitioners of this *yoga*; *ātma-māyām* - about Your bewildering material energy; *jijñāsubhiḥ* - who are inquisitive; *parama-bhāgavataiḥ* - by the most elevated devotees; *pariṣṭaḥ* - perfectly worshiped.

TRANSLATION

Those about to offer oblations into the fire of sacrifice in accordance with the Ṛg, Yajur and Sāma Vedas meditate on Your lotus feet. Similarly, the practitioners of transcendental yoga meditate upon Your lotus feet, hoping for knowledge about Your divine mystic potency, and the most elevated pure devotees perfectly worship Your lotus feet, desiring to cross beyond Your illusory potency.

PURPORT

The words *ātma-māyām jijñāsubhiḥ* are significant in this verse. The mystic *yogīs* (*adhyātma-yoga uta yogibhiḥ*) are eager to acquire knowledge of the Lord's mystic potencies, whereas the pure devotees (*parama-bhāgavatāiḥ*) are eager to cross beyond the kingdom of illusion so that they can serve Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet in pure loving ecstasy. In any case, everyone is interested in the potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The atheistic material scientists are also fascinated by the external material potency of the Lord, and the gross sense gratifiers are attracted by the physical body, which is also *ātma-māyā*, or an expansion of the Lord's potency. Although all of the Lord's potencies are qualitatively one with the Lord, and therefore with each other, the blissful spiritual potency is nevertheless supreme because it establishes relationships between the Lord and the pure living entities on the platform of eternal happiness. Every living entity is originally a loving servitor of the Lord, and the spiritual energy of the Lord engages the living entity in his pure constitutional position beyond illusion.

Our dreaming and waking experiences are both activities of the mind; however, the activities we perform while awake are more valuable because they establish us in our permanent situation. Similarly, at every moment every living entity is experiencing one of the innumerable potencies of the Supreme Lord. However, the experience of the spiritual potency is more significant because it establishes the living entity in his eternal, constitutional position as a faithful servitor of the Personality of Godhead. The demigods are glorifying the Lord's lotus feet because they are personally very eager to be purified by contact with those feet (*tavāṅghrir asmākam aśubhāśaya-dhūmaketuḥ syāt*). When a sincere devotee eagerly desires to attain the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet, the Lord brings him to His personal abode, just as the demigods were brought to Dvārakā by Lord Kṛṣṇa's arrangement.

TEXT 6.12

*paryuṣṭayā tava vibho vana-mālayeyam
saṁspārdhinī bhagavatī pratipatnī-vac chrīḥ
yaḥ su-praṇītam amuyārhaṇam ādadan no
bhūyāt sadāṅghrir aśubhāśaya-dhūmaketuḥ*

paryuṣṭayā - worn out; *tava* - Your; *vibho* - almighty Lord; *vanamālayā* - by the flower garland; *iyam* - she; *saṁspārdhinī* - feeling competitive; *bhagavatī* - the female counterpart of the Personality of Godhead; *prati-*

patnī-vat – just like an envious co-wife; *śrīḥ* – Lakṣmīdevī, the goddess of fortune; *yaḥ* – which Supreme Lord (Yourself); *su-praṇītam* – (so that it may be) properly executed; *amuyā* – by this; *arhaṇam* – the offering; *ādadan* – accepting; *naḥ* – our; *bhūyāt* – may they be; *sadā* – always; *aṅghriḥ* – the lotus feet; *aśubha-āśaya* – of our impure desires; *dhūma-ketuḥ* – the fire of destruction.

TRANSLATION

O almighty Lord, You are so kind to Your servants that You have accepted the withered flower garland that we have placed on Your chest. Since the goddess of fortune makes her abode on Your transcendental chest, she will undoubtedly become agitated, like a jealous co-wife, upon seeing our offering also dwelling there. Yet You are so merciful that You neglect Your eternal consort Lakṣmī and accept our offering as most excellent worship. O merciful Lord, may Your lotus feet always act as a blazing fire to consume the inauspicious desires within our hearts.

PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.26) it is stated:

*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam
yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad ahaṁ bhakty-upahṛtam
aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ*

Lord Kṛṣṇa gratefully and happily accepts even the most meager offering from His loving devotee. Lord Kṛṣṇa is conquered by the love of His pure devotees, just as a father is easily conquered by the most insignificant gift offered by his loving child. Unless a transcendentalist completely gives up the impersonal conception of life, he cannot make such a loving offering to the Lord. The process of meditation upon the Supersoul within the heart, called *dhyāna-yoga*, is not as pleasing to Kṛṣṇa as *bhakti-yoga*, or devotional service, because in *dhyāna*, or meditation, the *yogī* is trying to satisfy himself (and not the Lord) by attaining mystic powers. Similarly, in order to acquire material benefits from the Lord, ordinary people worship God in temples, churches and mosques. But one who desires actual spiritual perfection must be enlivened to always chant and hear the glories of the Lord. Such devotional enthusiasm is motivated by love of Godhead and is devoid of any selfish expectation.

The Lord is so kind that He neglects His own eternal consort, Lakṣmī, and gives preference to His humble devotee, just as a man will neglect the loving embrace of his wife when his affectionate child approaches him with a gift. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has pointed out that any garland worn by the Lord cannot be faded because all of the Lord's personal paraphernalia is completely transcendental and spiritually opulent. Similarly, there is no possibility that mundane jealousy could appear in the character of the goddess of fortune, who is as transcendental as Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. Therefore the statements of the demigods are to be understood as humorous words inspired by intense

love of Godhead. The demigods enjoy the protection of Lakṣmī and, ultimately, of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and due to their confidence in their loving relationship with the Lord and His consort they feel free to speak in a joking way.

TEXT 6.13

*ketus tri-vikrama-yutas tri-patat-patāko
yas te bhayābhaya-karo'sura-deva-camvoḥ
svargāya sādhuṣu khaleṣv itarāya bhūman
padaḥ punātu bhagavan bhajatām agham naḥ*

ketuḥ – a flagpole; *tri-vikrama* – three mighty steps in conquering Bali Mahārāja; *yataḥ* – adorned by; *tri-patat* – falling into each of the three planetary systems; *patākaḥ* – the flag upon which; *yaḥ* – which; *te* – Your (lotus feet); *bhaya-abhaya* – fear and fearlessness; *karaḥ* – creating; *asura-deva* – of the demons and the demigods; *camvoḥ* – for the respective armies; *svargāya* – for the attainment of heaven; *sādhuṣu* – among the saintly demigods and devotees; *khaleṣu* – among the envious; *itarāya* – for just the opposite; *bhūman* – O most powerful Lord; *padaḥ* – the lotus feet; *punātu* – may they purify; *bhagavan* – O Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhajatām* – who are engaged in worshipping You; *agham* – the sins; *naḥ* – of us.

TRANSLATION

O omnipotent Lord, in Your incarnation as Trivikrama, You raised Your leg like a flagpole to break the shell of the universe, allowing the holy Ganges to flow down, like a banner of victory, in three branches throughout the three planetary systems. By three mighty steps of Your lotus feet, Your Lordship captured Bali Mahārāja, along with his universal kingdom. Your lotus feet inspire fear in the demons by driving them down to hell and fearlessness among Your devotees by elevating them to the perfection of heavenly life. We are sincerely trying to worship You, our Lord; therefore may Your lotus feet kindly free us from all of our sinful reactions.

PURPORT

In order to reclaim for the demigods the universal kingdom seized by Bali Mahārāja, Lord Kṛṣṇa, as described in the Eighth Canto of this great work, appeared as the beautiful dwarf-*brāhmaṇa* Vāmana, who extended His foot upward to the outer limits of the universe. When the Lord's leg breached a hole in the universal shell, the holy Ganges water came flowing into the universe. This scene appeared like an upraised flagpole with a wonderfully flowing victory banner.

As stated in the *śruti-mantras*, *caraṇam pavitraṁ vitataṁ purāṇam yena pūtas tarati duṣkṛtāni*: “The lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead are most pure, all-pervading and the oldest of all. One who is purified by them crosses over all previous sinful activities.” Throughout the universe the process of worshipping the lotus feet of the Lord is most famous.

TEXT 6.14

*nasy ota-gāva iva yasya vaśe bhavanti
brahmādayas tanu-bhṛto mithur ardyamānāḥ
kālasya te prakṛti-pūruṣayoḥ parasya
śam nas tanotu caraṇaḥ puruṣottamasya*

nasi – through the nose; *ota* – strung; *gāvaḥ* – oxen; *iva* – as if; *yasya* – of whose; *vaśe* – under the control; *bhavanti* – they exist; *brahma-ādayaḥ* – Brahmā and all others; *tanu-bhṛtaḥ* – the embodied living beings; *mithuḥ* – among each other; *ardyamānāḥ* – struggling; *kālasya* – of the force of time; *te* – of Yourself; *prakṛti-pūruṣayoḥ* – both the material nature and the living entity; *parasya* – who is beyond them; *śam* – transcendental fortune; *naḥ* – for us; *tanotu* – may they spread; *caraṇaḥ* – the lotus feet; *puruṣa-uttamasya* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the transcendental entity who is superior to both material nature and the enjoyer of nature. May Your lotus feet bestow transcendental pleasure upon us. All of the great demigods, beginning with Brahmā, are embodied living entities. Struggling painfully with one another under the strict control of Your time factor, they are just like bulls dragged by ropes tied through their pierced noses.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī states: *nanu yuddhe devāsuraḥ paraspāram jayanti jīyante ca kim ahaṁ tatrety ata āhuḥ, nasīti: mithur mitho 'rdyamānā yuddhādibhiḥ pīḍyamānā brahmādayo 'pi yasya tava vaśe bhavanti na tu jaye parājaye vā svatantrāḥ.* “In the perpetual battles between the demigods, or devotees of the Lord, and the demons, or nondevotees, each side sometimes conquers and is sometimes apparently defeated. One may argue that all this has nothing to do with the Personality of Godhead since it is based on nothing more than the interaction of opposing living entities. But every living entity is, however, strictly under the control of the Personality of Godhead, and victory and defeat are always in the hands of the Lord.” This does not contradict the fact of the living entity’s free will, since the Lord awards victory and defeat according to the merit of the living entities. In a legal battle neither the prosecution nor the defense can act independently of the legal system presided over by the authorized judge. Victory and defeat in the court are awarded by the judge, but the judge is acting according to the laws, which do not favor or discriminate against either side.

Similarly, the Personality of Godhead is awarding us the results of our previous activities. In order to discredit God, materialists frequently give the argument that oftentimes innocent people suffer whereas impious rogues enjoy life unimpeded. The fact is, however, that the Personality of Godhead

is not a fool, as are the materialistic persons who place such arguments. The Lord can see our many previous lives; therefore He may allow one to enjoy or suffer in this life not only as a result of one's present activities, but also as a result of one's previous activities. For example, by working very hard a man may accumulate a fortune. If such a newly rich man then gives up his work and takes to a degenerate life, his fortune does not immediately disappear. On the other hand, one who is destined to become rich may now be working very hard, with discipline and austerity, and yet be without spending money. So a superficial observer might well be confused upon seeing the moral, hard-working man without funds and the degenerate, lazy man in possession of riches. Similarly, a materialistic fool without knowledge of past, present and future is unable to understand the perfect justice of the Personality of Godhead.

The example given in this verse to explain Kṛṣṇa's controlling power is appropriate. Although a bull is extremely powerful, he is easily controlled by a slight tug on a rope strung through his pierced nose. Similarly, even the most powerful politicians, scholars, demigods, etc., may immediately be put into an unbearable situation by the omnipotent Personality of Godhead. Therefore the demigods have not come to Dvārakā to proudly display their universal political and intellectual powers but to humbly surrender at the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 6.15

*asyāsi hetur udaya-sthiti-saṁyamānām
avyakta-jīva-mahatām api kālam āhuḥ
so'yaṁ tri-ṅābhir akhilāpacaye pravṛttaḥ
kālo gabhīra-ṛaya uttama-pūruṣas tvam*

asya - of this (universe); *asi* - You are; *hetuḥ* - the cause; *udaya* - of the creation; *sthiti* - maintenance; *saṁyamānām* - and annihilation; *avyakta* - of the unmanifest material nature; *jīva* - the individual living beings; *mahatām* - and of the *mahat-tattva*, with the manifest elements evolved from it; *api* - also; *kālam* - the controlling time factor; *āhuḥ* - You are said to be; *saḥ ayam* - this same personality; *tri-ṅābhiḥ* - appearing as a wheel with circumference divided into three parts (the year divided into four-month seasons); *akhila* - of everything; *apacaye* - in effecting the diminution; *pravṛttaḥ* - engaged; *kālaḥ* - the time factor; *gabhīra* - imperceptible; *ṛayaḥ* - the movement of which; *uttama-pūruṣaḥ* - the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tvam* - You are.

TRANSLATION

You are the cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe. As time, You regulate the subtle and manifest states of material nature and control every living being. As the threefold wheel of time You diminish all things by Your imperceptible actions, and thus You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

The word *gabhīra-ayaḥ*, or “imperceptible speed and power,” is significant. We observe that by the laws of nature all material things, including our own bodies, gradually disintegrate. Although we can perceive the long-term results of this aging process, we cannot experience the process itself. For example, no one can feel how his hair or fingernails are growing. We perceive the cumulative result of their growth, but from moment to moment we cannot experience it. Similarly, a house gradually decays until it is demolished. From moment to moment we cannot perceive exactly how this is happening, but in the course of longer intervals of time we can actually see the deterioration of the house. In other words, we can experience the results or manifestations of aging and deterioration, but as it is taking place the process itself is imperceptible. This is the wonderful potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form of time.

The word *tri-ṅābhiḥ* indicates that according to astrological calculation of the sun’s movements, the year can be divided into three sections: those represented by Aries, Taurus, Gemini and Cancer; Leo, Virgo, Libra and Scorpio; and Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces.

The word *uttama-pūruṣa*, or *puruṣottama*, is explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.18):

*yasmāt kṣaram atīto’ham
akṣarād api cottamaḥ
ato’smi loke vede ca
prathitaḥ puruṣottamaḥ*

“Because I am transcendental, beyond both the fallible and the infallible, and because I am the greatest, I am celebrated both in the world and in the *Vedas* as that Supreme Person.”

TEXT 6.16

*tvattaḥ pumān samadhigamya yayāsyā vīryam
dhatte mahāntam iva garbham amogha-vīryaḥ
so’yam tayānugata ātmana āṅḍa-kośam
haimam sasarja bahir āvaraṇair upetam*

tvattaḥ – from You; *pumān* – the *puruṣa-avatāra*, Mahā-Viṣṇu; *samadhigamya* – obtaining; *yayā* – along with which (material nature); *asya* – of this creation; *vīryam* – the potential seed; *dhatte* – He impregnates; *mahāntam* – the *mahat-tattva*, the raw amalgamation of matter; *iva garbham* – like an ordinary fetus; *amogha-vīryaḥ* – He whose semen is never wasted; *saḥ ayam* – that same (*mahat-tattva*); *tayā* – with the material nature; *anugataḥ* – joined; *ātmanaḥ* – from itself; *āṅḍa-kośam* – the primeval egg of the universe; *haimam* – golden; *sasarja* – produced; *bahiḥ* – on its outside; *āvaraṇaiḥ* – with several coverings; *upetam* – endowed.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, the original puruṣa-avatāra, Mahā-Viṣṇu, acquires His creative potency from You. Thus with infallible energy He

impregnates material nature, producing the mahat-tattva. Then the mahat-tattva, the amalgamated material energy, endowed with the potency of the Lord, produces from itself the primeval golden egg of the universe, which is covered by various layers of material elements.

PURPORT

In the previous verses the supremacy of the Personality of Godhead has been established in relation to the living entity and material nature. In this verse it is clearly stated that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the source of the greatest Viṣṇu incarnation, Mahā-Viṣṇu, and that Mahā-Viṣṇu acquires His creative potency from Lord Kṛṣṇa. It would therefore be foolish to surmise that Lord Kṛṣṇa is an expansion of Viṣṇu. In this regard the opinion of the demigods, headed by Brahmā, can be taken as final.

TEXT 6.17

*tat tasthūṣaś ca jagataś ca bhavān adhīśo
yan māyayottha-guṇa-vikriyayopanītān
arthāñ juṣann api hṛṣīka-pate na lipto
ye'nye svataḥ parihṛtād api bibhyati sma*

tat – therefore; *tasthūṣaḥ* – of everything stationary; *ca* – and; *jagataḥ* – mobile; *ca* – as well; *bhavān* – You (are); *adhīśaḥ* – the ultimate controller; *yat* – because; *māyayā* – by material nature; *uttha* – raised; *guṇa* – of (nature's) modes; *vikriyayā* – by the transformation (i.e. by the activity of the sense organs of the living beings); *upanītān* – gathered together; *arthān* – the sense objects; *juṣan* – engaging with; *api* – even though; *hṛṣīka-pate* – O master of everyone's senses; *na liptaḥ* – You are never touched; *ye* – those who; *anye* – others; *svataḥ* – on their own strength; *parihṛtāt* – on account of (objects of sense gratification); *api* – even; *bibhyati* – they fear; *sma* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

O Lord, You are the supreme creator of this universe and the ultimate controller of all moving and nonmoving living entities. You are Hṛṣīkeśa, the supreme controller of all sensory activity, and thus You never become contaminated or entangled in the course of Your supervision of the infinite sensory activities within the material creation. On the other hand, other living entities, even yogīs and philosophers, are disturbed and frightened simply by remembering the material objects that they have supposedly renounced in their pursuit of enlightenment.

PURPORT

The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is within the heart of every conditioned soul and guides the living entity in the pursuit and experience of sense gratification. The disappointing results of such activities gradually convince the conditioned soul to reject material life and surrender again to the Lord within his heart. Lord Kṛṣṇa is never affected by the futile attempts of the living

entities to enjoy His illusory energy. For the Personality of Godhead there is no possibility of fear or disturbance, because nothing is ultimately separate from Him.

TEXT 6.18

*smāyāvaloka-lava-darśita-bhāva-hāri-
bhrū-maṇḍala-prahita-saurata-mantra-śauṇḍaiḥ
patnyas tu ṣoḍaśa-sahasram anaṅga-bāṇair
yasyendriyaṁ vimathitum karaṇair na vibhvyah*

smāya - smiling; *avaloka* - of a glance; *lava* - by fractions; *darśita* - having shown; *bhāva* - their feelings; *hāri* - enchanting; *bhrū-maṇḍala* - by which arch of the eyebrows; *prahita* - launched; *saurata* - of conjugal love; *mantra* - messages; *śauṇḍaiḥ* - by the impudent advances; *patnyaḥ* - wives; *tu* - but; *ṣoḍaśa-sahasram* - sixteen thousand; *anaṅga* - of Cupid; *bāṇaiḥ* - by the arrows; *yasya* - whose; *indriyam* - senses; *vimathitum* - to agitate; *karaṇaiḥ* - with all their devices; *na vibhvyah* - they were not able.

TRANSLATION

My Lord, You are living with sixteen thousand exquisitely beautiful, aristocratic wives. By their irresistible coy and smiling glances and by their lovely arching eyebrows, they send You messages of eager conjugal love. But they are completely unable to disturb the mind and senses of Your Lordship.

PURPORT

In the previous verse it was clearly stated that no material object can attract the senses of the Lord. Now in this verse it is demonstrated that the Lord has no desire to enjoy even spiritual sense gratification. Kṛṣṇa is complete in Himself. He is the reservoir of all pleasure, and He does not lust after anything material or spiritual. The argument may be given that Kṛṣṇa, in order to please His wife Satyabhāmā, stole a *pārijāta* flower from heaven and thus appeared to be a henpecked husband under the control of His loving wife. But although Kṛṣṇa is sometimes conquered by the love of His devotees, He is never influenced by the desire to enjoy like an ordinary, lusty materialistic person. The nondevotees cannot understand the overwhelming loving feelings exchanged between the Lord and His pure devotees. Kṛṣṇa may be conquered by our intense love for Him, and thus pure devotees can control the Lord. For example, the elderly *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana would clap their hands in different rhythms to make Kṛṣṇa dance, and in Dvārakā Satyabhāmā ordered Kṛṣṇa to bring her a flower as proof of His love for her. As stated in Śrīnivāsa Ācārya's song to the Six Gosvāmīs, *gopī-bhāva-rasāmṛtābdhi-laharī-kallola-magnau muhuḥ*: the love between the Lord and His pure devotee is an ocean of spiritual bliss. But at the same time, Kṛṣṇa remains completely self-satisfied. Kṛṣṇa indifferently gave up the company of the incomparable young damsels of Vraja-bhūmi, the *gopīs*, and went to Mathurā at the request of His uncle, Akrūra. Thus neither the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana nor the queens of Dvārakā could arouse an enjoying spirit in

Kṛṣṇa. When all is said and done, pleasure in this world means sex. But this mundane sexual attraction is simply a perverted reflection of the transcendental loving affairs between Kṛṣṇa and His eternal associates in the spiritual world. The *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana are unsophisticated village girls, whereas the queens in Dvārakā are aristocratic young ladies. But both the *gopīs* and the queens are overwhelmed with love for Kṛṣṇa. As the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa displays the highest perfection of beauty, strength, wealth, fame, knowledge and renunciation and is thus completely satisfied by His own supreme position. He reciprocates spiritual loving affairs with the *gopīs* and queens simply for their sake. Only fools think that Lord Kṛṣṇa could be attracted by the perverted illusory pleasures to which we poor conditioned souls are so blindly attached. Therefore everyone should recognize the supreme transcendental position of the Personality of Godhead and surrender to Him. That is the clear implication of this statement by the demigods.

TEXT 6.19

*vibhvyas tavāmṛta-kathoda-vahās tri-lokyāḥ
pādāvane-ja-saritaḥ śamalāni hantum
ānuśravam śrutibhir aṅghri-jam aṅga-saṅgaiḥ
tīrtha-dvayam śuci-śadaḥ ta upasṛṣanti*

vibhvyāḥ – are able; *tava* – Your; *amṛta* – nectarean; *kathā* – of the topics; *uda-vahāḥ* – the water-bearing rivers; *tri-lokyāḥ* – of the three worlds; *pāda-avane* – from the bathing of Your lotus feet; *ja* – born; *saritaḥ* – rivers; *śamalāni* – all contamination; *hantum* – to destroy; *ānuśravam* – consisting of the process of hearing from bona fide authority; *śrutibhiḥ* – with the ears; *aṅghri-jam* – consisting of (the holy rivers) generated from Your lotus feet; *aṅga-saṅgaiḥ* – by direct physical contact; *tīrtha-dvayam* – these two kinds of holy places; *śuci-śadaḥ* – those who are striving for purification; *te* – Your; *upasṛṣanti* – they approach to associate with.

TRANSLATION

The nectar-bearing rivers of discussions about You, and also the holy rivers generated from the bathing of Your lotus feet, are able to destroy all contamination within the three worlds. Those who are striving for purification associate with the holy narrations of Your glories by hearing them with their ears, and they associate with the holy rivers flowing from Your lotus feet by physically bathing in them.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states, *ānuśravam guror uccāraṇam anuśrūyante*: “One should hear about Kṛṣṇa by hearing from the spiritual master.” The bona fide spiritual master describes the pastimes, potencies and incarnations of the Personality of Godhead to his disciple. If the spiritual master is bona fide and if the disciple is sincere and obedient, then the communication between *guru* and disciple is just like nectar, both for the

guru and the disciple. Ordinary persons cannot even imagine the special pleasure experienced by the devotees of the Lord. Such nectarean speaking and hearing destroys all contamination within the heart of a conditioned soul, the primary contamination being the desire to live without serving Kṛṣṇa.

The other nectar described here is *caraṇāmṛta*, the nectarean waters that bathe the Lord's feet. Lord Vāmanadeva bathed His own lotus foot by kicking a hole in the universal covering so that the sacred Ganges water washed His toes and fell into the universe. The Yamunā River also washed Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet when the Lord appeared on this planet five thousand years ago. Kṛṣṇa sported daily with His boyfriends and girlfriends in the Yamunā River, and consequently that river is also *caraṇāmṛta*. One should therefore try to take bath in the Ganges or Yamunā.

Every morning in ISKCON temples, the lotus feet of the Deity of Kṛṣṇa are bathed, and the water thus sanctified is also called *caraṇāmṛta*, the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. Śrīla Prabhupāda taught his disciples and followers to come before the Deities each morning and drink three drops of the *caraṇāmṛta* from the Deities' bathing.

In all these ways one can purify his heart and relish spiritual bliss. When one is fixed on the platform of spiritual bliss, then one does not take another birth in the material world. In this verse the word *śuci-śadaḥ* is significant: one must engage in the purified activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One must learn to serve the Lord from the bona fide spiritual master, whose instructions one should accept without speculation. Those who are attached to the phantasmagoria of this world sometimes concoct their own whimsical concepts of God. But only from the bona fide spiritual master can we get perfect and pure knowledge about the Supreme Personality of Godhead and devotional service to Him. Such knowledge may be found in all the books of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

TEXT 6.20

śrī-bādarāyaṇir uvāca
ity abhiṣṭūya vibudhaiḥ
seśaḥ śata-dhṛtir harim
abhyabhāṣata govindam
praṇamyāmbaram āśritaḥ

śrī-bādarāyaṇiḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *iti* – thus; *abhiṣṭūya* – praising; *vibudhaiḥ* – along with all the demigods; *sa-īśaḥ* – and also Lord Śiva; *śata-dhṛtiḥ* – Lord Brahmā; *harim* – the Supreme Lord; *abhyabhāṣata* – spoke; *govindam* – to Govinda; *praṇamya* – offering obeisances; *ambaram* – in the sky; *āśritaḥ* – situated.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: After Brahmā, along with Lord Śiva and the other demigods, thus offered prayers to the Supreme

Lord, Govinda, Lord Brahmā situated himself in the sky and addressed the Lord as follows.

TEXT 6.21

*śrī-brahmovāca
bhūmer bhārāvatārāya
purā vijñāpitaḥ prabho
tvam asmābhir aśeṣātman
tat tathaivopapāditam*

śrī-brahmā uvāca – Śrī Brahmā said; *bhūmeḥ* – of the earth; *bhāra* – the burden; *avatārāya* – for the sake of diminishing; *purā* – previously; *vijñāpitaḥ* – were requested; *prabho* – O Lord; *tvam* – You; *asmābhiḥ* – by us; *aśeṣa-ātman* – O unlimited Soul of all; *tat* – that (request); *tathā eva* – just as expressed by us; *upapāditam* – was fulfilled.

TRANSLATION

Lord Brahmā said: My dear Lord, previously we requested You to remove the burden of the earth. O unlimited Personality of Godhead, that request has certainly been fulfilled.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa might have said to the demigods, “Actually, you requested Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu to come down, so why are you saying that you requested Me? After all, I am Govinda.” Therefore Brahmā has addressed the Lord here as *aśeṣātmā*, or the unlimited Personality of Godhead from whom all plenary expansions of Viṣṇu emanate. This is the opinion of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

TEXT 6.22

*dharmāś ca sthāpitaḥ satsu
satya-sandheṣu vai tvayā
kīrtiś ca dikṣu vikṣiptā
sarva-loka-malāpahā*

dharmāḥ – the principles of religion; *ca* – and; *sthāpitaḥ* – established; *satsu* – among the pious; *satya-sandheṣu* – among those who seek after truth; *vai* – indeed; *tvayā* – by You; *kīrtiḥ* – Your glories; *ca* – and; *dikṣu* – in all the directions; *vikṣiptā* – disseminated; *sarva-loka* – of all planets; *mala* – the contamination; *apahā* – which remove.

TRANSLATION

My Lord, You have reestablished the principles of religion among pious men who are always firmly bound to the truth. You have also distributed Your glories all over the world, and thus the whole world can be purified by hearing about You.

TEXT 6.23

*avatīrya yador vaṁśe
bibhrad rūpam anuttamam*

*karmāṇy uddāma-vṛttāni
hitāya jagato'kṛthāḥ*

avatīrya – descending; *yadoḥ* – of King Yadu; *varṣe* – into the dynasty; *bibhrat* – bearing; *rūpam* – a transcendental form; *anuttamam* – unexcelled; *karmāṇi* – activities; *uddāma-vṛttāni* – comprised of magnanimous deeds; *hitāya* – for the benefit; *jagataḥ* – of the universe; *akṛthāḥ* – You performed.

TRANSLATION

Descending into the dynasty of King Yadu, You have manifested Your unique transcendental form, and for the benefit of the entire universe You have executed magnanimous transcendental activities.

TEXT 6.24

*yāni te caritānīśa
manuṣyāḥ sādharmaḥ kalau
śṛṅvantaḥ kīrtayantaś ca
tariṣyanti añjasā tamaḥ*

yāni – which; *te* – Your; *caritāni* – pastimes; *īśa* – O Supreme Lord; *manuṣyāḥ* – humans; *sādharmaḥ* – saintly persons; *kalau* – in the degraded Age of Kali; *śṛṅvantaḥ* – hearing; *kīrtayantaḥ* – chanting; *ca* – and; *tariṣyanti* – they will cross over; *añjasā* – easily; *tamaḥ* – darkness.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, those pious and saintly persons who in the Age of Kali hear about Your transcendental activities and also glorify them will easily cross over the darkness of the age.

PURPORT

Unfortunately, in Kali-yuga many persons are not attracted to the authorized Vedic literatures. Minimizing the transcendental process of hearing and chanting the glories of the Personality of Godhead, they prefer to listen to useless and whimsical vibrations on the radio and television, in newspapers and magazines, and so on. Rather than hear about Kṛṣṇa from the bona fide spiritual master, they endlessly give their own opinions about everything, until they are dragged away by the force of time. After studying the temporary, limited forms of the material world, they impatiently conclude that the Absolute Truth is formless. Such persons are actually worshipping Kṛṣṇa's illusory energy, *māyā*, who has been authorized to kick their stubborn heads. If instead people hear directly about Kṛṣṇa from the bona fide sources, they will very easily solve all the problems of their lives. In Kali-yuga people are constantly suffering from many psychological, social, economic, historical, political and existential problems. But all these nightmarish problems can be removed as soon as one awakens to the transcendental reality of the Personality of Godhead, who is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge and beyond the bewildering manifestations of the material energy. The Lord appears within this universe so that people can observe, hear about and glorify His actual activities. In this difficult Age of Kali we should all seriously take advantage of this opportunity.

TEXT 6.25

*yadu-varṁśe'vatīrṇasya
bhavataḥ puruṣottama
śarat-chataṁ vyatīyāya
pañca-vimśādhikam prabho*

yadu-varṁśe - in the family of the Yadus; *avatīrṇasya* - who has descended; *bhavataḥ* - of Yourself; *puruṣa-uttama* - O Supreme Person; *śarat-śatam* - one hundred autumns; *vyatīyāya* - having passed; *pañca-vimśa* - by twenty-five; *adhikam* - more; *prabho* - O Lord.

TRANSLATION

O Supreme Personality of Godhead, O my Lord, You have descended into the Yadu dynasty, and thus You have spent one hundred twenty-five autumns with Your devotees.

TEXTS 6.26-27

*nādhunā te'khilādhāra
deva-kāryāvaśeṣitam
kulam ca vipra-śāpena
naṣṭa-prāyam abhūt idam
tataḥ sva-dhāma paramam
viśasva yadi manyase
sa-lokāl loka-pālān naḥ
pāhi vaikuṅṭha-kiṅkarān*

na adhunā - no longer; *te* - for You; *akhila-ādhāra* - O basis of everything; *deva-kārya* - duty on behalf of the demigods; *avaśeṣitam* - remaining part; *kulam* - Your dynasty; *ca* - and; *vipra-śāpena* - by the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*; *naṣṭa-prāyam* - virtually annihilated; *abhūt* - has become; *idam* - this; *tataḥ* - therefore; *sva-dhāma* - Your own abode; *paramam* - supreme; *viśasva* - please enter; *yadi* - if; *manyase* - You are so disposed; *sa-lokān* - with the inhabitants of all the planets; *loka-pālān* - the protectors of the planets; *naḥ* - us; *pāhi* - please continue to protect; *vaikuṅṭha* - of Lord Viṣṇu, Vaikuṅṭha; *kiṅkarān* - the servants.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, there is nothing remaining at this time for Your Lordship to do on behalf of the demigods. You have already withdrawn Your dynasty by the curse of the brāhmaṇas. O Lord, You are the basis of everything, and if You so desire, kindly return now to Your own abode in the spiritual world. At the same time, we humbly beg that You always protect us. We are Your humble servants, and on Your behalf we are managing the universal situation. We, along with our planets and followers, require Your constant protection.

TEXT 6.28

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
avadhāritam etan me
yat āttha vibudheśvara
kṛtaṁ vaḥ kāryam akhilaṁ
bhūmer bhāro'vatāritaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *avadhāritam* – is understood; *etan* – this; *me* – by Me; *yat* – that which; *āttha* – you have said; *vibudha-īśvara* – O controller of the demigods, Brahmā; *kṛtam* – is completed; *vaḥ* – your; *kāryam* – work; *akhilam* – all; *bhūmeḥ* – of the earth; *bhāraḥ* – the burden; *avatāritaḥ* – is removed.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord said: O lord of the demigods, Brahmā, I understand your prayers and request. Having removed the burden of the earth, I have executed everything that was required on your behalf.

TEXT 6.29

*tat idam yādava-kulaṁ
vīrya-śaurya-śriyoddhatam
lokaṁ jighṛkṣat ruddhaṁ me
velayeva mahārṇavaḥ*

tat idam – this very; *yādava-kulam* – Yādava dynasty; *vīrya* – by their power; *śaurya* – courage; *śriyā* – and opulence; *uddhatam* – magnified; *lokaṁ* – the whole world; *jighṛkṣat* – threatening to devour; *ruddham* – has been checked; *me* – by Me; *velayā* – by the shore; *iva* – just as; *mahā-arṇavaḥ* – a great ocean.

TRANSLATION

That very Yādava dynasty in which I appeared became greatly magnified in opulence, especially in their physical strength and courage, to the extent that they threatened to devour the whole world. Therefore I have stopped them, just as the shore holds back the great ocean.

PURPORT

The heroes of the Yadu dynasty were so powerful that even the demigods could not check them. The enthusiasm of the Yadus was unlimitedly increased by their victories in dangerous battles, and they could not be killed. Due to their martial spirit they naturally desired to establish their power over the whole world; therefore the Lord checked them and withdrew them from the earth.

TEXT 6.30

*yady asaṁhr̥tya dr̥ptānām
yadūnām vipulam kulam
gantāsmi anena loka'yam
udvelena vinaṅkṣyati*

yadi – if; *asaṁhr̥tya* – without withdrawing; *dr̥ptānām* – of the overly proud; *yadūnām* – Yadus; *vipulam* – the vast; *kulam* – dynasty; *gantā asmi* – I go; *anena* – for that reason; *lokaḥ* – the world; *ayam* – this; *udvelena* – by the overflow (of the Yadus); *vinaṅkṣyati* – will be destroyed.

TRANSLATION

If I were to leave this world without withdrawing the overly proud members of the Yadu dynasty, the whole world would be destroyed by the deluge of their unlimited expansion.

PURPORT

Just as a tidal wave overwhelms the boundary of the shore and wreaks havoc on innocent people, similarly, there was imminent danger that the powerful Yadu dynasty might expand beyond all boundaries of social and political control. The members of the Yadu dynasty had become proud because of their apparent familial relationship with the Personality of Godhead. Although they were very religious and devoted to brahminical culture, they had become, as indicated by the word *dr̥ptānām*, affected by pride due to their relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Furthermore, due to their intense love for Kṛṣṇa, they would certainly feel such intense separation after the Lord's departure to the spiritual world that they would become maddened and thus become an unbearable burden on the earth. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has pointed out, however, that the earth herself, due to attachment for Kṛṣṇa, would never consider Kṛṣṇa's own family members to be anything but a welcome burden. Still, Kṛṣṇa wanted to remove this burden. The example is given that for the pleasure of her husband a beautiful young wife may decorate herself with many golden ornaments. These ornaments constitute a painful burden for the delicate wife, but although she is willing to bear this burden, the loving husband removes the ornaments for the pleasure of his wife. So the Lord, desiring to apply the wisdom of "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," took precautions to remove from the earth the burden of the Yadu dynasty.

TEXT 6.31

*idānīm nāśa ārabdhaḥ
kulasya dvija-śāpa-jaḥ
yāsyāmi bhavanam brahman
etat-ante tavānagha*

idānīm – just now; *nāśaḥ* – the annihilation; *ārabdhaḥ* – has begun; *kulasya* – of the dynasty; *dvija-śāpa-jaḥ* – due to the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*; *yāsyāmi* – I will go; *bhavanam* – to the place of residence; *brahman* – O Brahmā; *etat-ante* – after this; *tava* – your; *anagha* – O sinless one.

TRANSLATION

Now due to the brāhmaṇas' curse, the annihilation of My family has already begun. O sinless Brahmā, when this annihilation is finished and I am enroute to Vaikuṅṭha, I will pay a small visit to your abode.

PURPORT

The members of the Yadu dynasty are eternal servants of the Lord; therefore Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has explained the word *nāśaḥ*, or “destruction,” as *nigūḍhāyām dvārakāyām praveśanam ity arthaḥ*: the members of the Yadu dynasty entered into the hidden or confidential Dvārakā in the spiritual world, which is not manifested here on the earth. In other words, Dvārakā, the Lord’s abode, is manifest on the earth, and when the earthly Dvārakā is apparently removed, the eternal Dvārakā in the spiritual world remains as it is. Since the members of the Yadu dynasty are eternal associates of the Lord, there is no question of their destruction. Only our conditioned vision of their manifestation was destroyed. This is the meaning of the word *nāśaḥ*.

TEXT 6.32

*śrī-śuka uvāca
ity ukto loka-nāthena
svayam-bhūḥ praṇipatyā tam
saha deva-gaṇair devaḥ
sva-dhāma samapadyata*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *iti* – thus; *uktaḥ* – being addressed; *loka-nāthena* – by the Lord of the universe, Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *svayam-bhūḥ* – self-born Brahmā; *praṇipatyā* – falling down to offer obeisances; *tam* – unto Him; *saha* – along with; *deva-gaṇaiḥ* – all the different demigods; *devaḥ* – the great Lord Brahmā; *sva-dhāma* – to his personal abode; *samapadyata* – returned.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus addressed by the Lord of the universe, the self-born Brahmā fell down in obeisances at the lotus feet of the Lord. Surrounded by all the demigods, the great Brahmā then returned to his personal abode.

TEXT 6.33

*atha tasyām mahotpātān
dvāravatyām samutthitān
vilokya bhagavān āha
yadu-vṛddhān samāgatān*

atha – thereafter; *tasyām* – in that city; *mahā-utpātān* – serious disturbances; *dvāravatyām* – in Dvārakā; *samutthitān* – developed; *vilokya* – observing; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *āha* – said; *yadu-vṛddhān* – to the elder Yadus; *samāgatān* – assembled.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter, the Personality of Godhead observed that tremendous disturbances were taking place in the holy city of Dvārakā. Thus the Lord spoke to the assembled senior members of the Yadu dynasty as follows.

PURPORT

Muni-vāsa-nivāse kiṁ ghaṭetāriṣṭa-darśanam: there is no possibility of actual disturbances or inauspicious events in holy places inhabited by saintly persons. Thus the so-called disturbances in Dvārakā were directly enacted by the Personality of Godhead for His own auspicious purpose.

TEXT 6.34

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ete vai su-mahotpātā
vyuttiṣṭhantīha sarvataḥ
śāpaś ca naḥ kulasyāsīd
brāhmaṇebhyo duratyayaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Personality of Godhead said; *ete* – these; *vai* – indeed; *su-mahā-utpātāḥ* – very great disturbances; *vyuttiṣṭhanti* – are rising up; *iha* – here; *sarvataḥ* – on all sides; *śāpaḥ* – the curse; *ca* – and; *naḥ* – our; *kulasya* – of the family; *āsīt* – there has been; *brāhmaṇebhyaḥ* – by the *brāhmaṇas*; *duratyayaḥ* – impossible to counteract.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Our dynasty has been cursed by the brāhmaṇas. Such a curse is impossible to counteract, and thus great disturbances are appearing everywhere around us.

TEXT 6.35

*na vastavyam ihāsmābhir
jijīviṣubhir āryakāḥ
prabhāsaṁ su-mahat-puṇyaṁ
yāsyāmo'dyaiva mā ciram*

na vastavyam – should not reside; *iha* – here; *asmābhiḥ* – we; *jijīviṣubhiḥ* – desiring to live; *āryakāḥ* – O venerable ones; *prabhāsaṁ* – to the holy place called Prabhāsa; *su-mahat* – very much; *puṇyam* – pious; *yāsyāmaḥ* – let us go; *adya* – today; *eva* – even; *mā ciram* – without delay.

TRANSLATION

My dear respected elders, we must not remain any longer in this place if we wish to keep our lives intact. Let us go this very day to the most pious place Prabhāsa. We have no time to delay.

PURPORT

Many demigods, coming to the earth to assist Lord Kṛṣṇa in His pastimes, took birth within the Yadu dynasty and appeared as Lord Kṛṣṇa's associates. When the Lord had completed His earthly pastimes He wanted to send these demigods back to their previous service in universal administration. Each

demigod was to return to his respective planet. The transcendental city of Dvārakā is so auspicious that whoever dies there immediately goes back home, back to Godhead, but because the demigod members of the Yadu dynasty, in many cases, were not yet prepared to go back to Godhead, they had to die outside the city of Dvārakā. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa, pretending to be an ordinary living being, said, “We are all in danger. Let us all immediately go to Prabhāsa.” In this way, by His *yoga-māyā* Kṛṣṇa bewildered such demigod members of the Yadu dynasty and led them away to the holy place Prabhāsa.

Since Dvārakā is *parama-maṅgala*, the most auspicious place, not even an imitation of inauspiciousness can take place there. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastime of removing the Yadu dynasty is ultimately auspicious, but since it outwardly appeared inauspicious, it could not take place in Dvārakā; therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa led the Yadus away from Dvārakā. After having sent the demigods back to their planets, Lord Kṛṣṇa planned to return to the spiritual world, Vaikuṅṭha, in His original form and remain in the eternal city of Dvārakā.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has made the following important comments on this verse. Prabhāsa is a famous holy place located near the Veraval railway station, within the region of Junagarah. In Chapter Thirty of the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is written that after hearing the words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Yādavas went to the mainland from the island city of Dvārakā by means of boats and then traveled to Prabhāsa in chariots. At Prabhāsa-kṣetra they drank a beverage called *maireya* and became engaged in a mutual quarrel. A great battle ensued, and killing each other with hard stalks of cane, the members of the Yadu dynasty acted out the pastime of their own annihilation.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, manifesting His four-armed form, sat down under a *pippala* tree, placing His left foot, the heel of which was colored red like the red *koka-nada* lotus, upon His right thigh. A hunter named Jarā, watching from the shore of the ocean at Prabhāsa, mistook the Lord’s red-colored foot to be the face of a deer and shot his arrow at it.

At the base of that same *pippala* tree under which Lord Kṛṣṇa had sat there is now a temple. One mile away from the tree, on the seashore, is the Vīra-prabhañjana Maṭha, and it is said that from this point the hunter Jarā fired his arrow.

In the conclusion to his work *Mahābhārata-tātparyā-nirṇaya*, Śrī Madhvācārya-pāda has written the following purport to the *mauṣala-līlā*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, in order to bewilder the demons and ensure that the word of His own devotees and of the *brāhmaṇas* be maintained, created a body of material energy into which the arrow was shot. But the Lord’s actual four-armed form was never touched by the arrow of Jarā, who is actually the Lord’s devotee Bhṛgu Ṛṣi. In a previous age Bhṛgu Muni had placed his foot on the chest of Lord Viṣṇu. In order to counteract the offense of improperly placing his foot on the Lord’s chest, Bhṛgu had to

take birth as a degraded hunter. But even though a great devotee willingly accepts such a low birth, the Personality of Godhead cannot tolerate seeing His devotee in such a fallen condition. Thus the Personality of Godhead arranged that at the end of Dvāpara-yuga, when the Lord was winding up His manifest pastimes, His devotee Bhṛgu, in the form of the hunter Jarā, would cast the arrow into a material body created by the Lord's illusory energy. Thus the hunter would become remorseful, gain release from his degraded birth and go back to Vaikuṅṭha-loka.

Therefore, to please His devotee Bhṛgu and to confuse the demons, the Supreme Lord manifested His *mauṣala-līlā* at Prabhāsa, but it should be understood that this is an illusory pastime. The Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, from His very appearance on the earth, did not manifest any of the material qualities of ordinary human beings. The Lord did not appear from the womb of His mother. Rather, by His inconceivable power He descended into the maternity room. At the time of His giving up this mortal world, He similarly manifested an illusory situation for the sake of bewildering the demons. To bewilder the nondevotees, the Lord created an illusory body out of His material energy while simultaneously remaining personally in His own *sac-cid-ānanda* body, and thus He manifested the downfall of an illusory material form. This pretense effectively bewilders foolish demons, but Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's actual transcendental, eternal body of bliss never experiences death.

Also at Prabhāsa-kṣetra there is the holy place known as Bhṛgu-tīrtha, which was manifested by Lord Paraśurāma. The place at which the two rivers Sarasvatī and Hiraṇyā flow together into the ocean is named Bhṛgu-tīrtha, and there the hunter cast his arrow. There is an elaborate description of Prabhāsa-tīrtha in the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*. There are also many *phala-śrutis* given within the *Mahābhārata* in connection with Prabhāsa-tīrtha. *Phala-śrutis* are scriptural statements that promise various auspicious results for one who performs a particular pious activity. In the following verses the Lord Himself will explain the particular benefits to be derived from visiting Prabhāsa-kṣetra and performing religious activities there.

TEXT 6.36

*yatra snātvā dakṣa-śāpād
grhīto yakṣmaṇodu-rāṭ
vimuktaḥ kilbiṣāt sadyo
bheje bhūyaḥ kalodayam*

yatra – where; *snātvā* – taking bath; *dakṣa-śāpāt* – because of the curse of Prajāpati Dakṣa; *grhītaḥ* – seized; *yakṣmaṇā* – by consumptive lung disease; *uḍu-rāṭ* – the king of stars, the moon; *vimuktaḥ* – freed; *kilbiṣāt* – from his sinful reaction; *sadyaḥ* – immediately; *bheje* – he assumed; *bhūyaḥ* – once again; *kalā* – of his phases; *udayaṁ* – the increasing.

TRANSLATION

Once, the moon was afflicted with consumption because of the curse of Dakṣa, but just by taking bath at Prabhāsa-kṣetra, the moon was immediately freed from his sinful reaction and again resumed the waxing of his phases.

TEXTS 6.37-38

*vayaṁ ca tasminn āplutya
tarpayitvā pitṛṇ surān
bhojayitvoṣijo viprān
nānā-guṇavatāndhasā
teṣu dānāni pātreṣu
śraddhayoptvā mahānti vai
vṛjināni tariṣyāmo
dānair naubhir ivārṇavam*

vayam - we; *ca* - also; *tasmin* - at that place; *āplutya* - bathing; *tarpayitvā* - satisfying by offerings; *pitṛṇ* - the departed forefathers; *surān* - and the demigods; *bhojayitvā* - feeding; *uṣijaḥ* - worshipable; *viprān* - the *brāhmaṇas*; *nānā* - various; *guṇa-vatā* - having tastes; *andhasā* - with foodstuffs; *teṣu* - in them (the *brāhmaṇas*); *dānāni* - gifts; *pātreṣu* - as fitting candidates for charity; *śraddhayā* - faithfully; *uptvā* - sowing (i.e. offering to them); *mahānti* - great; *vai* - indeed; *vṛjināni* - the dangers; *tariṣyāmaḥ* - we will cross over; *dānaiḥ* - by our charity; *naubhiḥ* - with boats; *iva* - as if; *arṇavam* - the ocean.

TRANSLATION

By bathing at Prabhāsa-kṣetra, by offering sacrifice there to placate the forefathers and demigods, by feeding the worshipable brāhmaṇas with various delicious foodstuffs and by bestowing opulent gifts upon them as the most suitable candidates for charity, we will certainly cross over these terrible dangers through such acts of charity, just as one can cross over a great ocean in a suitable boat.

TEXT 6.39

*śrī-śuka uvāca
evam bhagavatādiṣṭā
yādavāḥ kuru-nandana
gantum kṛta-dhiyas tīrtham
syandanān samayūyujan*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca - Śrī Śukadeva said; *evam* - thus; *bhagavatā* - by the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ādiṣṭāḥ* - instructed; *yādavāḥ* - the Yādavas; *kuru-nandana* - O favorite son of the Kurus; *gantum* - to go; *kṛta-dhiyaḥ* - having made up their minds; *tīrtham* - to the holy place; *syandanān* - to their chariots; *samayūyujan* - they yoked their horses.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O favorite son of the Kurus, thus advised by the Personality of Godhead, the Yādavas made up their minds to go to that holy place, Prabhāsa-kṣetra, and thus yoked their horses to their chariots.

TEXTS 6.40-41

*tan nirīkṣyoddhavo rājan
śrutvā bhagavatoditam
dṛṣṭvāriṣṭāni ghorāṇi
nityam kṛṣṇam anuvrataḥ
vivikta upasaṅgamyā
jagatām īśvareśvaram
praṇamya śirasā pādau
prāñjalī tam abhāṣata*

tat - that; *nirīkṣya* - seeing; *uddhavaḥ* - Uddhava; *rājan* - O King; *śrutvā* - hearing; *bhagavatā* - by the Lord; *uditam* - what had been said; *dṛṣṭvā* - observing; *ariṣṭāni* - evil omens; *ghorāṇi* - fearful; *nityam* - always; *kṛṣṇam* - of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *anuvrataḥ* - a faithful follower; *vivikte* - in privacy; *upasaṅgamyā* - approaching; *jagatām* - of all the moving creatures within the universe; *īśvara* - of the controllers; *īśvaram* - the one supreme controller; *praṇamya* - bowing down; *śirasā* - with his head; *pādau* - at His feet; *prāñjaliḥ* - with hands folded in submission; *tam* - to Him; *abhāṣata* - spoke.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, Uddhava was a constantly faithful follower of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Upon seeing the imminent departure of the Yādavas, hearing from them of the Lord's instructions and taking note of the fearful omens, he approached the Personality of Godhead in a private place. He bowed down with his head at the lotus feet of the supreme controller of the universe and with folded hands addressed Him as follows.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī there cannot be any actual disturbance in the Lord's own abode. The great disasters apparently occurring in Dvārakā were an external show created by the Lord to facilitate His pastimes. We can understand the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa only by hearing from the recognized *ācāryas*. Lord Kṛṣṇa is not a mundane historical figure, and His activities cannot be confined within the tiny limits of material logic. Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are an exhibition of His *acintya-śakti*, or inconceivable potency, which functions according to higher, spiritual laws, unknown to the blind conditioned souls and their petty material logic.

TEXT 6.42

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
deva-deveśa yogeśa
puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtana
samhṛtyaitat kulam nūnam
lokaṁ santyakṣyate bhavān
vipra-śāpaṁ samartha'pi
pratyahan na yad īśvaraḥ*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *deva-deva* – of the greatest among the demigods; *īśa* – O ultimate God; *yoga-īśa* – O master of all mystic power; *puṇya* – which are pious; *śravaṇa-kīrtana* – O You, hearing and chanting the glories of whom; *samhṛtya* – withdrawing; *etat* – this; *kulam* – dynasty; *nūnam* – is it not so; *lokaṁ* – this world; *santyakṣyate* – are about to give up once and for all; *bhavān* – You; *vipra-śāpam* – the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*; *samarthaḥ* – capable; *api* – although; *pratyahan na* – You did not counteract; *yat* – because; *īśvaraḥ* – the Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: O my Lord, O supreme God among all the demigods, real piety is invoked simply by hearing and chanting Your transcendental glories. My Lord, it appears that You will now withdraw Your dynasty, and thus You Yourself will finally give up Your pastimes within this universe. You are the supreme controller and the master of all mystic power. But although You are fully capable of counteracting the brāhmaṇas' curse against Your dynasty, You are not doing so, and Your disappearance is imminent.

PURPORT

As previously mentioned, Kṛṣṇa's own dynasty can never be destroyed; therefore the word *samhṛtya* means that Kṛṣṇa was taking the Yādavas with Him as He left this material world. However, in the eyes of ordinary, unenlightened persons the withdrawal of the Yadu dynasty appears to be its destruction. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has very nicely explained the statement of Uddhava as follows.

Kṛṣṇa is addressed as *deva-deva*, or the supreme God among the gods, because He expertly solved all of the problems of the demigods by His incarnation within the universe. The Lord rid the world of demons and firmly established both His devotees and religious principles. Lord Kṛṣṇa is addressed here as *yogeśa* because He not only performed work on behalf of the demigods, but also revealed His beautiful, transcendental form, full of transcendental qualities and ecstasies, for the pleasure of His pure devotees. Kṛṣṇa is called *puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtana* because when by His internal mystic potency He exhibited His humanlike activities, the Lord stimulated the writing of innumerable Vedic scriptures about His pastimes. Thus persons who would be born in the future, like ourselves, would be able to hear and chant about the Lord's activities and also go back home, back to Godhead. Having insured the transcendental bliss and liberation of all of His devotees, even those who would be born in the future, Kṛṣṇa decided the time had

come for Him to leave this material universe. Uddhava could understand the Lord's desire and said to Kṛṣṇa, "You have instructed the Yādavas to counteract the *brāhmaṇas'* curse by taking bath at Prabhāsakṣetra, but how could mere bathing in a holy place be of greater value than seeing You, the Personality of Godhead, face to face? Since the Yādavas are always seeing Your transcendental form, and since You are the Supreme Lord, what is the use of their taking bath in a so-called holy place? Therefore You obviously have some other purpose. If You actually wanted to counteract the curse, You could simply say, 'Let this curse not act,' and the curse would immediately be neutralized. Therefore You must be preparing to leave this universe, and that is why You have not counteracted the curse."

TEXT 6.43

*nāham tavaṅghri-kamalam
kṣaṇārdham api keśava
tyaktum samutsahe nātha
sva-dhāma naya mām api*

na - am not; *aham* - I; *tava* - Your; *aṅghri-kamalam* - lotus feet; *kṣaṇa* - of a moment; *ardham* - for half; *api* - even; *keśava* - O killer of the demon Keśī; *tyaktum* - giving up; *samutsahe* - am I able to tolerate; *nātha* - O master; *sva-dhāma* - to Your own abode; *naya* - please take; *mām* - me; *api* - also.

TRANSLATION

O Lord Keśava, my dear master, I cannot tolerate giving up Your lotus feet even for a fraction of a moment. I urge You to take me along with You to Your own abode.

PURPORT

Uddhava understood that Kṛṣṇa was going to withdraw the Yadu dynasty, and thus he begged the Lord to take him along to the Lord's abode. He had no desire to merge into Kṛṣṇa's impersonal effulgence; instead he wanted to go to the Lord's spiritual abode and continue associating with Kṛṣṇa as His dearest friend. Kṛṣṇa is the Personality of Godhead and can do whatever He likes, but the devotee begs the Lord for the chance to serve Him. Although the Lord manifests within the material world His various abodes, such as Vṛndāvana, Dvārakā and Mathurā, and although these are certainly nondifferent from their counterparts in the spiritual world, the most advanced devotees, overwhelmed with desire to personally serve the Lord, are very eager to go to the Lord's original spiritual planet. As stated by Lord Kapila in the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the pure devotees have no desire for liberation. Because of their eagerness to render service, they urge the Lord to appear before them. The six Gosvāmīs, due to their intense eagerness to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, urgently searched after Them, calling out Their names in the forests of Vṛndāvana. Similarly, Uddhava is urging the Lord to take him to His own abode so that Uddhava's personal service to the Lord's lotus feet will not be interrupted even for a moment.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has pointed out that immature conditioned souls think that Lord Kṛṣṇa is an ordinary *jīva* soul engaged in material activities and was thus unable to protect His own dynasty from the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*. Uddhava’s statement corrects such unfortunate persons. It is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself who awarded pious living entities birth in brahminical families, and then Lord Kṛṣṇa further awarded them the potency to curse His dynasty. And finally, Lord Kṛṣṇa personally kept the curse intact, although He was capable of neutralizing it. Therefore in the beginning, middle and end, directly and indirectly, in the past, present and future, Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He is completely transcendental to even the slightest touch of material illusion or impotence.

TEXT 6.44

*tava vikrīḍitam kṛṣṇa
nṛṇām parama-maṅgalam
karṇa-pīyūṣam āsādyā
tyajanty anya-sprhām janāḥ*

tava – Your; *vikrīḍitam* – pastimes; *kṛṣṇa* – O Kṛṣṇa; *nṛṇām* – for men; *parama-maṅgalam* – supremely auspicious; *karṇa* – for the ears; *pīyūṣam* – nectar; *āsādyā* – having tasted; *tyajanti* – they reject; *anya* – for other things; *sprhām* – their desires; *janāḥ* – persons.

TRANSLATION

O my dear Kṛṣṇa, Your pastimes are supremely auspicious for mankind and are an intoxicating beverage for the ears. Tasting such pastimes, people forget their desires for other things.

PURPORT

Anyā-sprhām, or “desire for things other than Kṛṣṇa,” indicates the material desire to enjoy wife, children, money, and so on. Ultimately, the materialist may desire religious salvation for his personal comfort and satisfaction, but all such desires are mundane, because on the spiritual platform the pure soul thinks only of the Lord’s pleasure and the Lord’s service. Therefore, a pure devotee can never give up Kṛṣṇa, even for a moment, although for Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure he can give up the entire universe.

TEXT 6.45

*śayyāsanāṭana-sthāna-
snāna-kṛīḍāśanādiṣu
katham tvām priyam ātmānam
vayam bhaktāḥ tyajema hi*

śayyā – in lying down; *āsana* – sitting; *aṭana* – walking; *sthāna* – standing; *snāna* – bathing; *kṛīḍā* – taking recreation; *āsana* – eating; *ādiṣu* – and other activities; *katham* – how; *tvām* – You; *priyam* – dear; *ātmānam* – Self; *vayam* – we; *bhaktāḥ* – Your devotees; *tyajema* – can reject; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, You are the Supreme Soul, and thus You are most dear to us. We are Your devotees, and how can we possibly reject You or live without You even for a moment? Whether we are lying down, sitting, walking, standing, bathing, enjoying recreation, eating or doing anything else, we are constantly engaged in Your service.

PURPORT

One should be constantly engaged in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. By hearing about Kṛṣṇa and by serving Him, we can give up the illusion of trying to enjoy something separately from the Supreme Lord. If we neglect such hearing and serving, our minds will become bewildered by the illusory energy of the Lord, and seeing the world as separate from Kṛṣṇa, we will take it as a place meant for our own sense gratification. This gross ignorance brings nothing but trouble to the living entity.

TEXT 6.46

*tvayopabhukta-srag-gandha-
vāso-'lañkāra-carcitāḥ
ucchiṣṭa-bhojino dāsās
tava māyām jayema hi*

tvayā – by You; *upabhukta* – already enjoyed; *srag* – with the garlands; *gandha* – fragrances; *vāsaḥ* – garments; *alañkāra* – and ornaments; *carcitāḥ* – adorned; *ucchiṣṭa* – the remnants of Your food; *bhojinaḥ* – eating; *dāsāḥ* – Your servants; *tava* – Your; *māyām* – illusory energy; *jayema* – we will conquer; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

Simply by decorating ourselves with the garlands, fragrant oils, clothes and ornaments that You have already enjoyed, and by eating the remnants of Your meals, we, Your servants, will indeed conquer Your illusory energy.

PURPORT

It is clear from this verse that Uddhava is not approaching the Lord for liberation from the illusory energy. As a personal, confidential associate of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava was undoubtedly a completely liberated soul. He is praying to the Lord because he cannot bear the thought of living without Kṛṣṇa even for a moment. This feeling is called love of God. Uddhava is addressing the Lord as follows: “Even if Your illusory energy tries to attack us, my Lord, we will very easily conquer her by our powerful weapons, which are the remnants of Your foodstuffs, clothes, ornaments, and so on. In other words, we will easily conquer over *māyā* by *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, and not by useless speculation and mental concoction.”

TEXT 6.47

*vāta-vasanā ya ṛṣayaḥ
śramaṇā ūrdhra-manthinaḥ
brahmākhyam dhāma te yānti
śāntāḥ sannyāsino'malāḥ*

vāta-vasanāḥ – dressed by the air (naked); *ye* – those who are; *ṛṣayaḥ* – sages; *śramaṇāḥ* – strict observers of spiritual practices; *ūrdhva-manthinaḥ* – who have conserved their semen to the point that it has risen up to their heads; *brahma-ākhyam* – known as Brahman; *dhāma* – the (impersonal) spiritual abode; *te* – they; *yānti* – to go; *śāntāḥ* – peaceful; *sannyāsinaḥ* – members of the renounced order of life; *amalāḥ* – sinless.

TRANSLATION

Naked sages who seriously endeavor in spiritual practice, who have raised their semen upward, who are peaceful and sinless members of the renounced order, attain the spiritual abode called Brahman.

PURPORT

In Chapter Twelve of *Bhagavad-gītā* it is stated, *kleśo 'dhikataras teṣāṃ avyaktāsakta-cetasām*: those who are attached to the impersonal feature of the Personality of Godhead must endure grueling penances in order to achieve impersonal liberation in the realm of Brahman. Also it is stated in the *Bhāgavatam*, *āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ/ patanty adho 'nāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*. *Kṛcchreṇa*: with great struggle and trouble the *yogīs* climb their way up into the impersonal effulgence called *brahmajyoti*, but again they slip out of the *jyoti* and fall back into the material world because they do not take shelter of the Personality of Godhead.

Envious fools object to the “paternalism” of the Personality of Godhead, but these fools cannot take credit for the creation of their own body, brain or energy, nor can they claim credit for the air, rain, vegetables, fruits, sun, moon, and so on. In other words, they are totally dependent on the mercy of God at every second, and yet they arrogantly state that they do not want to accept the shelter of the Lord, because they are self-sufficient. In fact, some bewildered living entities even think that they themselves are God, although they cannot explain why “God” has to struggle and toil to achieve meager success in the *yoga* system. Therefore Uddhava is pointing out that, unlike the impersonalists and meditators, the pure devotees very easily cross over the illusory energy because they are totally attached to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa is always transcendental, and if one is firmly attached to the Lord’s lotus feet, then he is also transcendental. The causeless mercy of Kṛṣṇa is more valuable than millions and billions of years of one’s own struggling and straining. One should try to get the Lord’s mercy, and then everything will become very easy on the path of spiritual realization. In this age one can achieve the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa by constantly chanting His holy name, as recommended in the *śāstra*:

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam*

*kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatiḥ anyathā*

(Bṛhan-nāradiya Purāṇa)

If one constantly chants Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy names, avoiding offenses against the names, then surely one will achieve the same result as Uddhava. Uddhava was not interested in so-called Brahman realization, but rather he wanted to go on drinking the maddening nectar of the beautiful smiling of the Lord's moonlike face.

TEXTS 6.48-49

*vayaṁ tv iha mahā-yogin
bhramantaḥ karma-vartmasu
tvad-vārtayā tariṣyāmaḥ
tāvakaiḥ dustaraṁ tamaḥ
smarantaḥ kīrtayantas te
kṛtāni gaditāni ca
gaty-utsmitekṣaṇa-kṣveli
yaḥ nṛ-loka-vidāmbanam*

vayaṁ - we; *tu* - on the other hand; *iha* - in this world; *mahā-yogin* - O greatest of *yogīs*; *bhramantaḥ* - wandering; *karma-vartmasu* - on the paths of material work; *tvad* - of You; *vārtayā* - by discussion of the topics; *tariṣyāmaḥ* - will cross over; *tāvakaiḥ* - along with Your devotees; *dustaram* - insurmountable; *tamaḥ* - darkness; *smarantaḥ* - remembering; *kīrtayantaḥ* - glorifying; *te* - Your; *kṛtāni* - deeds; *gaditāni* - words; *ca* - also; *gati* - movements; *utsmite* - widely smiling; *īkṣaṇa* - glances; *kṣveli* - and loving pastimes; *yaḥ* - which are; *nṛ-loka* - of human society; *vidāmbanam* - a clever imitation.

TRANSLATION

O greatest of mystics, although we are conditioned souls wandering on the path of fruitive work, we will certainly cross beyond the darkness of this material world simply by hearing about Your Lordship in the association of Your devotees. Thus we are always remembering and glorifying the wonderful things You do and the wonderful things You say. We ecstatically recall Your amorous pastimes with Your confidential conjugal devotees and how You boldly smile and move about while engaged in such youthful pastimes. My dear Lord, Your loving pastimes are bewilderingly similar to the activities of ordinary people within this material world.

PURPORT

In this verse Uddhava, by stating *bhramantaḥ karma-vartmasu*, humbly presents himself as one of the conditioned souls entangled in fruitive activities. Still, Uddhava is confident that he will certainly cross over the illusory energy because he is addicted to chanting and remembering the

glorious activities and words of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, Rūpa Gosvāmī has stated:

*īhā yasya harer dāsye
karmaṇā manasā girā
nikhilāsv apy avasthāsu
jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate*

Although one may outwardly appear to be involved in this material world, if one is always engaged, twenty-four hours a day, in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, then one is considered to be a liberated soul. Uddhava states here that hearing and chanting the holy name and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa is infinitely more effective than becoming a naked *yogī* in the forest and running the constant risk of becoming, due to lusty desires and sex indulgence, a naked monkey in the forest. Uddhava is begging the Lord for the mercy of His Sudarśana *cakra*, whose effulgence is represented by the process of remembering and chanting the pastimes of the Lord. One who absorbs himself in the incomparable bliss of thinking of the Lord's abode easily becomes free from all lamentation, illusion and fear. That is the recommendation of Śrī Uddhava.

TEXT 6.50

*śrī-śuka uvāca
evam vijñāpito rājan
bhagavān devakī-sutaḥ
ekāntinaṁ priyaṁ bhṛtyam
uddhavaṁ samabhāṣata*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca - Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *evam* - in this way; *vijñāpitaḥ* - requested; *rājan* - O King; *bhagavān* - the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *devakī-sutaḥ* - the son of Devakī; *ekāntinaṁ* - in private; *priyam* - dear; *bhṛtyam* - to the servant; *uddhavam* - Uddhava; *samabhāṣata* - He spoke at length.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King Parīkṣit, thus addressed, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, began to reply confidentially to His dear, unalloyed servant Uddhava.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, the conditioned living entities, by their movements, laughter, activities and words, simply bind themselves more and more in material existence. But if they engage in hearing and chanting about the pastimes of the Personality of Godhead, the conditioned souls will achieve liberation from the bondage of repeated birth and death. This process of supreme liberation will now be elaborately described by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to His dearest devotee Śrī Uddhava.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Sixth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "The Yadu Dynasty Retires to Prabhāsa."

CHAPTER SEVEN

Lord Kṛṣṇa Instructs Uddhava

As described in this chapter, the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, replied to Uddhava's prayerful entreaty that he be allowed to return with Him to His abode. Kṛṣṇa advised Uddhava to take to the renounced order of *sannyāsa*, and when Uddhava showed interest in more elaborate instructions, the Lord further described the *avadhūta*'s account of his twenty-four spiritual masters. After hearing Uddhava's prayerful request to be taken back with Him to the spiritual world, Lord Kṛṣṇa informed him that He was indeed desirous of returning to His own personal abode because the purpose of His descent had been successfully fulfilled and the misfortunes of Kali-yuga would soon beset the earth. He thus advised Uddhava to take up *sannyāsa* by fixing his mind upon Him and establishing himself in theoretical and realized transcendental knowledge. The Lord further instructed Uddhava that while remaining untouched by contamination and compassionately disposed to all beings, he should begin wandering throughout this temporary world, which is simply the combined manifestation of the Lord's illusory energy and the imaginations of the living entities.

Uddhava then stated that renouncing material things in a spirit of detachment is the source of the highest auspiciousness, but such renunciation is certainly extremely difficult to accomplish for living entities other than the devotees of the Supreme Lord, because they are very attached to sense gratification. Uddhava expressed the need for some instruction by which foolish persons who misidentify the body as the self can be convinced to carry out their duties in accordance with the order of the Supreme Lord. Even great demigods like Brahmā are not completely surrendered to the Lord, but Uddhava declared that he himself had taken shelter of the only true instructor of the Absolute Truth – Lord Nārāyaṇa, the all-perfect, all-knowing master of Vaikuṅṭha and the only real friend of all living entities. Hearing this, the Supreme Lord replied that actually the *jīva* soul is his own *guru*. Within this human body, the living beings can search out the Supreme Lord by positive and negative means and ultimately achieve Him. For this reason the human form of life is most dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this regard, Lord Kṛṣṇa began to describe an ancient conversation between a *brāhmaṇa avadhūta* and the great king Yadu.

The son of Yayāti, Mahārāja Yadu, once encountered an *avadhūta* who was traveling about, here and there, in great transcendental ecstasy and was acting unpredictably, just like someone who has become haunted by a ghost. The King inquired from the holy man about the cause of his wandering and his ecstatic condition, and the *avadhūta* replied that he had received various instructions from twenty-four different *gurus* – the earth, the wind, the sky, the water, fire, and so on. Because of the knowledge he had gained from them, he was able to travel about the earth in a liberated state.

From the earth he had learned how to be sober, and from the two manifestations of earth, namely the mountain and the tree, he had learned, respectively, how to serve others and how to dedicate one's whole life to the

benefit of others. From the wind, manifesting in the form of the vital air within the body, he had learned how to be satisfied with merely keeping oneself alive, and from the external wind he had learned how to remain uncontaminated by the body and the objects of the senses. From the sky he had learned how the soul, which pervades all material substances, is both indivisible and imperceptible, and from the water he had learned how to be naturally clear and purifying. From the fire he had learned how to devour all things without becoming dirtied and how to destroy all the inauspicious desires of those who make offerings to him. He had also learned from fire how the Supreme Soul enters into every body and appears to assume the identity of each. From the moon he had learned how the various phases the material body undergoes – birth, growth, dwindling and death – do not affect the embodied soul. From the sun he had learned how to avoid entanglement even while coming into contact with sense objects, and he had also learned about the two different modes of perception based on seeing the real form of the soul and seeing false designative coverings. From the pigeon he had learned how too much affection and excessive attachment are not good for one. This human body is the open door to liberation, but if one becomes attached to family life like the pigeon, one is compared to a person who has climbed up to a high place just to fall down again.

TEXT 7.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
yat āttha mām mahā-bhāga
tat-cikīrṣitam eva me
brahmā bhavo loka-pālāḥ
svar-vāsam me'bhikāṅkṣiṇaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *yat* – that which; *āttha* – you spoke; *mām* – to Me; *mahā-bhāga* – O greatly fortunate Uddhava; *tat* – that; *cikīrṣitam* – the program that I am desiring to execute; *eva* – certainly; *me* – Mine; *brahmā* – Lord Brahmā; *bhavaḥ* – Lord Śiva; *loka-pālāḥ* – the leaders of all universal planets; *svaḥ-vāsam* – abode in Vaikuṅṭha; *me* – My; *abhikāṅkṣiṇaḥ* – they are desiring.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O greatly fortunate Uddhava, you have accurately revealed My desire to withdraw the Yadu dynasty from the earth and return to My own abode in Vaikuṅṭha. Thus Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and all other planetary rulers are now praying for Me to resume My residence in Vaikuṅṭha.

PURPORT

Each and every demigod has his particular abode in the heavenly planets within the material universe. Although Lord Viṣṇu is sometimes counted among the demigods, His abode is in Vaikuṅṭha, the spiritual sky. The demigods are universal controllers within the kingdom of *māyā*, but Viṣṇu is the Lord of the illusory potency and many other spiritual potencies. His

exalted residence does not lie within the kingdom of His insignificant maidservant *māyā*.

Lord Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead, is the Supreme Lord of all lords; the demigods are His separated parts and parcels. Being themselves minute *jīva* souls, the demigods are under the influence of the potency of *māyā*; but Lord Viṣṇu is always the supreme controller of *māyā*. The Personality of Godhead is the reservoir and root of all existence, and the material world is just a dim reflection of the brilliant scenery of His eternal, spiritual abode, where everything is infinitely beautiful and pleasurable. Viṣṇu is the supreme reality, and no living entity can ever be equal to or greater than Him. The Lord exists within His own unique category called *viṣṇu-tattva*, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All other prominent or extraordinary living entities owe their positions and potencies to the Lord. Ultimately Viṣṇu Himself is a plenary expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the original source of all the *viṣṇu-tattva* and *jīva-tattva* expansions. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa is the basis of everything.

TEXT 7.2

*mayā niṣpāditaṁ hy atra
deva-kāryam aśeṣataḥ
yat-artham avatīrṇo'ham
amśena brahmaṇārthitaḥ*

mayā – by Me; *niṣpāditaṁ* – accomplished; *hi* – certainly; *atra* – within this world; *deva-kāryam* – work for the benefit of the demigods; *aśeṣataḥ* – completely, with nothing remaining; *yat* – for whose; *artham* – sake; *avatīrṇaḥ* – incarnated; *aham* – I; *amśena* – with My plenary portion, Baladeva; *brahmaṇā* – by Lord Brahmā; *arthitaḥ* – being prayed for.

TRANSLATION

Answering the prayer of Lord Brahmā, I descended within this world along with My plenary portion, Lord Baladeva, and performed various activities on behalf of the demigods. I have now completed My mission here.

TEXT 7.3

*kulaṁ vai śāpa-nirdagdham
nañkṣyaty anyonya-vigrahāt
samudraḥ saptame hy enām
purīm ca plāvayiṣyati*

kulam – this Yadu dynasty; *vai* – definitely; *śāpa* – by the curse; *nirdagdham* – finished; *nañkṣyati* – will be destroyed; *anyonya* – mutual; *vigrahāt* – by a quarrel; *samudraḥ* – the ocean; *saptame* – on the seventh day; *hi* – certainly; *enām* – this; *purīm* – city; *ca* – also; *plāvayiṣyati* – will inundate.

TRANSLATION

Now due to the brāhmaṇas' curse the Yadu dynasty will certainly perish by fighting among themselves; and on the seventh day from today the ocean will rise up and inundate this city of Dvārakā.

PURPORT

In this and the following verses, Lord Kṛṣṇa indicates to Uddhava that he should immediately fix himself in self-realization by giving up all identification with the material world. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has pointed out that the Yadu dynasty was not actually destroyed by Lord Kṛṣṇa but merely removed from the vision of the world through the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*; similarly, the Lord's eternal abode Dvārakā can never be drowned by the ocean. Nevertheless, all external approaches to this transcendental city were covered by the ocean, and thus the Lord's abode remains inaccessible to foolish persons in Kali-yuga, as will be described later in this canto.

By the Lord's mystic potency, called *yoga-māyā*, He reveals His own form, abode, paraphernalia, pastimes, entourage, and so on, and at the suitable time He removes all of these from our mundane sight. Although bewildered conditioned souls may doubt the spiritual potency of the Lord, the pure devotees can directly perceive and relish His transcendental appearance and disappearance, which are described in *Bhagavad-gītā* as *janma karma ca me divyam*. If one faithfully accepts this perfect knowledge of the Lord's transcendental nature, then surely one will go back home, back to Godhead, and become an eternal companion of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 7.4

*yarhy evāyaṁ mayā tyakto
loko'yaṁ naṣṭa-maṅgalaḥ
bhaviṣyaty acirāt sādho
kalināpi nirākṛtaḥ*

yarhi – when; *eva* – certainly; *ayaṁ* – this; *mayā* – by Me; *tyaktaḥ* – abandoned; *lokaḥ* – the world; *ayaṁ* – this; *naṣṭa-maṅgalaḥ* – bereft of all auspiciousness or piety; *bhaviṣyati* – it will be; *acirāt* – very soon; *sādho* – O saintly one; *kalinā* – due to Kali; *api* – himself; *nirākṛtaḥ* – overwhelmed.

TRANSLATION

O saintly Uddhava, in the near future I will abandon this earth. Then, being overwhelmed by the Age of Kali, the earth will be bereft of all piety.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa's plan was to bring Uddhava back to His own eternal abode after a brief delay. Because of Uddhava's extraordinary spiritual qualities, the Lord wanted to engage him in propagating His message among other saintly persons who were not yet advanced to the stage of pure devotional service. However, the Lord assured Uddhava that he would not be bereft of the Lord's association for even a moment. Also, because Uddhava had become a perfect master of his senses, he would never be afflicted by the three modes

of material nature. In this way, before bringing Uddhava back home, back to Godhead, the Lord empowered him to carry out a specific confidential mission.

Wherever the supreme position of the Personality of Godhead is not recognized, useless mental speculation becomes very prominent, and the safe and sure path of hearing perfect Vedic knowledge becomes covered by the chaos of mental concoction. At the present time, especially in the Western countries, literally millions of books are being published on hundreds and thousands of subjects; yet despite this proliferation of mental concoction people remain totally in ignorance about the most fundamental issues of human life, namely, Who am I? Where have I come from? Where am I going? What is my soul? What is God?

The Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the reservoir of innumerable enchanting pastimes, and thus He is the source of innumerable varieties of pleasure. In fact, He is the ocean of eternal pleasure. When the eternal soul is bereft of the constitutional pleasure that comes from loving service to the Lord, he is overwhelmed and bewildered by material nature. He helplessly chases after material sense gratification, thinking that one material object is good and another bad, and constantly changes his assessment of what is good and what is bad. Thus he derives no peace or pleasure, is in constant anxiety and is repeatedly thrashed by the cruel laws of nature in the form of birth, death, old age and disease.

In this way the conditioned soul becomes a fit candidate to take birth in Kali-yuga, which is the epitome of misfortune. In Kali-yuga the living entities, who are already suffering so many tribulations, mercilessly turn against one another. Human society in Kali-yuga becomes savagely violent, and men open slaughterhouses to butcher hundreds of millions of innocent creatures. Large-scale wars are declared, and millions of human beings, even women and children, are quickly annihilated.

Unless the living entity recognizes the authority of the Personality of Godhead, he remains a helpless victim in the clutches of *māyā*, or material illusion. He concocts different solutions to release himself from *māyā*, but these solutions are themselves creations of *māyā* and thus cannot possibly release the conditioned soul. In fact, they only intensify his distress. In the next verse, Lord Kṛṣṇa specifically warns Uddhava to avoid Kali-yuga and go back home, back to Godhead. Those of us who have already taken birth in Kali-yuga should also heed this advice and immediately take all necessary steps to go back to the Lord's eternal abode for a blissful life of perfect knowledge. The material world is never a happy place, especially during the fearful days of Kali-yuga.

TEXT 7.5

*na vastavyam tvayaiveha
mayā tyakte mahī-tale*

*jano'bhadra-rucir bhadra
bhaviṣyati kalau yuge*

na - not; *vastavyam* - should remain; *tvayā* - you; *eva* - certainly; *iha* - in this world; *mayā* - by Me; *tyakte* - when it is abandoned; *mahītale* - the earth; *janaḥ* - the people; *abhadra* - sinful, inauspicious things; *ruciḥ* - addicted to; *bhadra* - O you who are sinless and auspicious; *bhaviṣyati* - will be; *kalau* - in Kali; *yuge* - in this *yuga*.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, you should not remain here on the earth once I have abandoned this world. My dear devotee, you are sinless, but in Kali-yuga the people will be addicted to all types of sinful activities; therefore do not stay here.

PURPORT

In this Age of Kali, human beings are totally unaware that the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes personally to the earth to manifest His transcendental pastimes as they are enacted in the spiritual world. Heedless of the authority of the Personality of Godhead, the fallen souls of Kali-yuga become engulfed in bitter quarrel and cruelly harass one another. Because people in Kali-yuga are addicted to polluted, sinful activities, they are always angry, lusty and frustrated. In Kali-yuga the devotees of the Personality of Godhead, who are engaged in the ever-increasing loving service of the Lord, should never be attracted to living on the earth, the population of which is covered in the darkness of ignorance and devoid of any loving relationship with the Lord. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa advised Uddhava not to remain on the earth in Kali-yuga. In fact, in *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord advises all living entities that they should never remain anywhere within the material universe - during any age. Therefore every living being should take advantage of the pressures of Kali-yuga to understand the overall useless nature of the material world and surrender himself at the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Following in the footsteps of Śrī Uddhava, one should surrender to Kṛṣṇa and go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 7.6

*tvam̐ tu sarvaṁ parityajya
snehaṁ sva-jana-bandhuṣu
mayy āveśya manaḥ saṁnyak
sama-dṛg vicarasva gām*

tvam - you; *tu* - in fact; *sarvaṁ* - all; *parityajya* - giving up; *sneham* - affection; *sva-jana-bandhuṣu* - for your relatives and friends; *mayi* - in Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *āveśya* - fixing; *manaḥ* - your mind; *saṁnyak* - completely; *sama-dṛk* - seeing everything with equal vision; *vicarasva* - wander; *gām* - throughout the earth.

TRANSLATION

Now you should completely give up all attachment to your personal friends and relatives and fix your mind on Me. Thus being always

conscious of Me, you should observe all things with equal vision and wander throughout the earth.

PURPORT

Śrīmad Vīrarāghava Ācārya has explained the concept of equal vision as follows: *sama-dṛk sarvasya brahmātmakatvānusandhāna-rūpa-sama-dṛṣṭimān*. “One who is on the path of self-realization should always endeavor to see the ultimate spiritual nature of all existence.” The word *mayi* in this verse means *paramātmāni*. One should fix one’s mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the source of everything. Thus as one passes one’s life on the earth, using up one’s allotted time, one should practice seeing all things and all people as part and parcel of the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. Since all living entities are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, ultimately they all have the same spiritual status. The material nature, also being an emanation of Kṛṣṇa, has a similar spiritual status, but although matter and spirit are both emanations from the Personality of Godhead, they do not exist exactly on the same level. In *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said that the spirit soul is the superior energy of the Lord, whereas the material nature is His inferior energy. However, since Lord Kṛṣṇa is equally present in all things, the word *sama-dṛk* in this verse indicates that one must ultimately see Kṛṣṇa within everything and everything within Kṛṣṇa. Thus equal vision is compatible with mature knowledge of the varieties present within this world. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments as follows on this verse. “At the end of His manifest pastimes on the earth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, thought as follows within His mind: ‘During My pastimes on the earth, I have satisfied the desires of all those devotees who anxiously desired to see Me. I have duly married many thousands of queens, headed by Rukmiṇī, whom I personally kidnapped, and I have killed innumerable demons in various places and by various means. I have attended meetings, reunions and ceremonies with many friends, relatives and well-wishers in cities such as Vṛndāvana, Mathurā, Dvārakā, Hastināpura and Mithilā, and thus I have kept constantly busy coming and going in the performance of pastimes.

“I further arranged to give My personal association to great devotees who are situated below the earthly planet. In order to please My mother Devakī and return her six deceased sons who were killed by Kaṁsa, I descended to the planet Sutala and blessed My great devotee Bali Mahārāja. In order to return the dead son of My spiritual master, Sāndīpani Muni, I personally went to the court of Ravinandana, or Yamarāja, and thus he was able to see Me face to face. I even blessed the residents of heaven, such as mother Aditi and Kaśyapa Muni, with My personal association when I traveled there to steal the *pārijāta* flower for My wife Satyabhāmā. And in order to please the inhabitants of Mahā-Viṣṇu’s abode, such as Nanda, Sunanda and Sudarśana, I traveled to Mahā-Vaikuṅṭhaloka to recover the deceased children of a frustrated *brāhmaṇa*. Thus, innumerable devotees who ardently desired to see Me have received the object of their prayers.

“Unfortunately Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and the great *paramahansa* sages who live with Him in Badarikāśrama, although most enthusiastic to see Me, never had their desire fulfilled. I have been on the earth for 125 years, and the scheduled time is now up. Being busily engaged in My pastimes, I did not have time to give My blessings to these great sages. Nevertheless, Uddhava is practically the same as Me. He is a great devotee and shares My own transcendental opulences. Thus, he is the right person for Me to send to Badarikāśrama. I shall give Uddhava complete transcendental knowledge by which one becomes detached from the material world, and he in turn can deliver this knowledge, the science of transcending the kingdom of illusion, to the worthy sages at Badarikāśrama. In this way he can teach them the method of rendering loving devotional service to My lotus feet. Such loving devotional service rendered to Me is the most valuable treasure, and by hearing such knowledge the desires of the great sages such as Nara-Nārāyaṇa will be completely fulfilled.

“Those great souls who have surrendered unto Me are always equipped with transcendental knowledge and detachment from the material world. Sometimes, being busy in their devotional service, they may appear to forget Me. However, a pure devotee who has achieved the platform of love for Me will always be protected by such sincere devotion. Even if such a devotee should suddenly give up his life while neglecting to fix his mind intensely on Me, such a devotee’s loving feelings are so powerful that they afford him all protection. Even if there is a temporary moment of forgetfulness, such devotion will bring the devotee to My lotus feet, which are beyond the vision of ordinary, materialistic persons. Uddhava is My pure devotee. Knowledge of Me and detachment from this world have again been aroused in him because he can never give up My association.”

The sincere servants of Caitanya Mahāprabhu are vigorously endeavoring to spread this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement for the pleasure of their spiritual master and Lord Kṛṣṇa. At the present time thousands of devotees in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, in all parts of the world, are working long hours under difficult conditions to distribute transcendental literature and thus enlighten the general populace. In this effort the devotees have no personal motivation but are simply desirous of pleasing their spiritual master by distributing his books. The people who receive this literature usually have no previous experience of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, yet they are so impressed by the purity of the devotees they meet that they eagerly purchase the books and magazines. In order to execute the tremendous task of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the devotees are tirelessly laboring day and night because they are on the platform of loving devotion. Although superficially such busy devotees may occasionally not think directly of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, such loving devotion will undoubtedly take them back to Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, and being pleased by their service, the Lord Himself will again arouse their unflinching meditation upon His personal form. This is the beauty of *bhakti-yoga*, which depends wholly and solely on the mercy of the all-merciful

Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is the only totally safe means of uprooting the deep desires for material enjoyment, attaining pure love for Kṛṣṇa and going beyond the material universe to the kingdom of God. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.40):

*nehābhikrama-nāśo'sti
pratyavāyo na vidyate
sv-āpam apy asya dharmasya
trāyate mahato bhayāt*

Lord Kṛṣṇa also advised Uddhava in this verse to give up the illusory attachment to so-called friends and family within this material world. One may not be able to physically give up association with family and friends, but one should understand that everyone and everything is part and parcel of God and is meant for the pleasure of God. As soon as one thinks, "This is my personal family," immediately one will see the material world as no more than a place for enjoying family life. As soon as one is attached to one's so-called family, false prestige and material possessiveness arise. Actually, everyone is part and parcel of God and therefore, on the spiritual platform, related to all other entities. This is called *kṛṣṇa-sambandha*, or the constitutional relationship with Kṛṣṇa. It is not possible to advance to the highest stage of spiritual awareness and at the same time maintain a petty material concept of society, friendship and love. One should experience all relationships on the higher, spiritual platform of *kṛṣṇa-sambandha*, which means seeing everything in relation to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.

One who is situated in his constitutional relationship with Kṛṣṇa can see all things in relation to Kṛṣṇa. He thus gives up the mundane urges of the body, mind and speech and travels throughout the earth as a devotee of the Lord. Such a highly elevated personality is called *gosvāmī*, or the master of the senses. This stage is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.54) by the words *brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā*: on the spiritual platform one attains complete satisfaction.

TEXT 7.7

*yad idaṁ manasā vācā
cakṣurbhyāṁ śravaṇādibhiḥ
naśvaram grhyamāṇam ca
viddhi māyā-mano-mayam*

yat - that which; *idaṁ* - this world; *manasā* - by the mind; *vācā* - by speech; *cakṣurbhyāṁ* - by the eyes; *śravaṇa-ādibhiḥ* - by the ears and other senses; *naśvaram* - temporary; *grhyamāṇam* - that which is being accepted or perceived; *ca* - and; *viddhi* - you should know; *māyā-maṇaḥ-mayam* - it is only imagined to be real by the influence of *māyā*.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, the material universe that you perceive through your mind, speech, eyes, ears and other senses is an illusory

creation that one imagines to be real due to the influence of māyā. In fact, you should know that all of the objects of the material senses are temporary.

PURPORT

The question may be raised that since we find good and bad qualities throughout the material world, how can Lord Kṛṣṇa advise Uddhava to see everything equally? In this verse Kṛṣṇa explains that material good and evil are a creation of the illusory energy, just as the objects of a dream are a mental creation.

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā, vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*: Lord Kṛṣṇa is actually everything because He is present within everything and everything is present within Him. Kṛṣṇa is *sarva-loka-maheśvaram*, the Lord and proprietor of all worlds. To see anything separate from Kṛṣṇa is illusion, and attraction to any kind of material illusion, either good or bad, is ultimately useless since it obliges the living entity to continue wandering in the cycle of birth and death.

Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching constitute the activities of the five knowledge-gathering senses. Similarly, the voice, the hands, the legs, the anus and the genitals constitute the five working senses. These ten senses are organized around the mind, which is the center of material activity. When the living entity desires to exploit matter, he is covered by the three modes of nature. Thus he concocts different philosophical, political and social explanations of reality but never understands the Absolute Truth, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is beyond the contaminated perception of the material senses. One who is entangled in the network of material designations, such as race, nationality, sectarian religion, political affiliation, etc., is absorbed in the experience of combining his body and other bodies with material sense objects, thinking these sense objects to be sources of happiness and satisfaction. Unfortunately, the entire material world, along with the senses that experience it, is a temporary creation that will be annihilated by the time potency of the Supreme Lord. Despite our foolish hopes and dreams, there is no actual happiness on the material platform. The real truth is not material, nor is it temporary. The real truth is called *ātmā*, or the eternal soul, and among all eternal souls one is supreme. He is called the Personality of Godhead, and in His original form He is known as Kṛṣṇa. The knowledge-gathering process culminates in perception of the inconceivable, transcendental form of Kṛṣṇa. One who is not perceiving Kṛṣṇa in everything and everything in Kṛṣṇa is undoubtedly on the platform of mental concoction. In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa warns Uddhava to remain clear of this illusory platform of existence.

TEXT 7.8

*puṁso'yuktasya nānārtho
bhramaḥ sa guṇa-doṣa-bhāk*

*karmākarma-vikarmeti
guṇa-doṣa-dhiyo bhidā*

puṁsaḥ – of a person; *ayuktasya* – whose mind is diverted from the truth; *nānā* – many; *arthaḥ* – values or meanings; *bhramaḥ* – confusion; *saḥ* – that; *guṇa* – something good; *doṣa* – something bad; *bhāḥ* – embodying; *karma* – compulsory duties; *akarma* – nonperformance of prescribed duties; *vikarma* – forbidden activities; *iti* – thus; *guṇa* – good things; *doṣa* – bad things; *dhiyaḥ* – of one who perceives; *bhidā* – this difference.

TRANSLATION

One whose consciousness is bewildered by illusion perceives many differences in value and meaning among material objects. Thus one engages constantly on the platform of material good and evil and is bound by such conceptions. Absorbed in material duality, such a person contemplates the performance of compulsory duties, nonperformance of such duties and performance of forbidden activities.

PURPORT

The illusory mental platform of existence is described in this verse. The word *ayuktasya* indicates the conditioned soul who does not fix his mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is clearly described in *Bhagavad-gītā* and other Vedic literature that Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, is within everything, and everything is within the Lord. The example may be given that when a woman loves a man, she is most eager to see him, and she daily sees him dressed in different clothes. Actually the woman is interested not in the clothes but in the man. Similarly, within every material object is the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore one who has developed love of God is constantly seeing the Lord everywhere, and not just the superficial material objects that cover the Lord.

The word *ayuktasya* in this verse indicates one who has not come to the stage of reality. Such a person, being deprived of loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, attempts to enjoy the innumerable forms and flavors of material experience. This temporary, illusory engagement is not the constitutional function of the bewildered living entity, who remains without any awareness of the ultimate reality, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Within the world of matter there are undoubtedly varieties. Among dogs there are pedigree poodles and common mutts, and among horses there are thoroughbreds and old gray mares. Similarly, some human beings are beautiful and educated and others are dull and homely. Some are rich and some are poor. In nature we find fertile land and sterile land, lush forests and useless deserts, invaluable gems and colorless stones, flowing transparent rivers and stagnant dirty ponds. In human society we find happiness and distress, love and hate, victory and defeat, war and peace, life and death, and so on. However, we do not have any permanent relationship with any of these conditions, because we are eternal spirit souls, part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Vedic culture is arranged in such a way

that everyone can become perfect in self-realization simply by performing his occupational duty for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Sve sve karmaṇy abhirataḥ saṁsiddhiṁ labhate naraḥ*. Some conditioned souls, however, believe that complete perfection in life may be achieved by performing ordinary, nonspiritual duties on behalf of family, nation, humanity, and so on. Others are interested in neither service to God nor noble mundane activities, and there are others who actively pursue sinful life. Such sinful persons generally rise from bed late in the afternoon and stay awake all night, taking intoxicants and engaging in illicit sex. Such a dark, hellish existence is caused by attraction to *tamo-guṇa*, the mode of ignorance. Actions in the mode of ignorance are called *vikarma*, as mentioned in this verse. Unfortunately, neither the materially responsible person nor the materially irresponsible person nor the sinful person can achieve the real perfection of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Although different societies and different individuals maintain different concepts of good and evil, all material things are ultimately useless in terms of our eternal self-interest, which is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This idea is expressed by the saintly King Citraketu in the Sixth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.17.20):

*guṇa-pravāha etasmin
kaḥ śāpaḥ ko nv anugrahaḥ
kaḥ svargo narakaḥ ko vā
kiṁ sukhaṁ duḥkham eva vā*

“This material world resembles the waves of a constantly flowing river. Therefore, what is a curse and what is a favor? What are the heavenly planets and what are the hellish planets? What is actually happiness and what is actually distress? Because the waves flow constantly, none of them has an eternal effect.” The argument may be given that since in the *Vedas* there are prescribed and forbidden activities, the *Vedas* also accept the concept of good and evil within the material world. The fact is, however, that it is not the *Vedas* themselves but the conditioned souls who are bound up in material duality. The function of Vedic literature is to engage each individual at the particular level on which he is presently situated and gradually elevate him to the perfection of life. The material mode of goodness is not itself spiritual, but it does not impede spiritual life. Since the material mode of goodness purifies one’s consciousness and creates a hankering for higher knowledge, it is a favorable platform from which to pursue spiritual life, just as the airport is a favorable place from which to travel. If a man desires to travel from New York to London, the New York airport is certainly the most favorable place from which to travel. But if the man misses his plane, he is no closer to London than anyone in New York who did not go to the airport. In other words, the advantage of the airport is meaningful only if one catches his plane. Similarly, the material mode of goodness is the most favorable situation from which to move up to the spiritual platform. The *Vedas* prescribe and forbid various activities to lift the conditioned soul to the material mode of goodness, and from that point he should rise to the

spiritual platform by transcendental knowledge. Therefore if one does not come to the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, his elevation to the material mode of goodness is useless, just as a trip to the airport is useless for one who misses his plane. In the *Vedas* there are injunctions and prohibitions that appear to accept good and evil among material things, but the ultimate purpose of the Vedic regulations is to create a favorable situation for spiritual life. If one can immediately take to spiritual life then there is no need to waste time with rituals within the modes of nature. Therefore Kṛṣṇa advises Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.45):

*traī-guṇya-visayā vedā
nistrai-guṇyo bhavāṛjuna
nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-stho
niryoga-kṣema ātmavān*

“The *Vedas* mainly deal with the subject of the three modes of material nature. Rise above these modes, O Arjuna. Be transcendental to all of them. Be free from all dualities and from all anxieties for gain and safety, and be established in the Self.” In this connection, Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted the following verses from *Mahābhārata*:

*svargādyāś ca guṇāḥ sarve
doṣāḥ sarve tathaiva ca
ātmanaḥ karṣṇā-bhrāntyā
jāyante nātra saṁśayaḥ*

“Within the material world, the conditioned souls consider residence on the heavenly planets and celestial pleasures, such as the pious enjoyment of beautiful women, to be good and desirable things. Similarly, painful or miserable conditions are considered to be evil or bad. However, all such perception of good and bad in the material world is undoubtedly based upon the fundamental mistake of considering oneself, and not the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to be the ultimate doer or performer of all actions.”

*paramātmānam evaikaṁ
kartāraṁ vetti yaḥ pumān
sa mucyate’smāt saṁsārāt
paramātmānam eti ca*

“On the other hand, a person who knows that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the actual controller of material nature, and that it is ultimately He who is moving everything, can free himself from the bondage of material existence. Such a person goes to the abode of the Lord.”

TEXT 7.9

*tasmād yuktendriya-grāmo
yukta-citta idaṁ jagat
ātmanīkṣasva vitatam
ātmānaṁ mayy adhīsvare*

tasmāt – therefore; *yukta* – having brought under control; *indriya-grāmaḥ* – all the senses; *yukta* – also subduing; *cittaḥ* – your mind; *idaṁ* – this; *jagat* –

world; *ātmani* – within the individual soul; *īkṣasva* – you should see; *vitatam* – spread out (as the substance of his material enjoyment); *ātmānam* – and that individual soul; *mayi* – in Me; *adhīśvare* – the supreme controller.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, bringing all your senses under control and thus subduing the mind, you should see the entire world as situated within the self, who is expanded everywhere, and you should also see this individual self within Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

The word *vitatam*, or “widely expanded,” implies that the individual *jīva* soul is present throughout the material universe. Similarly, in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.24) Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *nityaḥ sarva-gataḥ*: the individual soul is eternal and is expanded everywhere throughout the material and spiritual worlds. This does not mean, however, that each individual soul is all-pervading, but that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, has expanded His marginal potency everywhere. Thus, one should not blindly conclude that a minute living entity is all-pervading; rather, one should understand that God is great and expands His personal energy everywhere. In this verse, *ātmanīkṣasva vitatam* means that this material world is created to facilitate the sense gratification of the conditioned souls, who are trying to enjoy without Kṛṣṇa, their actual master. The living entities are busily trying to exploit the external energy of the Lord, but their jurisdiction over the material world is illusory. Both the material nature and the conditioned living being are energies of the Lord and thus exist within the Personality of Godhead and are under His supreme control.

The individual living entity exists for the pleasure of the Personality of Godhead and is the Lord’s eternal servant. As soon as the senses become absorbed in material gratification they lose their power to experience the Absolute Truth. The actual goal of sense activity is satisfaction of Viṣṇu, the Lord, and all of the senses can experience infinite spiritual pleasure by perceiving and serving the Lord in His personal feature. Those who adopt the impersonal conception of God, however, try to stop all sense activity. But because the senses cannot remain permanently inactive they naturally return to activities in the realm of material illusion. If one engages the senses in the service of the Personality of Godhead, then one enjoys unlimited pleasure upon seeing the transcendental beauty of the Lord’s form. But unless one qualifies himself by pure loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa, the Lord does not award him this exalted experience. Therefore, every conditioned soul should end his unnecessary separation from the Personality of Godhead by rejoining the Lord’s blissful company. Lord Kṛṣṇa personally comes down to reopen the blind eyes of the conditioned souls, and thus the Lord is personally teaching Uddhava so that sincere souls in the future might take advantage of His instructions. Indeed, hundreds and millions of people even now derive spiritual enlightenment from Lord Kṛṣṇa’s instructions to Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 7.10

*jñāna-vijñāna-saṁyukta
ātma-bhūtaḥ śarīriṇām
ātmānubhava-tuṣṭātmā
nāntarāyair vihanase*

jñāna – with conclusive knowledge of the Vedas; *vijñāna* – and practical realization of the purpose of knowledge; *saṁyuktaḥ* – fully endowed; *ātma-bhūtaḥ* – an object of affection; *śarīriṇām* – for all embodied beings (beginning with the great demigods); *ātmānubhava* – by direct perception of the soul; *tuṣṭa-ātmā* – having a satisfied mind; *na* – never; *antarāyaiḥ* – by disturbances; *vihanase* – you will be checked in your progress.

TRANSLATION

Being fully endowed with conclusive knowledge of the Vedas and having realized the ultimate purpose of such knowledge in practice, you will be able to perceive the pure self, and thus your mind will be satisfied. At that time you will become dear to all living beings, headed by the demigods, and you will never be hampered by any disturbance in life.

PURPORT

As explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*, one whose mind is free from material desire becomes disinterested in demigod worship, since the purpose of such worship is material amelioration. The demigods, however, are never displeased with one who becomes a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and offers all of his worship to the Lord. The demigods themselves are humble servants of Lord Kṛṣṇa, as was amply demonstrated in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes on the earth. One who can experience the eternal soul within everyone’s body certainly becomes dear to all living beings. Since he sees everyone as qualitatively equal to himself, he does not envy anyone nor try to lord it over any other living being. Being free from envy and a well-wisher of all, such a self-realized soul is naturally dear to everyone. As stated in the song to the Six Gosvāmīs, *dhīrādhīra-jana-priyau priya-karau nirmatsarau pūjītau*.

TEXT 7.11

*doṣa-buddhyobhayātīto
niṣedhān na nivartate
guṇa-buddhyā ca vihitam
na karoti yathārbhakaḥ*

doṣa-buddhyā – because of thinking that such action is wrong; *ubhaya-atītaḥ* – one who has transcended both (the conceptions of mundane right and wrong); *niṣedhāt* – from what is forbidden; *na nivartate* – he does not desist; *guṇa-buddhyā* – because of thinking it is good; *ca* – also; *vihitam* – what is

enjoined; *na karoti* – he does not do; *yathā* – just like; *arbhakaḥ* – a young child.

TRANSLATION

One who has transcended material good and evil automatically acts in accordance with religious injunctions and avoids forbidden activities. The self-realized person does this spontaneously, like an innocent child, and not because he is thinking in terms of material good and evil.

PURPORT

One who has developed transcendental knowledge never acts whimsically. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī describes two stages of devotional service: *sādhana-bhakti* and *rāgānuga-bhakti*. *Rāgānuga-bhakti* is the stage of spontaneous love of Godhead, whereas *sādhana-bhakti* means the conscientious practice of the regulative principles of devotional service. In most cases, one who is now enjoying transcendental consciousness has rigidly practiced the rules and regulations of devotional service. Thus, due to previous practice, one spontaneously avoids sinful life and acts in accordance with the standards of ordinary piety. This does not mean that a self-realized soul is consciously avoiding sin and pursuing piety. Rather, due to his self-realized nature, he spontaneously engages in the most exalted spiritual activities, just as an innocent child may spontaneously exhibit good qualities such as kindness, tolerance, and so on. The spiritual platform is called *śuddha-sattva*, or purified goodness, to distinguish it from the material mode of goodness, which is always to some extent polluted by the lower modes of passion and ignorance. Thus if a man in material goodness appears to be most pious in the eyes of the world, we can only imagine the spotless character of a self-realized soul in purified spiritual goodness. Therefore it is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.18.12):

*yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā
mano-rathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ*

If one is a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he will automatically exhibit all the exalted qualities of the demigods. Such manifestation of purity is spontaneous, as explained in this verse.

TEXT 7.12

*sarva-bhūta-suhṛc chānto
jñāna-vijñāna-niścayaḥ
paśyan mad-ātmakam viśvam
na vipadyeta vai punaḥ*

sarva-bhūta – to all creatures; *su-hṛt* – a well-wisher; *śāntaḥ* – peaceful; *jñāna-vijñāna* – in knowledge and transcendental realization; *niścayaḥ* – firmly fixed; *paśyan* – seeing; *mat-ātmakam* – pervaded by Me; *viśvam* – the

universe; *na vipadyeta* – will never fall into the cycle of repeated birth and death; *vai* – indeed; *punaḥ* – again.

TRANSLATION

One who is the kind well-wisher of all living beings, who is peaceful and firmly fixed in knowledge and realization, sees Me within all things. Such a person never again falls down into the cycle of birth and death.

TEXT 7.13

śrī-śuka uvāca
ity ādiṣṭo bhagavatā
mahā-bhāgavato nṛpa
uddhavaḥ praṇipatyāha
tattvaṁ jijñāsur acyutam

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *iti* – thus; *ādiṣṭaḥ* – instructed; *bhagavatā* – by the Supreme Lord; *mahā-bhāgavataḥ* – the exalted devotee of the Lord; *nṛpa* – O King; *uddhavaḥ* – Uddhava; *praṇipatya* – after bowing down to offer respects; *āha* – spoke; *tattvam* – the scientific truth; *jijñāsuḥ* – being eager to learn; *acyutam* – unto the infallible Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, thus instructed His pure devotee Uddhava, who was eager to receive knowledge from the Lord. Uddhava then offered obeisances to the Lord and spoke as follows.

PURPORT

Uddhava is described here as *tattvaṁ jijñāsuḥ*, or desiring to know the truth. It is clear from previous verses that Śrī Uddhava is a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and that he considers devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa to be the perfection of life. Thus the words *tattvaṁ jijñāsuḥ* indicate that since Lord Kṛṣṇa is about to leave the earth, Uddhava is most anxious to deepen his understanding of the Lord so that he may further advance in loving service at the Lord's lotus feet. Unlike an ordinary philosopher or scholar, a pure devotee is not eager to acquire knowledge for personal gratification.

TEXT 7.14

śrī-uddhava uvāca
yogeśa yoga-vinyāsa
yogātman yoga-sambhava
niḥśreyasāya me proktas
tyāgaḥ sannyāsa-lakṣaṇaḥ

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *yoga-īśa* – O giver of all results of *yoga*; *yoga-vinyāsa* – O You who by Your own power bestow *yoga* even upon those who are unqualified; *yoga-ātman* – O Supreme Soul realized through *yoga*; *yoga-sambhava* – O origin of all mystic power; *niḥśreyasāya* – for the ultimate benefit; *me* – of me; *proktaḥ* – You have spoken about; *tyāgaḥ* –

renunciation; *sannyāsa* – by the acceptance of the order of *sannyāsa*; *lakṣaṇaḥ* – characterized.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, You alone award the results of yoga practice, and You are so kind that by Your own influence You distribute the perfection of yoga to Your devotee. Thus You are the Supreme Soul who is realized through yoga, and it is You who are the origin of all mystic power. For my supreme benefit You have explained the procedure for giving up the material world through the process of sannyāsa, or renunciation.

PURPORT

The word *yogeśa* here indicates that the Supreme Personality of Godhead awards the results of all *yoga* practices. Since all of the material and spiritual worlds emanate from the transcendental body of Kṛṣṇa, there is nothing to be achieved by any *yoga* process except Kṛṣṇa and His potencies. And since the Lord remains eternally the master of His potencies, no one can achieve anything through *yoga*, or any other spiritual or material process, except by the sanction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The word *yoga* means “linking up,” and unless we link ourselves with the Absolute Truth, we remain covered by the darkness of ignorance. Thus, Kṛṣṇa is the goal of *yoga*. In the material world we falsely try to link ourselves with the objects of the senses. Man wants to link with woman and woman with man, or one tries to link up with nationalism, socialism, capitalism or innumerable other creations of the illusory energy of the Lord. Since we are linking ourselves to temporary objects the relationships are temporary, the results are temporary, and at the time of death we become bewildered when all of our connections are suddenly cut off by *māyā*. If we link ourselves to Kṛṣṇa, however, our relationship with Him will continue even after death. As explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*, the relationship with Kṛṣṇa that we develop in this life will continue to increase in our next life until we achieve the supreme goal of entering Kṛṣṇa’s planet. Those who sincerely serve the mission of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, following the transcendental lifestyle prescribed by the Lord, will enter the Lord’s abode at the end of this lifetime. One can never achieve a permanent situation by mental speculation, and what to speak of by ordinary material sense gratification. By the methods of *haṭha-yoga*, *karma-yoga*, *rāja-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga*, etc., one does not actually awaken his propensity for rendering eternal loving service to the Personality of Godhead. Thus, one is bereft of the transcendental tastes of spiritual enjoyment. Sometimes the conditioned soul, disgusted by his failure to gratify his senses, bitterly decides to renounce the material world and merge into an impersonal, painless transcendence. But our actual happy situation is to render loving service at the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead. All of the different *yoga* processes gradually lead one to love of Godhead, and it is Lord Kṛṣṇa’s aim to reestablish the conditioned souls in this happy position.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu is making this perfection easily available through the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, the supreme *yoga* process for this age.

TEXT 7.15

*tyāgo'yaṁ duṣkaro bhūman
kāmanām viṣayātmabhiḥ
sutarām tvayi sarvātmann
abhaktair iti me matiḥ*

tyāgaḥ – renunciation; *ayaṁ* – this; *duṣkaraḥ* – difficult to perform; *bhūman* – O my Lord; *kāmanām* – of material enjoyment; *viṣaya* – sense gratification; *ātmabhiḥ* – by those dedicated to; *sutarām* – especially; *tvayi* – unto You; *sarva-ātmann* – O Supreme Soul; *abhaktaiḥ* – by those without devotion; *iti* – thus; *me* – my; *matiḥ* – opinion.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, O Supreme Soul, for those whose minds are attached to sense gratification, and especially for those bereft of devotion unto You, such renunciation of material enjoyment is most difficult to perform. That is my opinion.

PURPORT

Those who are truly devoted to the Supreme Lord do not accept anything for their personal gratification but rather accept those things suitable to be offered in the Lord's loving service. The word *viṣayātmabhiḥ* indicates those who desire material objects for their personal gratification instead of for the devotional service of the Lord. The minds of such materialistic persons are suitably disturbed, and it is virtually impossible for such persons to renounce material enjoyment. This is the opinion of Śrī Uddhava.

TEXT 7.16

*so'haṁ mamāham iti mūḍha-matir vigāḍhas
tvan-māyayā viracitātmani sānubandhe
tat tv añjasā nigaditaṁ bhavatā yathāhaṁ
saṁsādhayāmi bhagavann anuśādhi bhṛtyam*

saḥ – he; *aham* – I; *mama aham* – the false concept of “I” and “mine”; *iti* – thus; *mūḍha* – most foolish; *matiḥ* – consciousness; *vigāḍhaḥ* – merged; *tvan-māyayā* – by Your illusory potency; *viracita* – manufactured; *ātmani* – in the body; *sa-anubandhe* – along with bodily relations; *tat* – therefore; *tu* – indeed; *añjasā* – easily; *nigaditam* – that instructed; *bhavatā* – by You; *yathā* – the process by which; *aham* – I; *saṁsādhayāmi* – may execute; *bhagavan* – My dear Lord; *anuśādhi* – teach; *bhṛtyam* – Your servant.

TRANSLATION

O my Lord, I myself am most foolish because my consciousness is merged in the material body and bodily relations, which are all manufactured by Your illusory energy. Thus I am thinking, “I am this body, and all of these relatives are mine.” Therefore, my Lord,

please instruct Your poor servant. Please tell me how I can very easily carry out Your instructions.

PURPORT

It is very difficult to give up false identification with the material body, and thus we remain attached to our so-called bodily relations such as wife, children, friends, and so on. Bodily attachment causes intense pain within the heart, and we are stunned by lamentation and hankering. Śrī Uddhava, a pure devotee of the Lord, here speaks like an ordinary person showing how to pray to the Personality of Godhead. We practically see that many sinful persons enter the International Society for Krishna Consciousness and after preliminary purification become most repentant for their previous illicit activities. They are shocked when they realize how they gave up the personal association of God to pursue the useless forms created by *māyā*; therefore they wholeheartedly pray to the spiritual master and Lord Kṛṣṇa to be engaged eternally in transcendental devotional service. Such a repentant, eager mentality is most auspicious for spiritual advancement. The Lord certainly answers the prayers of a repentant devotee desperate to escape the clutches of illusion.

TEXT 7.17

*satyasya te sva-dṛśa ātmana ātmano'nyam
vaktāram īśa vibudheṣv api nānucakṣe
sarve vimohita-dhiyas tava māyayeme
brahmādayas tanu-bhṛto bahir-artha-bhāvāḥ*

satyasya – of the Absolute Truth; *te* – besides You; *sva-dṛśaḥ* – who reveal Yourself; *ātmanaḥ* – for me personally; *ātmanaḥ* – than the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *anyam* – other; *vaktāram* – qualified speaker; *īśa* – O my Lord; *vibudheṣu* – among the demigods; *api* – even; *na* – not; *anucakṣe* – I can see; *sarve* – all of them; *vimohita* – bewildered; *dhiyaḥ* – their consciousness; *tava* – Your; *māyayā* – by the illusory potency; *ime* – these; *brahma-ādayaḥ* – headed by Lord Brahmā; *tanu-bhṛtaḥ* – conditioned souls with material bodies; *bahiḥ* – in external things; *artha* – supreme value; *bhāvāḥ* – conceiving of.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, You are the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and You reveal Yourself to Your devotees. Besides Your Lordship, I do not see anyone who can actually explain perfect knowledge to me. Such a perfect teacher is not to be found even among the demigods in heaven. Indeed, all of the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā, are bewildered by Your illusory potency. They are conditioned souls who accept their own material bodies and bodily expansions to be the highest truth.

PURPORT

All conditioned souls, from Lord Brahmā down to the insignificant ant, are declared by Śrī Uddhava to be covered by material bodies produced by the

illusory potency of the Lord. The demigods in heaven, being absorbed in universal management, constantly utilize their fabulous material potencies. They therefore gradually fix their minds upon their mystically empowered bodies and also upon their bodily expansions such as their celestial wives, children, co-workers and friends. In the course of life in the heavenly planets, the demigods become conditioned to think in terms of material good and bad, and thus they accept the immediate welfare of their bodies to be the highest goal of life.

The demigods do, however, try to strictly follow the laws of God. And to help them do this, the Supreme Lord descends to remind the heavenly beings of His own supreme personality, which possesses powers infinitely exceeding theirs. Lord Viṣṇu has an eternal body, full of bliss, knowledge and unlimited variegated potencies, whereas the demigods possess only deluxe material forms, subject to birth, death, old age and disease.

Because the demigods are attached to ruling the created universe, their devotion to God is tinged with material desires. They are therefore attracted to those portions of Vedic knowledge that award the various material opulences necessary for perpetuating their celestial life. Śrī Uddhava, however, being a pure devotee of the Lord, is determined to go back home, back to Godhead, for eternal life and is thus not at all interested in the sophisticated Vedic knowledge of the demigods. The material world is a gigantic prison, whose inmates are subjected to birth, death, old age and illusion, and a pure devotee has no desire to remain there even as a first-class prisoner, like the demigods. Śrī Uddhava desires to return to the kingdom of God and for this reason directly approaches the Personality of Godhead. The Lord is *sva-dṛśaḥ*, or one who reveals Himself to His devotee. Thus, only the Lord Himself or His pure devotee, who faithfully repeats the Lord's message, can take one beyond the material sky into the free atmosphere of the spiritual planets, where the liberated souls enjoy an eternal life of bliss and omniscience.

TEXT 7.18

*tasmād bhavantam anavadyam ananta-pāraṁ
sarva-jñam īśvaram akuṅṭha-vikuṅṭha-dhiṣṇyam
nirviṇṇa-dhīr aham u he vṛjinābhitapto
nārāyaṇaṁ nara-sakhaṁ śaraṇaṁ prapadye*

tasmāt – therefore; *bhavantam* – unto You; *anavadyam* – the perfect; *ananta-pāraṁ* – unlimited; *sarva-jñam* – omniscient; *īśvaram* – Personality of Godhead; *akuṅṭha* – undisturbed by any force; *vikuṅṭha* – the spiritual kingdom Vaikuṅṭha; *dhiṣṇyam* – whose personal abode; *nirviṇṇa* – feeling renounced; *dhīr* – my mind; *aham* – I; *u he* – O (Lord); *vṛjina* – by material distress; *abhitaptaḥ* – tormented; *nārāyaṇaṁ* – unto Lord Nārāyaṇa; *nara-sakhaṁ* – the friend of the infinitesimal living entity; *śaraṇaṁ prapadye* – I approach to take shelter.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O Lord, feeling weary of material life and tormented by its distresses, I now surrender unto You because You are the perfect master. You are the unlimited, all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose spiritual abode in Vaikuṅṭha is free from all disturbances. In fact, You are known as Nārāyaṇa, the true friend of all living beings.

PURPORT

No one can claim to be a self-made man, because everyone works with the body and mind awarded by material nature. By the laws of nature there is always anxiety in material existence, and terrible tragedies periodically harass the conditioned souls. Here Uddhava points out that only Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, is a proper master, friend and shelter for the conditioned souls. We may be attracted by the good qualities of a particular man or demigod, but we may later discover discrepancies in that person's behavior. Therefore Kṛṣṇa is described as *anavadyam*. There are no discrepancies in the personal conduct or character of the Personality of Godhead; He is eternally faultless.

We may faithfully serve a master, father or demigod, but when it is time for us to receive our reward for faithful service, the master may die. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is here described as *ananta-pāram*, which indicates that He is not limited by time or space. The word *anta* indicates the termination of time, and *pāra* indicates a spatial termination; therefore *ananta-pāram* means that Lord Kṛṣṇa is not limited by time or space and thus will always dutifully reward His faithful servants.

If we serve someone other than the Personality of Godhead, our so-called master may forget our service or become ungrateful. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is described here as *sarva-jñam*, omniscient. He can never forget the service of His devotee, and therefore He is never ungrateful. In fact, it is said that Lord Kṛṣṇa does not remember the faults of His devotees but only the sincere service they have rendered.

A further disadvantage in serving anyone besides Kṛṣṇa is that when we are in danger our master may not be able to protect us. If we take shelter of our nation, that nation may be destroyed in war. If we take shelter of our family, they may also die. And as described in the Vedic literature, even the demigods are sometimes defeated by the demons. But since Lord Kṛṣṇa is described here as *īśvara*, or the supreme controller, there is no danger of His being overcome or even impeded by any other power. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa's promise of protection to His devotee is eternally valid.

If we do not serve the Personality of Godhead, we will not know the ultimate result of our service. But here Lord Kṛṣṇa is described as *akuṅṭha-vikuṅṭha-dhiṣṇyam*. Lord Kṛṣṇa has an eternal abode called Vaikuṅṭha, and that abode is never disturbed by anything. The faithful servants of Lord Kṛṣṇa will certainly go back to Godhead, back home, for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge in the personal abode of the Lord. However, since even the

demigods, and what to speak of insignificant human beings, are subject sooner or later to annihilation, what ultimate benefit can be derived from serving them?

Uddhava describes his personal situation as *nirviṇṇa-dhīḥ* and *vṛjinābhitaṭṭaḥ*. In other words, Śrī Uddhava states that he is exhausted and discouraged by the contradictions and anguish of material life. He has been forced, therefore, to become humble and surrender to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, the personal friend of every living entity. In the material world a great man does not have time for insignificant men. But although the Lord is the greatest person, He sits in the heart of every living entity; thus He is the most merciful. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate shelter of even Nāra, or the Lord's *puruṣa* expansion who creates the material world. The living entity is called *nara*, and the source of his material situation is Nāra, or Mahā-Viṣṇu. The word *nārāyaṇa* indicates that even Mahā-Viṣṇu finds His shelter in Kṛṣṇa, who is certainly supreme. Although our consciousness is presently contaminated by sinful propensities, if we follow the example of Śrī Uddhava and take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, everything can be rectified. Taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa means taking shelter of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa and obeying Him. Lord Kṛṣṇa demands this in *Bhagavad-gītā*, and if we comply with the order of the Lord our life can become fully auspicious and successful. Sooner than we expect, we may, by Kṛṣṇa's mercy, enter the kingdom of God for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

TEXT 7.19

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
prāyeṇa manujā loke
loka-tattva-vicakṣaṇāḥ
samuddharanti hy ātmānam
ātmanaivāśubhāsayāt

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - Lord Kṛṣṇa said; *prāyeṇa* - in general; *manujāḥ* - humans; *loke* - in this world; *loka-tattva* - the factual situation of the material world; *vicakṣaṇāḥ* - who know expertly; *samuddharanti* - they deliver; *hi* - indeed; *ātmānam* - themselves; *ātmanā* - by their own intelligence; *eva* - indeed; *aśubha-āsayāt* - from the inauspicious attitude of desiring sense gratification.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord replied: Generally those human beings who can expertly analyze the actual situation of the material world are able to raise themselves beyond the inauspicious life of gross material gratification.

PURPORT

Śrī Uddhava expressed to the Lord in the previous verses his fallen condition and his entanglement in the material concept of life. Now Lord Kṛṣṇa reassures Uddhava that even persons far less qualified than Uddhava are able to extricate themselves from the inauspicious life of material sense

gratification. According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, even if one has not received the instruction of a bona fide spiritual master, one can understand by direct and indirect analysis that the material world is not a place of enjoyment. Direct analysis means one's personal experience and indirect analysis means hearing and reading of the experience of others.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Lord Kṛṣṇa considered Uddhava to be more intelligent than even the demigods in heaven. Uddhava, however, was feeling discouraged, thinking himself unqualified to render devotional service to the Lord. But Uddhava was actually perfectly situated because he had achieved Lord Kṛṣṇa as his personal spiritual master.

Similarly, the members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are guided by the instructions of the Society's founder-*ācārya*, Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. Therefore, a sincere member of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement should never feel discouraged but should rather count his blessings and do the needful to go back home, back to Godhead. Within the material world, certain activities are auspicious and produce happiness, whereas other activities, being sinful, are inauspicious and cause unlimited suffering. Even one who has not yet received the complete mercy of the bona fide Kṛṣṇa conscious spiritual master should conclude by sharp intelligence that there is no happiness in ordinary, material life and that real self-interest lies beyond the material platform.

Śrīla Madhvācārya points out that even if one is expert not only in material knowledge but also in spiritual knowledge, one will enter into the darkness of ignorance if one neglects the association of the devotees of the Lord.

Therefore, one should not misinterpret this verse in a way that minimizes the significance of the pure devotee spiritual master. One who is *vicakṣaṇāḥ*, or expert, will eventually come to understand the difference between matter and spirit. Such a person will certainly recognize and appreciate a genuine spiritual master. One who is advanced in knowledge undoubtedly becomes humble, and thus an expert advanced human will never neglect the lotus feet of the pure devotees of the Lord.

TEXT 7.20

*ātmano gurur ātmaiva
puruṣasya viśeṣataḥ
yat pratyakṣānumānābhyām
śreyo'sāv anuvindate*

ātmanaḥ – of himself; *guruḥ* – the instructing spiritual master; *ātmā* – himself; *eva* – indeed; *puruṣasya* – of a person; *viśeṣataḥ* – in a particular sense; *yat* – because; *pratyakṣa* – by his direct perception; *anumānābhyām* – and application of logic; *śreyaḥ* – real benefit; *asau* – he; *anuvindate* – can eventually gain.

TRANSLATION

An intelligent person, expert in perceiving the world around him and in applying sound logic, can achieve real benefit through his own intelligence. Thus sometimes one acts as one's own instructing spiritual master.

PURPORT

As illustrated in this chapter by the conversation between King Yadu and the *avadhūta*, a sensitive, reasonable person can acquire real knowledge and happiness simply by carefully observing the world around him. By observing the happiness and distress of other living entities, one can understand what is beneficial and what is destructive.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī states in this connection, *gurv-anusaraṇe pravartaka ity arthaḥ*: the knowledge acquired by one's own perception and intelligence leads one to appreciate the value of the representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The word *śreyas* in this verse indicates that one can advance in life through one's own intelligence. By good association one should gradually come to understand one's eternal position as servant of Kṛṣṇa, and then one becomes very eager to live in the company of other enlightened persons. Birds of a feather flock together. The symptom of an enlightened servant of Kṛṣṇa is that he is eager for the company of other such great souls. Thus by one's sensitive and rational observation of this material world, one should come to appreciate the value of spiritual life in the association of the devotees.

TEXT 7.21

*puruṣatve ca mām dhīrāḥ
sāṅkhya-yoga-viśāradāḥ
āvistarām prapaśyanti
sarva-śakty-upabṛṁhitam*

puruṣatve – in the human form of life; *ca* – and; *mām* – Me; *dhīrāḥ* – those free from envy through spiritual knowledge; *sāṅkhya-yoga* – in the spiritual science composed of analytical knowledge and devotion to the Supreme; *viśāradāḥ* – who are expert; *āvistarām* – directly manifest; *prapaśyanti* – they clearly see; *sarva* – all; *śakti* – with My energies; *upabṛṁhitam* – fully endowed.

TRANSLATION

In the human form of life, those who are self-controlled and expert in the spiritual science of Sāṅkhya can directly see Me along with all of My potencies.

PURPORT

We find the following statement in the *Vedas*: *puruṣatve cāvistarām ātmā sahita-prajñānena sampanna-tamo vijñātaṁ vadati vijñātaṁ paśyati veda śvastanaṁ veda lokālokau martyenāmṛtam īpsaty evaṁ sampanno 'thetareṣām paśūnām āsanā-pipāse evābhijñānam*. “In the human form of life, the soul is fully endowed with intelligence to understand spiritual

knowledge. Thus, in human life the soul may speak realized knowledge, see the truth, know the future and also understand the reality both of this world and of the next. Taking advantage of the experience of mortal life, the soul in human form may endeavor for immortality, and the human body is fully equipped to achieve this end. In such an elevated state the soul is certainly well acquainted with the ordinary activities of animals, such as eating and drinking.”

The human form of life (*puruṣatve*) is very significant because it affords us the opportunity to perfect our existence. The Sāṅkhya system mentioned here is best illustrated by the instructions of Lord Kapila to His mother, Devahūti. Lord Kapila is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and His mother approached Him, saying:

*nirviṇṇā nitarāṁ bhūmann
asad-indriya-tarṣaṇāt
yena sambhāvyamānena
prapannāndham tamaḥ prabho*

“I am very sick of the disturbance caused by my material senses, for because of this sense disturbance, my Lord, I have fallen into the abyss of ignorance.” (*Bhāg.* 3.25.7) Lord Kapila delivered to His mother a highly analytical summary of all material and spiritual reality. It is significant that Lord Kapila did not discriminate against His mother because she was a woman, nor did He consider her incapable of understanding the most elaborate spiritual knowledge. Thus, in a Kṛṣṇa conscious society of liberated souls, any man, woman or child may become a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa without discrimination. It is also significant that in the highly intellectual Sāṅkhya system enunciated by Lord Kapila, the solid conclusion is surrender to the lotus feet of the pure devotees and love of Godhead. In Lord Kapila’s instructions in the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, He emphasizes the need to take shelter of the pure devotees of the Lord. In the present verse Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *sāṅkhya-yoga-viśāradāḥ*: those who are expert in taking shelter of the pure devotees and who can thus understand the actual situation of this world are able to see Kṛṣṇa in His personal form, along with His internal and external potencies.

A spiritual master becomes bona fide by his full surrender to his spiritual master; but as explained in this chapter, one may also act as his own *guru*. This means that an intelligent and perceptive person can understand the nature of this world and his own limitations. Such a person then becomes very much inclined to associate with the pure devotees of the Lord and to receive the mercy of those who are advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, *sāṅkhya-yoga*, as described here, refers to the rigorous intellectual progress of the *jñāna-yoga* system, along with the devotion of *bhakti-yoga*, which emphasizes the mercy of the lotus feet of the pure devotees.

Actually, *jñāna-yoga* is a factor in the *bhakti-yoga* system, since Kṛṣṇa is *jñāna-gamya*, or the goal of all knowledge. The Lord also says in *Bhagavad-*

gītā (10.10) that He personally enlightens a sincere devotee with all knowledge. In this chapter, Lord Kṛṣṇa is training Uddhava to see the Lord's personal form in the course of his daily experiences in the material world. The Lord has already indicated to Uddhava that he will travel throughout the world in *samādhi*, or trance, and now Lord Kṛṣṇa is preparing Uddhava to travel as a true *sannyāsī* seeing the Personality of Godhead everywhere.

TEXT 7.22

*eka-dvi-tri-catuṣ-pādo
bahu-pādas tathāpadaḥ
bahvyaḥ santi puraḥ sṛṣṭās
tāsām me pauraṣī priyā*

eka - one; *dvi* - two; *tri* - three; *catuḥ* - four; *pādaḥ* - having legs; *bahu-pādaḥ* - having many legs; *tathā* - also; *apadaḥ* - having no legs; *bahvyaḥ* - many; *santi* - there are; *puraḥ* - different kinds of bodies; *sṛṣṭāḥ* - created; *tāsām* - of them; *me* - to Me; *pauraṣī* - the human form; *priyā* - is most dear.

TRANSLATION

In this world there are many kinds of created bodies - some with one leg, others with two, three, four or more legs, and still others with no legs - but of all these, the human form is actually dear to Me.

PURPORT

The ultimate purpose of material creation is to facilitate the return of the conditioned souls back home, back to Godhead. Since this redemption of the conditioned souls is especially possible in the human form of life, naturally this form is particularly dear to the compassionate Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 7.23

*atra mām mṛgayanty addhā
yuktā hetubhir īśvaram
grhyamāṇair guṇair liṅgair
agrāhyam anumānataḥ*

atra - here (in the human form); *mām* - for Me; *mṛgayanti* - they search; *addhā* - directly; *yuktāḥ* - situated; *hetubhiḥ* - by apparent symptoms; *īśvaram* - the Supreme Lord; *grhyamāṇaiḥ guṇaiḥ* - with the perceiving intelligence, mind and senses; *liṅgaiḥ* - and by indirectly ascertained symptoms; *agrāhyam* - beyond the grasp of direct perception; *anumānataḥ* - by the process of logical deduction.

TRANSLATION

Although I, the Supreme Lord, can never be captured by ordinary sense perception, those situated in human life may use their intelligence and other faculties of perception to directly search for Me through both apparent and indirectly ascertained symptoms.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the word *yuktāḥ* in this verse indicates those engaged in the regulative practice of *bhakti-yoga*. The devotees of the Lord do not abandon their intelligence and become mindless fanatics, as some fools think. As indicated by the words *anumānataḥ* and *guṇair liṅgaiḥ*, a devotee engaged in *bhakti-yoga* intensely searches out the Personality of Godhead through all of the rational faculties of the human brain. The word *mṛgayanti*, or “searching,” does not, however, indicate an unregulated or unauthorized process. If we are searching for the telephone number of a particular person, we look in the authorized telephone directory. Similarly, if we are searching for a particular product, we go to a specialized store where we are likely to find what we are looking for. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī points out that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not a product of the imagination, and thus we cannot whimsically imagine what the Lord might be. Therefore, to gain information about Lord Kṛṣṇa, one must conduct a regulated search in the authorized Vedic scriptures. The word *agrāhyam* in this verse indicates that no one can achieve or understand Lord Kṛṣṇa by ordinary speculation or through the activities of the material senses. In this regard Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states the following verse in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.234):

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

“No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him.”

The words *grāhyamāṅguṇaiḥ* indicate the rational and intellectual faculties of the human brain. All of these can be used to directly and indirectly perceive the Personality of Godhead. Indirectly one may experience the Lord through His creation. Since we are experiencing this world through our intelligence (and senses), we may conclude that our own intelligence must have a creator and that creator is therefore supremely intelligent. Thus, through simple logic any sane person can understand that there is a Supreme Personality of Godhead who is controlling everything.

One may also directly perceive the Lord through chanting and hearing His holy names and glories. *Śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ* means that one should always chant and hear of the glories of the Lord. One who perfectly hears and chants will undoubtedly see the Lord face to face. Lord Kṛṣṇa is all-pervading, and one should search for Him everywhere. By the transcendental senses, purified by *bhakti-yoga*, one may directly perceive the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As indicated by the word *addhā* in this verse, this perception is direct and not imaginary. This point has been

elaborately explained by Śrīla Prabhupāda in his purport to this verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.2.35):

*bhagavān sarva-bhūteṣu
lakṣitaḥ svātmanā hariḥ
dṛśyair buddhy-ādibhir draṣṭā
lakṣaṇair anumāpakaiḥ*

“The Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is in every living being along with the individual soul, and this fact is perceived and hypothesized in our acts of seeing and taking help from the intelligence.”

TEXT 7.24

*atrāpy udāharantīmam
itihāsaṁ purātanam
avadhūtasya saṁvādam
yador amita-tejasaḥ*

atra api – in this very matter; *udāharanti* – they cite as example; *imam* – this; *itihāsam* – a historical narration; *purātanam* – ancient; *avadhūtasya* – of a holy man acting outside the scope of ordinary regulative principles; *saṁvādam* – the conversation; *yadoḥ* – and of King Yadu; *amita-tejasaḥ* – whose power was unlimited.

TRANSLATION

In this regard, sages cite a historical narration concerning the conversation between the greatly powerful King Yadu and an avadhūta.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa will narrate this story to show Uddhava how rational intelligence can be utilized in *bhakti-yoga* to acquire Vedic knowledge and how ultimately an intelligent person will come to the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 7.25

*avadhūtaṁ dvijaṁ kañcic
carantaṁ akuto-bhayam
kaviṁ nirīkṣya taruṇaṁ
yaduḥ papraccha dharma-vit*

avadhūtam – the mendicant; *dvijaṁ* – a *brāhmaṇa*; *kañcit* – a certain; *carantaṁ* – wandering; *akutaḥ-bhayam* – without fear for any reason; *kaviṁ* – learned; *nirīkṣya* – observing; *taruṇam* – young; *yaduḥ* – King Yadu; *papraccha* – inquired; *dharma-vit* – expert in religious principles.

TRANSLATION

Mahārāja Yadu once observed a certain brāhmaṇa avadhūta, who appeared to be quite young and learned, wandering about fearlessly. Being himself most learned in spiritual science, the King took the opportunity and inquired from him as follows.

TEXT 7.26

*śrī-yadur uvāca
kuto buddhir iyaṁ brahmann
akartuḥ su-viśāradā
yām āsādya bhavāl lokam
vidvāṁś carati bāla-vat*

śrī-yaduḥ uvāca – King Yadu said; *kutaḥ* – from where; *buddhiḥ* – intelligence; *iyam* – this; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*; *akartuḥ* – of one not engaged in any work; *su-viśāradā* – very broad; *yām* – which; *āsādya* – having acquired; *bhavān* – you; *lokam* – the world; *vidvān* – in full knowledge; *carati* – travel; *bāla-vat* – like a child.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Yadu said: O brāhmaṇa, I see that you are not engaged in any practical religious activity, and yet you have acquired a most expert understanding of all things and all people within this world. Kindly tell me, sir, how did you acquire this extraordinary intelligence, and why are you traveling freely throughout the world behaving as if you were a child?

TEXT 7.27

*prāyo dharmārtha-kāmeṣu
vivitsāyām ca mānavāḥ
hetunaiva samīhanta
āyuso yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ*

prāyaḥ – generally; *dharma* – in religiosity; *artha* – economic development; *kāmeṣu* – and sense gratification; *vivitsāyām* – in pursuit of spiritual knowledge; *ca* – also; *mānavāḥ* – human beings; *hetunā* – for the purpose; *eva* – indeed; *samīhante* – they endeavor; *āyusaḥ* – of long life; *yaśasaḥ* – fame; *śriyaḥ* – and material opulence.

TRANSLATION

Generally human beings work hard to cultivate religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and also knowledge of the soul, and their usual motive is to increase the duration of their lives, acquire fame and enjoy material opulence.

PURPORT

An intelligent person should understand that if there is an eternal soul different from the body, then real happiness must lie in our eternal situation, beyond the bondage of material nature. However, ordinary persons, even when discussing spiritual subject matters, generally desire to become famous or to increase their wealth and duration of life by such spiritual practices. Most common people think, for example, that the *yoga* system is meant for improving one's health, that one may pray to God for money, and

that one's spiritual knowledge is meant for increasing one's prestige in society. Mahārāja Yadu wants to clarify that the young *brāhmaṇa avadhūta* is not like ordinary persons and that he is actually on a spiritual platform, as will be explained in the following verses.

TEXT 7.28

*tvam tu kalpaḥ kavir dakṣaḥ
su-bhago'mṛta-bhāṣaṇaḥ
na kartā nehase kiñcij
jaḍonmatta-piśāca-vat*

tvam – you; *tu* – however; *kalpaḥ* – capable; *kaviḥ* – learned; *dakṣaḥ* – expert; *su-bhagaḥ* – handsome; *amṛta-bhāṣaṇaḥ* – having nectarean speech; *na* – are not; *kartā* – a doer; *na ihase* – you do not desire; *kiñcit* – anything; *jaḍa* – stupefied; *unmatta* – maddened; *piśāca-vat* – like a ghostly creature.

TRANSLATION

You, however, although capable, learned, expert, handsome and most eloquent, are not engaged in doing anything, nor do you desire anything; rather, you appear stupefied and maddened as if you were a ghostly creature.

PURPORT

Ignorant persons often think that renounced spiritual life is meant for those who are impotent or homely or incompetent in practical worldly affairs. Sometimes foolish people say that religious life is a crutch for those who are not expert enough to achieve a high status in society. Therefore King Yadu has described the qualities of the mendicant *brāhmaṇa* in order to show that the *brāhmaṇa* has taken to renounced spiritual life in spite of great potential for worldly success. The *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* is described as being expert, learned, good-looking, eloquent and in every sense qualified to be a great material success. Still, the *avadhūta* has renounced material life and taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Going back home, back to Godhead, for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge is the real work of a human being.

The followers of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu simultaneously cultivate their own Kṛṣṇa consciousness and strenuously endeavor in missionary work to help others become Kṛṣṇa conscious. Often foolish persons deride the devotees by saying, “Why don't you get a job?” They think that one who is sincerely endeavoring for spiritual enlightenment and who is also enlightening others is not doing anything practical. Foolish materialists will pay millions of dollars to extend their lives by a few weeks or months in a hospital, but they do not appreciate someone endeavoring for eternal life. There is no actual logic in material life. The act of trying to enjoy without Kṛṣṇa is in itself the culmination of irrationality, and thus we cannot expect to find anything ultimately rational or logical in a materialistic life devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Many devotees of Kṛṣṇa come from wealthy, learned and influential families, and they take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in order to perfect their lives, and certainly not due to lack of opportunity for material

advancement. Although sometimes persons in material distress approach the Supreme Lord for help in material life, a real devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa voluntarily gives up all types of material enjoyment, knowing that nothing but love of Kṛṣṇa and service to His lotus feet are the actual perfection of life.

TEXT 7.29

*janeṣu dahyamāneṣu
kāma-lobha-davāgninā
na tapyase'gninā mukto
gaṅgāmbhaḥ-stha iva dvipaḥ*

janeṣu – all people; *dahyamāneṣu* – even while they are burning; *kāma* – of lust; *lobha* – and greed; *dava-agninā* – in the forest fire; *na tapyase* – you are not burned; *agninā* – from the fire; *muktaḥ* – free; *gaṅgā-ambhaḥ* – in the water of the Gaṅgā; *sthaḥ* – standing; *iva* – as if; *dvipaḥ* – an elephant.

TRANSLATION

Although all people within the material world are burning in the great forest fire of lust and greed, you remain free and are not burned by that fire. You are just like an elephant who takes shelter from a forest fire by standing within the water of the Ganges River.

PURPORT

The natural result of transcendental bliss is described in this verse. The young *brāhmaṇa* was physically very attractive, and his senses were full of potency for material enjoyment, yet he was not at all affected by material lust. This position is called *mukti*, or liberation.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that within the Ganges flow great currents of water, capable of extinguishing a blazing fire. If an elephant maddened by sex desire stands within the Ganges, its powerful, cooling currents extinguish his lust, and the elephant becomes pacified. Similarly, ordinary human beings trapped in the cycle of birth and death are constantly harassed by the enemies of lust and greed, which never allow the mind to be completely peaceful. But if, following the example of the elephant, one situates oneself within the cooling waves of transcendental bliss, then all material desire will soon be extinguished, and one will become *sānta*, or peaceful. As described in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *kṛṣṇa-bhakta niṣkāma ataeva sānta*. Thus, everyone should take to the movement of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and cleanse himself in the cooling waters of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, our real, eternal consciousness.

TEXT 7.30

*tvaṁ hi naḥ pṛcchatām brahmann
ātmany ānanda-kāraṇam
brūhi sparśa-vihīnasya
bhavataḥ kevalātmanaḥ*

tvam – you; *hi* – certainly; *naḥ* – to us; *pr̥cchatām* – who are inquiring; *brahman* – O *brāhmaṇa*; *ātmani* – within yourself; *ānanda* – of the ecstasy; *kāraṇam* – the cause; *brūhi* – please say; *sparsā-vihīnasya* – who are devoid of any contact with material enjoyment; *bhavataḥ* – of you; *kevala-ātmanaḥ* – who are living completely alone.

TRANSLATION

O brāhmaṇa, we see that you are devoid of any contact with material enjoyment and that you are traveling alone, without any companions or family members. Therefore, because we are sincerely inquiring from you, please tell us the cause of the great ecstasy that you are feeling within yourself.

PURPORT

The word *kevalātmanaḥ* is significant here. Unless one has practical realization of the Supreme Soul and the individual soul, who reside together within the heart of every living being, it is very difficult to artificially adopt the *sannyāsa* order of life and travel without the association of wife, children or other family members. The nature of every living being is to make friends with others and to offer his love to a suitable person. One who has realized the Supreme Person is satisfied to always carry the Personality of Godhead within his heart as his constant companion. Unless one has realized that Kṛṣṇa is one's only true friend and that Kṛṣṇa is within one's heart, one will remain attached to the temporary relationships of the material world.

TEXT 7.31

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
yadunaivam mahā-bhāgo
brahmaṇyena su-medhasā
pr̥ṣṭaḥ sabhājitaḥ prāha
praśrayāvanatam dvijaḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *yadunā* – by King Yadu; *evam* – in this way; *mahā-bhāgaḥ* – greatly fortunate; *brahmaṇyena* – who was very respectful to *brāhmaṇas*; *su-medhasā* – and intelligent; *pr̥ṣṭaḥ* – asked; *sabhājitaḥ* – honored; *prāha* – he spoke; *praśraya* – out of humility; *avanatam* – bowing his head; *dvijaḥ* – the *brāhmaṇa*.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kṛṣṇa continued: The intelligent King Yadu, always respectful to the brāhmaṇas, waited with bowed head as the brāhmaṇa, pleased with the King's attitude, began to reply.

TEXT 7.32

śrī-brāhmaṇa uvāca
santi me guravo rājan
bahavo buddhy-upāśritāḥ
yato buddhim upādāya
mukto'tāmīha tān śṛṇu

śrī-brāhmaṇaḥ uvāca – the *brāhmaṇa* said; *santi* – there are; *me* – my; *guravaḥ* – spiritual masters; *rājan* – O King; *bahavaḥ* – many; *buddhi* – by my intelligence; *upāśritāḥ* – taken shelter of; *yataḥ* – from whom; *buddhim* – intelligence; *upādāya* – gaining; *muktaḥ* – liberated; *aṭāmi* – I wander; *iha* – in this world; *tān* – them; *śṛṇu* – please hear.

TRANSLATION

The brāhmaṇa said: My dear King, with my intelligence I have taken shelter of many spiritual masters. Having gained transcendental understanding from them, I now wander about the earth in a liberated condition. Please listen as I describe them to you.

PURPORT

The word *buddhy-upāśritāḥ* in this verse indicates that the *brāhmaṇa*'s spiritual masters did not directly speak to him. Instead, he learned from them by his intelligence. All living entities who are inimical to Lord Kṛṣṇa glorify useless material things and spend their lives trying to lord it over the material objects they falsely worship. Thus the conditioned souls try to increase their duration of life, as well as their fame and beauty, by means of mundane religiosity, economic development and gross sense gratification. King Yadu noticed that the saintly *avadhūta* did not behave like that. Therefore the King was inquisitive to find out the actual situation of the *brāhmaṇa*. In reply to the King the saintly *brāhmaṇa* states, "I do not consider the twenty-four elements of the physical world as objects of my sense gratification, and therefore I don't consider accepting or rejecting them. Rather, I accept the material elements as my instructing spiritual masters. Thus, even though wandering throughout the material world, I am never bereft of service to the *guru*. Taking shelter of steady intelligence, I travel about the earth constantly engaged on the transcendental platform. By intelligence I transcend useless desires, and my ultimate goal is the loving devotional service of the Lord. Now I shall explain to you about my twenty-four spiritual masters."

TEXTS 7.33-35

*pṛthivī vāyur ākāśam
āpo'gniś candramā raviḥ
kapoto'jagaraḥ sindhuḥ
pataṅgo madhukṛd gajaḥ
madhu-hā hariṇo mīnaḥ
piṅgalā kuraro'rbhakaḥ
kumārī śara-kṛt sarpa
ūrṇanābhiḥ supeśakṛt
ete me guravo rājan
catur-vimśatir āśritāḥ
śikṣā vṛttibhir eteṣām
anvaśikṣam ihātmanaḥ*

pr̥thivī – the earth; *vāyuh* – the air; *ākāśam* – the sky; *āpaḥ* – the water; *agniḥ* – the fire; *candramāḥ* – the moon; *raviḥ* – the sun; *kapotaḥ* – the pigeon; *ajagaraḥ* – the python; *sindhuh* – the sea; *pataṅgaḥ* – the moth; *madhu-kṛt* – the honeybee; *gajaḥ* – the elephant; *madhu-hā* – the honey thief; *hariṇaḥ* – the deer; *mīnaḥ* – the fish; *piṅgalā* – the prostitute named Piṅgalā; *kuraraḥ* – the *kurara* bird; *arbhakaḥ* – the child; *kumārī* – the young girl; *śara-kṛt* – the arrow maker; *sarpaḥ* – the serpent; *ūrṇa-nābhiḥ* – the spider; *supeśa-kṛt* – the wasp; *ete* – these; *me* – me; *guravaḥ* – spiritual masters; *rājan* – O King; *catuḥ-vimśatiḥ* – twenty-four; *āśritāḥ* – taken shelter of; *śikṣā* – instruction; *vṛttibhiḥ* – from the activities; *eteṣāṃ* – of them; *anvaśikṣam* – I have properly learned; *iha* – in this life; *ātmanaḥ* – about the self.

TRANSLATION

O King, I have taken shelter of twenty-four gurus, who are the following: the earth, air, sky, water, fire, moon, sun, pigeon and python; the sea, moth, honeybee, elephant and honey thief; the deer, the fish, the prostitute Piṅgalā, the kurara bird and the child; and the young girl, arrow maker, serpent, spider and wasp. My dear King, by studying their activities I have learned the science of the self.

PURPORT

The wasp is known as *supeśa-kṛt* because it causes the insect that it kills to take a beautiful form in the next life.

TEXT 7.36

*yato yad anuśikṣāmi
yathā vā nāhuṣātmaja
tat tathā puruṣa-vyāghra
nibodha kathayāmi te*

yataḥ – from whom; *yat* – what; *anuśikṣāmi* – I have learned; *yathā* – how; *vā* – and; *nāhuṣa-ātma-ja* – O son of King Nāhuṣa (Yayāti); *tat* – that; *tathā* – thus; *puruṣa-vyāghra* – O tiger among men; *nibodha* – listen; *kathayāmi* – I will recount; *te* – to you.

TRANSLATION

Please listen, O son of Mahārāja Yayāti, O tiger among men, as I explain to you what I have learned from each of these gurus.

TEXT 7.37

*bhūtair ākramyamāṇo’pi
dhīro daiva-vaśānugaiḥ
tat vidvān na calen mārgād
anvaśikṣam kṣiter vratam*

bhūtaiḥ – by various creatures; *ākramyamāṇaḥ* – being harassed; *api* – although; *dhīraḥ* – sober; *daiva* – of fate; *vaśa* – the control; *anugaiḥ* – who are simply following; *tat* – this fact; *vidvān* – he who is in knowledge of; *na*

calet - should not deviate; *mārgāt* - from the path; *anvaśikṣam* - I have learned; *kṣiteḥ* - from the earth; *vratam* - this fixed practice.

TRANSLATION

A sober person, even when harassed by other living beings, should understand that his aggressors are acting helplessly under the control of God, and thus he should never be distracted from progress on his own path. This rule I have learned from the earth.

PURPORT

The earth is the symbol of tolerance. By deep oil-drilling, atomic explosions, pollution, and so on, the earth is constantly harassed by demoniac living entities. Sometimes lush forests are cut down by greedy men with commercial interests, and thus a wasteland is created. Sometimes the earth's surface is soaked by the blood of soldiers fighting in savage warfare. Yet, despite all these disturbances, the earth continues to provide all the necessities of the living beings. In this way one may learn the art of tolerance by studying the earth.

TEXT 7.38

*śaśvat parārtha-sarvehaḥ
parārthaikānta-sambhavaḥ
sādhuḥ śikṣeta bhū-bhṛtto
naga-śiṣyaḥ parātmātām*

śaśvat - always; *para* - of others; *artha* - for the sake; *sarva-īhaḥ* - all of one's efforts; *para-artha* - the benefit of others; *ekānta* - sole; *sambhavaḥ* - reason for living; *sādhuḥ* - a saintly person; *śikṣeta* - should learn; *bhū-bhṛttaḥ* - from the mountain; *naga-śiṣyaḥ* - the disciple of the tree; *parātmātām* - dedication to others.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person should learn from the mountain to devote all his efforts to the service of others and to make the welfare of others the sole reason for his existence. Similarly, as the disciple of the tree, he should learn to dedicate himself to others.

PURPORT

Great mountains bear unlimited quantities of earth, which in turn give sustenance to innumerable forms of life such as trees, grass, birds, animals, and so on. Mountains also pour forth unlimited quantities of crystalline water in the form of waterfalls and rivers, and this water gives life to all. By studying the example of mountains, one should learn the art of providing for the happiness of all living entities. Similarly, one may take excellent lessons from the pious trees, who offer innumerable benefits, such as fruits, flowers, cooling shade and medicinal extracts. Even when a tree is suddenly cut down and dragged away, the tree does not protest but continues to give service to others in the form of firewood. Thus, one should become the disciple of such magnanimous trees and learn from them the qualities of saintly conduct.

According to Śrīla Madhvācārya, the word *parārthaikānta-sambhavaḥ* indicates that one should dedicate all of one's wealth and other assets to the welfare of others. By one's acquired opulence, one should especially try to please the spiritual master and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, the demigods, as well as all truly respectable superior personalities, will automatically be pleased. By developing saintly conduct, as described in this verse, one will become tolerant, and this will free one from the useless agitation of the material senses, which drive one to wander throughout the world searching in vain for material happiness. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has also emphasized the tree's quality of tolerance: *taror iva sahiṣṇunā, kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*. One who is as tolerant as a tree can chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa constantly, finding ever-new satisfaction.

TEXT 7.39

*prāṇa-vṛttyaiva santuṣyen
munir naivendriya-priyaiḥ
jñānam yathā na naśyeta
nāvakīryeta vāñ-manaḥ*

prāṇa-vṛttyā – with the mere functioning of his vital air; *eva* – even; *santuṣyet* – should be satisfied; *munīḥ* – a sage; *na* – not; *eva* – indeed; *indriya-priyaiḥ* – with things that gratify the senses; *jñānam* – consciousness; *yathā* – so that; *na naśyeta* – may not be destroyed; *na avakīryeta* – may not become disturbed; *vāk* – his speech; *manaḥ* – and mind.

TRANSLATION

A learned sage should take his satisfaction in the simple maintenance of his existence and should not seek satisfaction through gratifying the material senses. In other words, one should care for the material body in such a way that one's higher knowledge is not destroyed and so that one's speech and mind are not deviated from self-realization.

PURPORT

A wise man does not absorb his consciousness in the forms, flavors, aromas and sensations of material sense gratification, but rather accepts activities such as eating and sleeping simply to keep body and soul together. One must properly maintain one's body by regulated activities of eating, sleeping, cleansing, etc., otherwise the mind will become weak, and one's spiritual knowledge will fade away. If one eats too austerely, or if in the name of selflessness one accepts impure food, surely one loses control of the mind. On the other hand, if one eats food that is excessively fatty or rich there will be an unwanted increase in sleep and semen, and thus the mind and speech will be overwhelmed by the modes of passion and ignorance. Lord Kṛṣṇa has summarized the whole matter in *Bhagavad-gītā* by His statement *yuktāhāra-vihārasya yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu*. One should moderately and intelligently regulate all of one's bodily activities so that they are favorable for self-realization. This technique is taught by the bona fide

spiritual master. If one is too austere or if one engages too much in sense gratification, self-realization is impossible.

It is the duty of a devotee of the Lord to avoid seeing any object as separate from Kṛṣṇa, because that is illusion. A gentleman will never try to enjoy the property of another gentleman. Similarly, if one sees everything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, there is no scope for material sense gratification. But if one sees material objects as separate from Kṛṣṇa, then one's material enjoying propensity is immediately aroused. A human being must be intelligent enough to distinguish between *preyas*, or temporary gratification, and *śreyas*, permanent benefit. One may accept sense activity in a regulated, limited fashion so that one will be strong for serving Kṛṣṇa, but if one excessively indulges the material senses, one will lose one's gravity and seriousness in spiritual life and act like an ordinary materialist. The ultimate goal, as stated here, is *jñānam*, or steady consciousness of the Absolute Truth, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 7.40

*viṣayeṣv āviśan yogī
nānā-dharmeṣu sarvataḥ
guṇa-doṣa-vyapetātmā
na viṣajjeta vāyu-vat*

viṣayeṣu – into contact with material objects; *āviśan* – entering; *yogī* – one who has attained self-control; *nānā-dharmeṣu* – which have different varieties of qualities; *sarvataḥ* – everywhere; *guṇa* – good qualities; *doṣa* – and faults; *vyapeta-ātmā* – a person who has transcended; *na viṣajjeta* – should not become entangled; *vāyu-vat* – like the wind.

TRANSLATION

Even a transcendentalist is surrounded by innumerable material objects, which possess good and bad qualities. However, one who has transcended material good and evil should not become entangled even when in contact with the material objects; rather, he should act like the wind.

PURPORT

The wind is the external manifestation of air, whereas *prāṇa* is the internal manifestation. When the wind passes over waterfalls it carries sprinkles of clear water and thus becomes most refreshing. Sometimes the wind blows through a beautiful forest, carrying the fragrances of fruits and flowers; at other times the wind may fuel a fire that burns the same forest to ashes. The wind, however, being fixed in its own nature, remains neutral in both its auspicious and inauspicious activities. Similarly, within this material world we will inevitably face both pleasing and disgusting situations. If, however, we remain fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we will not be disturbed by the inauspicious, nor will we become attached to the materially auspicious. In the course of his spiritual duties, a devotee sometimes finds himself chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in a beautiful country atmosphere, and sometimes he finds

himself doing the same thing in a hellish city. In both cases the devotee fixes his mind upon Lord Kṛṣṇa and experiences transcendental bliss. Although the wind passes through the most dark and forbidding places, the wind is not frightened or disturbed. Similarly, a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa should never be fearful or anxious, even when in the most difficult situation. One who is attached to materially pleasing forms, tastes, smells, sounds and touches will also be repelled by the opposite in each category. Thus finding himself surrounded by innumerable good and bad things, the materialist is constantly disturbed. When the wind blows in many directions at once, the atmosphere becomes agitated. Similarly, if the mind is constantly attracted and repelled by material objects there will be such mental disturbance that it will be impossible to think of the Absolute Truth. Therefore, one should learn from the blowing wind the art of moving throughout the material world without attachment.

TEXT 7.41

*pārthiveṣv iha deheṣu
praviṣṭas tad-guṇāśrayaḥ
guṇair na yujyate yogī
gandhair vāyur ivātma-dṛk*

pārthiveṣu – composed of earth (and other elements); *iha* – in this world; *deheṣu* – within bodies; *praviṣṭaḥ* – having entered; *tad* – of them; *guṇa* – the characteristic qualities; *āśrayaḥ* – having assumed; *guṇaiḥ* – with those qualities; *na yujyate* – does not entangle himself; *yogī* – a yogī; *gandhair* – with different odors; *vāyur* – the air; *iva* – just as; *ātma-dṛk* – he who can see himself properly (as separate from this matter).

TRANSLATION

Although a self-realized soul may live in various material bodies while in this world, experiencing their various qualities and functions, he is never entangled, just as the wind which carries various aromas does not actually mix with them.

PURPORT

Although we experience the wind as fragrant or foul, depending on the aromas it carries, the wind does not in fact change its actual nature. Similarly, although we regard a particular person as strong or weak, intelligent or retarded, beautiful or homely, good or bad, the pure spirit soul, who is the actual person, does not really possess any of the qualities of the body but is merely covered by them, just as the wind is covered by different aromas. Thus, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person is always aware that he is different from the temporary body. He experiences the various transformations of the body, such as childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age; but although he experiences the pains, pleasures, qualities and functions of that body, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person never thinks that he is the body. He always understands that he is an eternal spirit soul, part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa. As stated in this verse, *na yujyate yogī*: he is not entangled. The conclusion

is that one should never consider a Kṛṣṇa conscious person in terms of bodily designation, but should see him as an eternal servitor of the Lord.

TEXT 7.42

*antarhitaś ca sthira-jaṅgameṣu
brahmātma-bhāvena samanvayena
vyāptyāvyavacchedam asaṅgam ātmano
munir nabhastvaṁ vitatasya bhāvayet*

antarhitaḥ – present within; *ca* – also; *sthira* – all nonmoving living bodies; *jaṅgameṣu* – and all moving forms of life; *brahma-ātma-bhāvena* – by realization that he himself is pure spirit; *samanvayena* – as a result of the different contacts (with different bodies); *vyāptyā* – because of being all-pervading; *avyavacchedam* – the feature of being undivided; *asaṅgam* – being unattached; *ātmanaḥ* – possessed by the Supersoul; *munīḥ* – a sage; *nabhastvam* – the similarity with the sky; *vitatasya* – of the expansive; *bhāvayet* – should meditate upon.

TRANSLATION

A thoughtful sage, even while living within a material body, should understand himself to be pure spirit soul. Similarly, one should see that the spirit soul enters within all forms of life, both moving and nonmoving, and that the individual souls are thus all-pervading. The sage should further observe that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as the Supersoul, is simultaneously present within all things. Both the individual soul and the Supersoul can be understood by comparing them to the nature of the sky: although the sky extends everywhere and everything rests within the sky, the sky does not mix with anything, nor can it be divided by anything.

PURPORT

Although air exists within the sky, the sky, or space, is different from air. Even in the absence of air, space or sky is present. All material objects are situated within space, or within the vast material sky, but the sky remains undivided and, although accommodating all objects, never actually mixes with anything. In the same way one can understand the situation of both the individual soul and the Supersoul. The individual soul is all-pervading, because there are innumerable *jīvātmās*, which enter within all things; yet, as confirmed in Vedic literature, each individual *ātmā* remains infinitesimal. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (5.9) states:

*bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya
śatadhā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvaḥ sa vijñeyaḥ
sa cānantyāya kalpate*

“When the upper point of a hair is divided into one hundred parts and again each of such parts is further divided into one hundred parts, each such part is the measurement of the dimension of the spirit soul.” The same is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*keśāgra-śata-bhāgasya
śatāṁśaḥ sādṛśātmakaḥ
jīvaḥ sūkṣma-svarūpo'yaṁ
saṅkhyātīto hi cit-kaṇaḥ*

“There are innumerable particles of spiritual atoms, which are measured as one ten-thousandth of the upper portion of the hair.”

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, however, is all-pervading because He Himself is personally present everywhere. The Lord is known as *advaita*, or indivisible. Thus the same unique Personality of Godhead exists everywhere, just like the sky, and yet is not attached to anything, although everything is resting within Him. The Lord Himself has confirmed this analysis of His all-pervasiveness in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.6):

*yathākāśa-sthito nityaṁ
vāyuḥ sarvatra-go mahān
tathā sarvāṇi bhūtāni
mat-sthānīty upadhāraya*

“As the almighty wind, blowing everywhere, always rests in ethereal space, know that in the same manner all beings rest in Me.”

Therefore, although both the *jīva* soul and the Supersoul are said to be all-pervading, it should be remembered that there are innumerable individual *jīva* souls, whereas there is only one Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord is always supreme, and one who is actually a thoughtful sage never doubts the supreme position of the Lord.

TEXT 7.43

*tejo-'b-anna-mayair bhāvair
meghādyair vāyuneritaiḥ
na sprśyate nabhas tadvat
kāla-srṣṭair guṇaiḥ pumān*

tejaḥ – fire; *ap* – water; *anna* – and earth; *mayaiḥ* – consisting of; *bhāvaiḥ* – by objects; *megha-ādyaiḥ* – clouds and so on; *vāyunā* – by the wind; *īritaiḥ* – which are blown; *na sprśyate* – is not touched; *nabhaḥ* – the ethereal sky; *tat-vat* – in the same way; *kāla-srṣṭaiḥ* – which have been sent forth by time; *guṇaiḥ* – by the modes of nature; *pumān* – a person.

TRANSLATION

Although the mighty wind blows clouds and storms across the sky, the sky is never implicated or affected by these activities. Similarly, the spirit soul is not actually changed or affected by contact with the material nature. Although the living entity enters within a body made of earth, water and fire, and although he is impelled by the three modes of nature created by eternal time, his eternal spiritual nature is never actually affected.

PURPORT

Although the sky appears to be affected by the mighty movements of wind, rain, hurricanes, lightning and thunder, etc., the sky, being very subtle, is

actually not affected, but is rather the background for such visible activities. Similarly, although the material body and mind undergo innumerable changes, such as birth and death, happiness and distress, love and hate, the eternal living entity is merely the background for such activities. The spirit soul, being most subtle, is not actually affected; only due to misidentification with the superficial activities of the body and mind does the soul undergo terrible distress within the material world.

In this regard, Śrīla Madhvācārya has pointed out that the individual living entity must struggle to revive his divine spiritual qualities. The living entity is part and parcel of the supreme entity, called Kṛṣṇa, and as such the individual soul is also a reservoir of godly qualities. The Personality of Godhead, however, automatically manifests these qualities without any hindrance, whereas the conditioned soul must struggle to revive such qualities. Thus, although both the Personality of Godhead and the personality of the living entity are eternal and transcendental, the Personality of Godhead is always supreme. By realizing all this with clear intelligence, the conditioned soul can rise to the spiritual platform.

TEXT 7.44

*svacchaḥ prakṛtitaḥ snigdho
mādhuryas tīrtha-bhūr nṛṇām
muniḥ punāty apām mitram
īkṣopasparśa-kīrtanaiḥ*

svacchaḥ – pure; *prakṛtitaḥ* – by nature; *snigdhaḥ* – soft or softhearted; *mādhuryaḥ* – sweet or gentle speech; *tīrtha-bhūḥ* – a place of pilgrimage; *nṛṇām* – for human beings; *muniḥ* – a sage; *punāty* – sanctifies; *apām* – of the water; *mitram* – the exact counterpart; *īkṣā* – by being seen; *upasparśa* – by being respectfully touched; *kīrtanaiḥ* – and by being glorified verbally.

TRANSLATION

O King, a saintly person is just like water because he is free from all contamination, gentle by nature, and by speaking creates a beautiful vibration like that of flowing water. Just by seeing, touching or hearing such a saintly person, the living entity is purified, just as one is cleansed by contact with pure water. Thus a saintly person, just like a holy place, purifies all those who contact him because he always chants the glories of the Lord.

PURPORT

The words *apām mitram*, “just like water,” can also be read as *aghān mitram*, which means that a saintly person purifies all living entities by accepting them as *mitram*, or his personal friends, and saves them from their sinful reactions (*aghāt*). The conditioned living entity falsely identifies with his gross material body and subtle mind and thus falls from the platform of spiritual knowledge. A conditioned living being is always lusty for material sense gratification, and if he does not acquire it, he becomes angry.

Sometimes he is so obsessed with fear of losing his material gratification that he enters a stage approaching madness.

A saintly person, however, is like pure water, free from all contamination and capable of purifying all things. Just as pure water is transparent, a saintly person transparently manifests the Personality of Godhead within his heart. Such love of Godhead is the reservoir of all happiness. Water makes a most pleasing vibration as it flows and cascades, and similarly the sound vibration of the Lord's pure devotee, who is saturated with the glories of the Lord, is most charming and beautiful. Thus, by studying the nature of water one can understand the symptoms of a pure devotee of the Lord.

TEXT 7.45

*tejasvī tapasā dīpto
durdharṣodara-bhājanaḥ
sarva-bhakṣyo'pi yuktātmā
nādatte malam agni-vat*

tejasvī - brilliantly luminous; *tapasā* - by his austerity; *dīptaḥ* - glowing; *durdharṣa* - unshakable; *udara-bhājanaḥ* - eating only that needed by his stomach; *sarva* - everything; *bhakṣyaḥ* - eating; *api* - even though; *yukta-ātmā* - one who is fixed in spiritual life; *na ādatte* - does not assume; *malam* - contamination; *agni-vat* - like the fire.

TRANSLATION

Saintly persons become powerful by execution of austerities. Their consciousness is unshakable because they do not try to enjoy anything within the material world. Such naturally liberated sages accept foodstuffs that are offered to them by destiny, and if by chance they happen to eat contaminated food, they are not affected, just like fire, which burns up contaminated substances that are offered to it.

PURPORT

The word *udara-bhājana* indicates that a saintly person eats only to keep body and soul together and not for sense gratification. One should eat palatable foodstuffs to maintain one's mind in a cheerful mood; however, one should not eat luxuriously, because this will cause sex desire and laziness. A saintly person is always a perfect gentleman and is never greedy or lusty. Although *māyā* tries to defeat him by offering different material allurements, ultimately these attractive material features are themselves defeated by the spiritual power of a saintly person. Thus, one should never disrespect a spiritually advanced personality but should worship him reverentially. To carelessly approach a Kṛṣṇa conscious personality is just like carelessly approaching fire, which immediately burns if not handled properly. The Lord does not excuse mistreatment of a pure devotee.

TEXT 7.46

*kvacit channaḥ kvacit spaṣṭa
upāsyah śreya icchatām
bhuṅkte sarvatra dātṛṇām
dahan prāg-uttarāśubham*

kvacit – sometimes; *channaḥ* – concealed; *kvacit* – sometimes; *spaṣṭaḥ* – manifest; *upāsyah* – worshipable; *śreyaḥ* – the highest good; *icchatām* – by those desiring; *bhuṅkte* – he devours; *sarvatra* – on all sides; *dātṛṇām* – of those making offerings to him; *dahan* – burning; *prāk* – previous; *uttara* – and future; *aśubham* – sinful reactions.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person, just like fire, sometimes appears in a concealed form and at other times reveals himself. For the welfare of the conditioned souls who desire real happiness, a saintly person may accept the worshipable position of spiritual master, and thus like fire he burns to ashes all the past and future sinful reactions of his worshipers by mercifully accepting their offerings.

PURPORT

A saintly person prefers to conceal his exalted spiritual position, but to instruct the suffering people of the world he sometimes reveals his own greatness. This is compared to a fire that sometimes burns unnoticed beneath ashes and sometimes blazes openly. Just as fire devours the ghee and other offerings given by the performers of sacrifice, similarly a saintly person accepts the praise offered by his conditioned followers, knowing that in fact all praise is meant for the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. Although an ordinary person immediately becomes puffed up and foolish when he is praised, such inauspicious tendencies within a saintly person are burned to ashes by his attachment to the Absolute Truth. In this way, he is just like fire.

TEXT 7.47

*sva-māyayā sṛṣṭam idaṁ
sad-asal-lakṣaṇam vibhuḥ
praviṣṭa īyate tat-tat-
svarūpo'gnir iva idhasi*

sva-māyayā – by His own material energy; *sṛṣṭam* – created; *idaṁ* – this (body of the individual *jīva*); *sat-asat* – as demigod, animal, and so on; *lakṣaṇam* – characterized; *vibhuḥ* – the Almighty; *praviṣṭaḥ* – having entered; *īyate* – appears; *tat-tat* – of each different form; *svarūpaḥ* – assuming the identity; *agnih* – fire; *iva* – as; *idhasi* – in firewood.

TRANSLATION

Just as fire manifests differently in pieces of wood of different sizes and qualities, the omnipotent Supreme Soul, having entered the bodies of higher and lower life forms created by His own potency, appears to assume the identity of each.

PURPORT

Although the Supreme Lord is within everything, everything is not the Lord. By the mode of goodness the Lord creates the exalted material bodies of demigods and *brāhmaṇas*, and by expanding the mode of ignorance He similarly creates the bodies of animals, *śūdras* and other lower forms of life. The Lord enters all of these superior and inferior creations, but He remains *vibhu*, the all-powerful Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that although fire is present within smoldering wood, it blazes forth when we stir the wood around. Similarly, although the Personality of Godhead is indirectly present everywhere, when we chant and hear His glories with love and devotion the Lord is stirred into manifestation and directly appears before His devotees.

The foolish conditioned souls ignore the spectacular presence of the Lord within everything and instead absorb their mediocre consciousness in their own temporary material coverings, thinking, “I am a strong man,” “I am a beautiful woman,” “I am the richest man in this city,” “I am a Ph.D.,” and so on. One should cut off such useless entanglement and accept the fact that one is pure spirit soul, the eternal, blissful servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 7.48

*visargādyāḥ śmaśānāntā
bhāvā dehasya nātmanaḥ
kalānām iva candrasya
kālenāvyakta-vartmanā*

visarga – birth; *ādyāḥ* – beginning with; *śmaśāna* – the time of death, when the body is burned to ashes; *antāḥ* – ending with; *bhāvāḥ* – the states; *dehasya* – of the body; *na* – not; *ātmanaḥ* – of the soul; *kalānām* – of the different phases; *iva* – as; *candrasya* – of the moon; *kālena* – by time; *avyakta* – imperceptible; *vartmanā* – whose movement.

TRANSLATION

The various phases of one’s material life, beginning with birth and culminating in death, are all properties of the body and do not affect the soul, just as the apparent waxing and waning of the moon does not affect the moon itself. Such changes are enforced by the imperceptible movements of time.

PURPORT

The body undergoes six changes: birth, growth, maintenance, production of by-products, dwindling and death. Similarly, the moon appears to grow, diminish and finally disappear. Since moonlight is a lunar reflection of sunlight, it is understood that the moon itself does not grow or diminish; rather, we perceive the reflection of the moon in various phases. Similarly, the eternal soul is not born, nor does it die, as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.20): *na jāyate mriyate vā kadācit*. We perceive the reflection of the soul in the form of the gross material body and the subtle mind, which undergo various material changes.

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the sun is a fiery planet and the moon is a watery planet. This is also confirmed by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and further illustrates the ignorance of modern science about the actual nature of the moon planet.

TEXT 7.49

*kālena hy ogha-vegena
bhūtānām prabhavāpyayau
nityāv api na dṛśyete
ātmano'gner yathārciṣām*

kālena - by time; *hi* - indeed; *ogha* - like a flood; *vegena* - whose speed; *bhūtānām* - of created bodies; *prabhava* - the birth; *apyayau* - and demise; *nityau* - constant; *api* - although; *na dṛśyete* - are not seen; *ātmanaḥ* - related to the spirit soul; *agneḥ* - of fire; *yathā* - just as; *arciṣām* - of the flames.

TRANSLATION

The flames of a fire appear and disappear at every moment, and yet this creation and destruction is not noticed by the ordinary observer. Similarly, the mighty waves of time flow constantly, like the powerful currents of a river, and imperceptibly cause the birth, growth and death of innumerable material bodies. And yet the soul, who is thus constantly forced to change his position, cannot perceive the actions of time.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇa avadhūta* instructing King Yadu again gives the example of fire after having already proceeded to the example of the moon. This analytic method is called *siṃhāvalokana*, or “the lion’s glance,” by which one simultaneously proceeds forward and casts backward glances to see if anything has been overlooked. Thus the sage proceeds with his analysis but returns to the example of fire to illustrate the need for renunciation. The material body is certainly an ephemeral and phantasmagorical manifestation of the Lord’s external potency. The flames of a fire constantly take birth and disappear, yet we perceive the fire as a continuous reality. Similarly, the soul is a continuous reality, although his material bodies appear and disappear constantly, by the influence of time. It is said that the most astonishing thing is that no one thinks that they will die. Because the soul is eternal, the living entity is prone to accept any fleeting situation as permanent, forgetting that his eternal nature can be truly experienced only in the eternal atmosphere of the spiritual sky. If one is convinced of this fact, he develops the quality of *vairāgya*, or detachment from material illusion.

TEXT 7.50

*guṇair guṇān upādatte
yathā-kālaṃ vimuñcati*

*na teṣu yujyate yogī
gobhir gā iva go-patiḥ*

guṇaiḥ – by his senses; *guṇān* – material sense objects; *upādatte* – accepts; *yathā-kālam* – at the proper time; *vimuñcati* – gives them up; *na* – he does not; *teṣu* – in them; *yujyate* – become entangled; *yogī* – a self-realized sage; *gobhiḥ* – by his rays; *gāḥ* – bodies of water; *iva* – as; *go-patiḥ* – the sun.

TRANSLATION

Just as the sun evaporates large quantities of water by its potent rays and later returns the water to the earth in the form of rain, similarly, a saintly person accepts all types of material objects with his material senses, and at the appropriate time, when the proper person has approached him to request them, he returns such material objects. Thus, both in accepting and giving up the objects of the senses, he is not entangled.

PURPORT

A Kṛṣṇa conscious person never feels proprietorship over the opulences entrusted to him by Lord Kṛṣṇa for spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. The devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa should not merely accumulate material wealth, but should distribute the opulences of Lord Kṛṣṇa in such a way that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement spreads unlimitedly. This is a lesson to be learned from the sun.

TEXT 7.51

*budhyate sve na bhedena
vyakti-stha iva tad-gataḥ
lakṣyate sthūla-matibhir
ātmā cāvasthito'rka-vat*

budhyate – is thought of; *sve* – in his original form; *na* – not; *bhedena* – in terms of diversity; *vyakti* – on separate reflecting objects; *sthaḥ* – situated; *iva* – apparently; *tad-gataḥ* – actually having entered within them; *lakṣyate* – seems; *sthūla-matibhiḥ* – to those whose intelligence is dull; *ātmā* – the self; *ca* – also; *avasthitaḥ* – situated; *arkavat* – like the sun.

TRANSLATION

Even when reflected in various objects, the sun is never divided, nor does it merge into its reflection. Only those with dull brains would consider the sun in this way. Similarly, although the soul is reflected through different material bodies, the soul remains undivided and nonmaterial.

PURPORT

The sun is reflected in many objects, such as windows, mirrors, shiny metal, oil, water, and so on, yet the sun remains one and indivisible. Similarly, the eternal spirit soul within the body is reflected through the screen of the material body. Thus the soul appears to be old or young, fat or skinny, happy or sad. The soul may appear to be American, Russian, African, Hindu or

Christian; however, the eternal soul in its natural position is free of any material designation.

The word *sthūla-matibhiḥ* in this verse indicates those whose intelligence is gross and dull. We have practical experience of a dog urinating on a valuable painting at an outdoor art show. Due to its dull intelligence, the dog could not appreciate the actual value of the painting. Similarly, unless one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one is grossly misusing the invaluable opportunity of human life. Human life is meant for self-realization, and we should not waste time bickering over material designations such as capitalist, communist, American, Russian, and so on. Instead, all people should take to the loving devotional service of God and realize their eternal, pure identity. One should understand the sun by observing its direct manifestation and not its distorted reflection on material objects. Similarly, one should consider every living being in terms of his pure spiritual identity beyond the distorted manifestation of material designations.

The word *ātmā* in this verse also refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Just as we tend to observe ordinary *jīva* souls through the reflection of the material body, we tend to observe the Personality of Godhead through the distorting screen of our material mind. Thus, we imagine God to be impersonal or material or unknowable. When the sky is overcast, sunlight is the highest possible perception of the sun, which is covered by clouds. Similarly, when one's mind is fogged over with mental speculation one may take the light emanating from the transcendental body of God to be the highest spiritual truth. However, when the mind is spotlessly clear like a cloudless blue sky, one can see the actual form of the Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Absolute Truth cannot be perfectly understood by the covered mind of the conditioned soul; rather, one must see the Lord through the clear blue sky of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is free from fruitive desires and mental speculation. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings:

*jīvera kalyāṇa-sādhana-kāma
jagate āsi' e madhura nāma
avidyā-timira-tāpana-rūpe
hṛd-gagane virāje*

“The holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa descends into the darkness of the material world just to benedict the conditioned souls. The holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa is just like the sun that rises in the clear sky of the heart of the devotees.” Such brilliant knowledge cannot be understood by those who are trying, in the name of either piety or atheism, to exploit the material creation of the Lord. One must become a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and then his knowledge will illuminate everything in all directions: *kasmin nu bhagavo vijñāte sarvam idaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavatīti* (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.3).

TEXT 7.52

*nāti-snehaḥ prasaṅgo vā
kartavyaḥ kvāpi kenacit*

*kurvan vindeta santāpaṁ
kapota iva dīna-dhīḥ*

na – not; *ati-snehaḥ* – excess affection; *prasaṅgaḥ* – close association; *vā* – or; *kartavyaḥ* – one should manifest; *kva api* – ever; *kenacit* – with anyone or anything; *kurvan* – so doing; *vindeta* – one will experience; *santāpam* – great distress; *kapotaḥ* – the pigeon; *iva* – just as; *dīna-dhīḥ* – cripple-minded.

TRANSLATION

One should never indulge in excessive affection or concern for anyone or anything; otherwise one will have to experience great suffering, just like the foolish pigeon.

PURPORT

The Sanskrit prefix *ati*, or “excessive,” indicates affection or attachment in which there is no Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.29), *suhṛdam sarva-bhūtānām*: the Lord is the eternal well-wisher of every living being. The Lord is so affectionate that He sits in the heart of every conditioned soul and accompanies him throughout his endless wandering in the kingdom of *māyā*, patiently waiting for the conditioned soul to come back home, back to Godhead. Thus the Lord makes all arrangements for the eternal happiness of every living entity. The best way for anyone to show compassion and affection for all living beings is to become a preacher on behalf of Lord Kṛṣṇa and assist the Lord in reclaiming the fallen souls. If our affection or attachment for others is based on bodily sense gratification, in the name of society, friendship and love, that excessive, unwanted affection (*ati-sneha*) will cause burning pain at the time of the breaking or destruction of the relationship. Now the story of the foolish pigeon will be narrated. A similar story is described in the Seventh Canto, Second Chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, told by Yamarāja to the mourning widows of King Suyajña.

TEXT 7.53

*kapotaḥ kaścanāraṇye
kṛta-nīḍo vanaspatau
kapotyā bhāryayā sārddham
uvāsa katicit samāḥ*

kapotaḥ – pigeon; *kaścana* – a certain; *araṇye* – in the forest; *kṛta-nīḍaḥ* – having built his nest; *vanaspatau* – in a tree; *kapotyā* – with a female pigeon; *bhāryayā* – his wife; *sa-ardham* – as his companion; *uvāsa* – he dwelled; *katicit* – for some; *samāḥ* – years.

TRANSLATION

There once was a pigeon who lived in the forest along with his wife. He had built a nest within a tree and lived there for several years in her company.

TEXT 7.54

*kapotau sneha-guṇita-
hṛdayau gṛha-dharminau*

*dr̥ṣṭim̐ dr̥ṣṭyāṅgam aṅgena
buddhim̐ buddhyā babandhatuḥ*

kapotau - the two pigeons; *sneha* - by affection; *guṇita* - tied together as if by ropes; *hṛdayau* - their hearts; *gṛha-dharminau* - attached householders; *dr̥ṣṭim̐* - glance; *dr̥ṣṭyā* - by glance; *aṅgam* - physical body; *aṅgena* - by the other's body; *buddhim̐* - mind; *buddhyā* - by the other's mind; *babandhatuḥ* - they bound each other.

TRANSLATION

The two pigeons were very much devoted to their household duties. Their hearts being tied together by sentimental affection, they were each attracted by the other's glances, bodily features and states of mind. Thus, they completely bound each other in affection.

PURPORT

The male and female pigeon were so attracted to each other that they could not tolerate even a moment's separation from one another. This is called *bhagavad-vismṛti*, or forgetfulness of the Supreme Lord and attachment to dead matter. The living entity has an eternal love for the Lord, but when perverted, that love is manifested as false material affection. A pale reflection of actual pleasure thus becomes the foundation of a false life based on forgetfulness of the Absolute Truth.

TEXT 7.55

*śayyāsanāṭana-sthāna
vārtā-kṛīḍāśanādikam
mithunī-bhūya viśrabdhau
ceratur vana-rājiṣu*

śayyā - resting; *āsana* - sitting; *aṭana* - walking; *sthāna* - standing; *vārtā* - conversing; *kṛīḍā* - playing; *aśana* - eating; *ādikam* - and so on; *mithunī-bhūya* - together as a couple; *viśrabdhau* - trusting; *ceratuḥ* - they performed; *vana* - of the forest; *rājiṣu* - among the groves of trees.

TRANSLATION

Naively trusting in the future, they carried out their acts of resting, sitting, walking, standing, conversing, playing, eating and so forth as a loving couple among the trees of the forest.

TEXT 7.56

*yam̐ yam̐ vāñchati sā rājan
tarpayanty anukampitā
tam̐ tam̐ samanayat kāmam̐
kṛcchreṇāpy ajitendriyaḥ*

yam yam - whatever; *vāñchati* - would want; *sā* - she; *rājan* - O King; *tarpayantī* - pleasing; *anukampitā* - being shown mercy; *tam tam* - that; *samanayat* - brought; *kāmam* - her desire; *kṛcchreṇa* - with difficulty; *api* - even; *ajita-indriyaḥ* - having never learned to control his senses.

TRANSLATION

Whenever she desired anything, O King, the she-pigeon would flatteringly cajole her husband, and he in turn would gratify her by faithfully doing whatever she wanted, even with great personal difficulty. Thus, he could not control his senses in her association.

PURPORT

The word *tarpayantī* indicates that the lady pigeon was quite expert in seducing her husband through smiling glances and loving talks. Thus appealing to his noble sentiments, she efficiently engaged him as her faithful servant. The poor pigeon was *ajitendriya*, or one who cannot control his senses and whose heart is easily melted by the beauty of a woman. The *brāhmaṇa avadhūta* is giving valuable instructions by narrating this story of the two pigeons and the terrible distress they suffered by inevitable separation. If one's intelligence is not dedicated to serving Hṛṣīkeśa, the Supreme Lord of sense activity, undoubtedly one will plunge into the nescience of bodily gratification. Then one becomes no better than a foolish pigeon.

TEXT 7.57

*kapotī prathamam garbham
grhṇantī kāla āgate
aṇḍāni suṣuve nīḍe
sta-patyuḥ sannidhau satī*

kapotī – the female pigeon; *prathamam* – her first; *garbham* – pregnancy; *grhṇantī* – carrying; *kāle* – when the time (for delivery); *āgate* – had come; *aṇḍāni* – eggs; *suṣuve* – she delivered; *nīḍe* – in the nest; *sva-patyuḥ* – of her husband; *sannidhau* – in the presence; *satī* – the chaste.

TRANSLATION

Then the female pigeon experienced her first pregnancy. When the time arrived, the chaste lady delivered a number of eggs within the nest in the presence of her husband.

TEXT 7.58

*teṣu kāle vyajāyanta
racitāvayavā hareḥ
śaktibhir durvibhāvyābhiḥ
komalāṅga-tanūrahāḥ*

teṣu – from those eggs; *kāle* – in time; *vyajāyanta* – were born; *racita* – produced; *avayavāḥ* – (children) whose limbs; *hareḥ* – of the Supreme Lord, Hari; *śaktibhiḥ* – by the potencies; *durvibhāvyābhiḥ* – which are inconceivable; *komala* – tender; *aṅga* – whose limbs; *tanūrahāḥ* – and feathers.

TRANSLATION

When the time was ripe, baby pigeons, with tender limbs and feathers created by the inconceivable potencies of the Lord, were born from those eggs.

TEXT 7.59

*prajāḥ pupuṣatuḥ prītau
dampatī putra-vatsalau
śṛṅvantau kūjitaṁ tāsāṁ
nirvṛtau kala-bhāṣitaiḥ*

prajāḥ – their progeny; *pupuṣatuḥ* – they nourished; *prītau* – very pleased; *dam-patī* – the couple; *putra* – to their children; *vatsalau* – compassionate; *śṛṅvantau* – listening; *kūjitaṁ* – to the chirping; *tāsāṁ* – of their children; *nirvṛtau* – extremely happy; *kala-bhāṣitaiḥ* – by the awkward sounds.

TRANSLATION

The two pigeons became most affectionate to their children and took great pleasure in listening to their awkward chirping, which sounded very sweet to the parents. Thus with love they began to raise the little birds who were born of them.

TEXT 7.60

*tāsāṁ patatrain su-sparśaiḥ
kūjitair mugdha-ceṣṭitaiḥ
pratyudgamair adīnānām
pitarau mudam āpatuḥ*

tāsāṁ – of the little birds; *patatrain* – by the wings; *su-sparśaiḥ* – gentle to the touch; *kūjitaiḥ* – their chirping; *mugdha* – attractive; *ceṣṭitaiḥ* – by the activities; *pratyudgamaiḥ* – by their efforts to fly by eagerly jumping up; *adīnānām* – of the happy (children); *pitarau* – the parents; *mudam āpatuḥ* – became joyful.

TRANSLATION

The parent birds became very joyful by observing the soft wings of their children, their chirping, their lovely innocent movements around the nest and their attempts to jump up and fly. Seeing their children happy, the parents were also happy.

TEXT 7.61

*snehānubaddha-hṛdayāv
anyonyam viṣṇu-māyayā
vimohitau dīna-dhiyau
śīśūn pupuṣatuḥ prajāḥ*

sneha – by affection; *anubaddha* – bound up; *hṛdayau* – their hearts; *anyonyam* – mutually; *viṣṇu-māyayā* – by the illusory potency of Lord Viṣṇu; *vimohitau* – completely bewildered; *dīna-dhiyau* – weak-minded; *śīśūn* – their children; *pupuṣatuḥ* – they nourished; *prajāḥ* – their progeny.

TRANSLATION

Their hearts bound to each other by affection, the foolish birds, completely bewildered by the illusory energy of Lord Viṣṇu, continued to take care of the young offspring who had been born to them.

TEXT 7.62

*ekadā jagmatus tāsām
annārtham tau kuṭumbinau
paritaḥ kānane tasminn
arthinau ceratuś ciram*

ekadā – once; *jagmatuḥ* – they went; *tāsām* – of the children; *anna* – food; *artham* – for the sake of; *tau* – the two; *kuṭumbinau* – heads of the family; *paritaḥ* – all around; *kānane* – in the forest; *tasmin* – that; *arthinau* – anxiously searching; *ceratuḥ* – they wandered; *ciram* – far away.

TRANSLATION

One day the two heads of the family went out to find food for the children. Being very anxious to feed their offspring properly, they wandered all over the forest for a long time.

TEXT 7.63

*dṛṣṭvā tān lubdhakaḥ kaścid
yadṛcchāto vane-caraḥ
jagrhe jālam ātatya
carataḥ svālayāntike*

dṛṣṭvā – seeing; *tān* – them, the young birds; *lubdhakaḥ* – hunter; *kaścit* – a certain; *yadṛcchātaḥ* – at random; *vane* – in the forest; *caraḥ* – passing; *jagrhe* – he seized; *jālam* – his net; *ātatya* – having spread out; *carataḥ* – who were moving about; *sva-ālaya-antike* – in the vicinity of their own home.

TRANSLATION

At that time a certain hunter who happened to be wandering through the forest saw the young pigeons moving about near their nest. Spreading out his net he captured them all.

TEXT 7.64

*kapotaś ca kapotī ca
prajā-poṣe sadotsukau
gatau poṣaṇam ādāya
sva-nīḍam upajagmatuḥ*

kapotaḥ – the pigeon; *ca* – and; *kapotī* – the she-pigeon; *ca* – and; *prajā* – of their children; *poṣe* – in the matter of maintaining; *sadā* – always; *utsukau* – eagerly engaged; *gatau* – having gone; *poṣaṇam* – food; *ādāya* – bringing; *sva* – their own; *nīḍam* – to the nest; *upajagmatuḥ* – they approached.

TRANSLATION

The pigeon and his wife were always anxious for the maintenance of their children, and they were wandering in the forest for that purpose. Having obtained proper food, they now returned to their nest.

TEXT 7.65

*kapotī svātmajān vīkṣya
bālakān jāla-saṁvṛtān
tān abhyadhāvat krośantī
krośato bhṛśa-duḥkhitā*

kapotī – the female pigeon; *sva-ātma-jān* – her own offspring; *vīkṣya* – seeing; *bālakān* – the children; *jāla* – by the nest; *saṁvṛtān* – surrounded; *tān* – toward them; *abhyadhāvat* – she ran; *krośantī* – calling out; *krośataḥ* – toward them who were also crying; *bhṛśa* – extremely; *duḥkhitā* – distressed.

TRANSLATION

When the lady pigeon caught sight of her own children trapped within the hunter's net, she was overwhelmed with anguish, and crying out, she rushed toward them as they cried out to her in return.

TEXT 7.66

*sāsakṛt sneha-guṇitā
dīna-cittāja-māyayā
svayaṁ cābadhyata śicā
baddhān paśyantī apasmṛtiḥ*

sā – she; *asakṛt* – constantly; *sneha* – by material affection; *guṇitā* – bound up; *dīna-cittā* – of crippled intelligence; *aja* – of the unborn Supreme Lord; *māyayā* – by the illusory potency; *svayaṁ* – herself; *ca* – also; *abadhyata* – became caught; *śicā* – by the net; *baddhān* – the captured (children); *paśyantī* – while looking at; *apasmṛtiḥ* – having forgotten herself.

TRANSLATION

The lady pigeon had always allowed herself to be bound by the ropes of intense material affection, and thus her mind was overwhelmed by anguish. Being in the grip of the illusory energy of the Lord, she completely forgot herself, and rushing forward to her helpless children, she was immediately bound in the hunter's net.

TEXT 7.67

*kapotaḥ svātmajān baddhān
ātmano'py adhikān priyān
bhāryām cātma-samām dīno
vilalāpāti-duḥkhitāḥ*

kapotaḥ – the male pigeon; *sva-ātma-jān* – his own children; *baddhān* – bound up; *ātmanaḥ* – than himself; *api* – even; *adhikān* – more; *priyān* – dear;

bhāryām – his wife; *ca* – and; *ātma-samām* – equal to himself; *dīnaḥ* – the unfortunate fellow; *vilalāpa* – lamented; *ati-duḥkhitaḥ* – most unhappy.

TRANSLATION

Seeing his own children, who were more dear to him than life itself, fatally bound in the hunter’s net along with his dearest wife, whom he considered equal in every way to himself, the poor male pigeon began to lament wretchedly.

TEXT 7.68

*aho me paśyatāpāyam
alpa-puṇyasya durmateḥ
atr̥ptasyākṛtārthasya
gṛhas trai-varḡiko hataḥ*

aho – alas; *me* – my; *paśyata* – just see; *apāyam* – the destruction; *alpa-puṇyasya* – of him whose pious credit has been insufficient; *durmateḥ* – unintelligent; *atr̥ptasya* – unsatisfied; *akṛta-arthasya* – of him who has not fulfilled the purpose of his life; *gṛhaḥ* – the family life; *trai-varḡikaḥ* – comprising the three aims of civilized existence (religiosity, economic development and sense gratification); *hataḥ* – ruined.

TRANSLATION

The male pigeon said: Alas, just see how I am now destroyed! I am obviously a great fool, for I did not properly execute pious activities. I could not satisfy myself, nor could I fulfill the purpose of life. My dear family, which was the basis of my religiosity, economic development and sense gratification, is now hopelessly ruined.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī explains that the word *atr̥ptasya* indicates that the pigeon was not satisfied with the sense gratification he had achieved. Although he was completely attached to his wife, children and nest, he could not sufficiently enjoy them since there is ultimately no satisfaction in such things. *Akṛtārthasya* indicates that his hopes and dreams for future expansion of his sense gratification were now also ruined. People commonly refer to their “home, sweet home” as their nest, and money put aside for future sense gratification is called a nest egg. Therefore, all of the love birds of the material world should clearly note how their so-called wife, children and fortune will all be dragged away in the hunter’s net. In other words, death will finish everything.

TEXT 7.69

*anurūpānukūlā ca
yasya me pati-devatā
śūnye gṛhe mām santyajya
putraiḥ svar yāti sādhubhiḥ*

anurūpā – suitable; *anukūlā* – faithful; *ca* – and; *yasya* – of whom; *me* – of me; *pati-devatā* – she who accepted her husband as a worshipable deity;

śūnye – empty; *gṛhe* – in the home; *mām* – me; *santyajya* – leaving behind; *putraiḥ* – along with her sons; *svaḥ* – to heaven; *yāti* – is going; *sādhubhiḥ* – saintly.

TRANSLATION

My wife and I were an ideal match. She always faithfully obeyed me and in fact accepted me as her worshipable deity. But now, seeing her children lost and her home empty, she has left me behind and gone to heaven with our saintly children.

TEXT 7.70

*so'haṁ śūnye gṛhe dīno
mṛta-dāro mṛta-prajaḥ
jjīviṣe kim arthaṁ vā
vidhuro duḥkha-jīvitaḥ*

saḥ aham – myself; *śūnye* – empty; *gṛhe* – in the house; *dīnaḥ* – wretched; *mṛta-dāraḥ* – my wife dead; *mṛta-prajaḥ* – my children dead; *jjīviṣe* – I should want to live; *kim artham* – for what purpose; *vā* – indeed; *vidhuraḥ* – suffering separation; *duḥkha* – miserable; *jīvitaḥ* – my life.

TRANSLATION

Now I am a wretched person living in an empty home. My wife is dead; my children are dead. Why should I possibly want to live? My heart is so pained by separation from my family that life itself has become simply suffering.

TEXT 7.71

*tāṁs tathāivāvṛtān śigbhir
mṛtyu-grastān viceṣṭataḥ
svayaṁ ca kṛpaṇaḥ śikṣu
paśyann apy abudho'patat*

tān – them; *tathā* – also; *eva* – indeed; *āvṛtān* – surrounded; *śigbhiḥ* – by the net; *mṛtyu* – by death; *grastān* – seized; *viceṣṭataḥ* – stunned; *svayam* – himself; *ca* – also; *kṛpaṇaḥ* – wretched; *śikṣu* – within the net; *paśyan* – while watching; *api* – even; *abudhaḥ* – unintelligent; *apatat* – he fell.

TRANSLATION

As the father pigeon wretchedly stared at his poor children trapped in the net and on the verge of death, pathetically struggling to free themselves, his mind went blank, and thus he himself fell into the hunter's net.

TEXT 7.72

*taṁ labdhvā lubdhakaḥ krūraḥ
kapotaṁ gṛha-medhinam
kapotakān kapotīm ca
siddhārthaḥ prayayau gṛham*

tam – him; *labdhvā* – taking; *lubdhakaḥ* – the hunter; *krūraḥ* – cruel; *kapotam* – the pigeon; *gṛha-medhinam* – the materialistic householder; *kapotakān* – the pigeon children; *kapotīm* – the pigeon wife; *ca* – also; *siddha-arthaḥ* – having achieved his purposes; *prayayau* – he set off; *gṛham* – for his home.

TRANSLATION

The cruel hunter, having fulfilled his desire by capturing the head pigeon, his wife and all of their children, set off for his own home.

TEXT 7.73

*evam kuṭumbya aśāntātmā
dvandvārāmaḥ patatri-vat
puṣṇan kuṭumbam kṛpaṇaḥ
sānubandho'vasīdati*

evam – thus; *kuṭumbī* – a family man; *aśānta* – unpeaceful; *ātmā* – his soul; *dvandva* – in material dualities (like male and female); *ārāmaḥ* – taking his pleasure; *patatri-vat* – like this bird; *puṣṇan* – maintaining; *kuṭumbam* – his family; *kṛpaṇaḥ* – the miser; *sa-anubandhaḥ* – with his relatives; *avasīdati* – must suffer greatly.

TRANSLATION

In this way, one who is too attached to family life becomes disturbed at heart. Like the pigeon, he tries to find pleasure in mundane sex attraction. Busily engaged in maintaining his own family, the miserly person is fated to suffer greatly, along with all his family members.

TEXT 7.74

*yaḥ prāpya mānuṣam lokam
mukti-dvāram apāvṛtam
gṛheṣu khaga-vat saktas
tam ārūḍha-cyutam viduḥ*

yaḥ – one who; *prāpya* – having achieved; *mānuṣam lokam* – the human form of life; *mukti* – of liberation; *dvāram* – the door; *apāvṛtam* – wide open; *gṛheṣu* – in family affairs; *khaga-vat* – like the bird of this story; *saktas* – attached; *tam* – him; *ārūḍha* – having climbed high; *cyutam* – then falling; *viduḥ* – they consider.

TRANSLATION

The doors of liberation are opened wide to one who has achieved human life. But if a human being simply devotes himself to family life like the foolish bird in this story, then he is to be considered as one who has climbed to a high place only to trip and fall down.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Seventh Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Lord Kṛṣṇa Instructs Uddhava.”

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Story of Piṅgalā

Lord Kṛṣṇa told Uddhava how the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* explained to Mahārāja Yadu the instructions he had received from nine of his *gurus*, beginning with the python.

The instruction the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* received from the python is that an intelligent person should cultivate a mentality of detachment and should maintain his body by accepting whatever comes of its own accord or is easily obtained. In this way, he should remain always engaged in the worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even if no food is available, the person who wants to engage fully in the Lord's worship should not beg; rather, he should understand this to be the arrangement of providence, thinking, "Whatever enjoyment is destined for me will automatically come, and thus I should not uselessly waste the remaining duration of my life in worrying about such things." If he does not get any food, he should simply remain lying like the python and patiently fix his mind in meditation upon the Supreme Lord.

The instruction the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* received from the ocean is that the mind of the sage who is devoted to the Personality of Godhead appears very clear and grave, just like the still ocean waters. The ocean does not overflow during the rainy season, when all the flooded rivers discharge their waters into it, nor does it dry up during the hot season, when the rivers fail to supply it. Similarly, the sage does not become elated when he achieves desirable things, nor does he become distressed in their absence.

The instruction of the moth is that just as he becomes enticed by the fire and gives up his life, the fool who cannot control his senses becomes enchanted by the forms of women decorated with gold ornaments and fine clothing. Chasing after these embodiments of the divine illusory energy of the Lord, he loses his life untimely and falls down into the most horrible hell.

There are two kinds of bees, the bumblebee and the honeybee. The instruction learned from the bumblebee is that a sage should collect only small amounts of food from many different households and thus day after day practice the occupation of *mādhukarī* for maintaining his existence. A sage should also collect the essential truths from all scriptures, be they great or insignificant. The instruction received from the second insect, the honeybee, is that a mendicant *sannyāsī* should not save the food he begs for the sake of having it later that night or the next day, because if he does so, then just like the greedy honeybee he will be destroyed along with his hoard.

From the elephant the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* received the following instruction. Male elephants are tricked by hunters into moving toward captive female elephants, whereupon they fall into the hunters' ditch and are captured. Similarly, the man who becomes attached to the form of woman falls down into the deep well of material life and is destroyed.

The instruction received from the honey thief is that just as he steals the honey collected with great effort by the honeybee, a person in the renounced order of life has the privilege of enjoying before anyone else the

food and other valuable things purchased by the hard-earned money of the householders.

The instruction from the deer is that just as he becomes confused upon hearing the song of the hunter's flute and loses his life, so also does any person who becomes attracted to mundane music and song uselessly waste his life.

The instruction learned from the fish is that because he comes under the sway of attachment to the sense of taste, he is caught on the baited fishhook and must die. Similarly, an unintelligent person who is victimized by his insatiable tongue will also end up losing his life.

There was once a prostitute named Piṅgalā in the city of Videha, and from her the *avadhūta* learned another lesson. One day she dressed herself in very attractive clothing and ornaments and was waiting from sunset until midnight for a customer. She waited in great anticipation, but as the time passed her mind became very uneasy. No man came to see her, and in disgust she finally became renounced, giving up her hankering for the arrival of a suitor. Thereafter she engaged herself in thinking only of the Supreme Lord, Hari, and her mind achieved the supreme platform of peace. The instruction received from her is that hopes for sense gratification are the root cause of all suffering. Therefore, only one who has given up such hankering can fix himself in meditation upon the Personality of Godhead and achieve transcendental peace.

TEXT 8.1

*śrī-brāhmaṇa uvāca
sukham aindriyakam rājan
svarge naraka eva ca
dehinām yad yathā duḥkham
tasmān neccheta tad-budhaḥ*

śrī-brāhmaṇaḥ uvāca – the saintly *brāhmaṇa* said; *sukham* – happiness; *aindriyakam* – generated from the material senses; *rājan* – O King; *svarge* – in material heaven; *narake* – in hell; *eva* – certainly; *ca* – also; *dehinām* – of the embodied living beings; *yad* – since; *yathā* – just as; *duḥkham* – unhappiness; *tasmāt* – therefore; *na* – not; *iccheta* – should desire; *tad* – that; *budhaḥ* – one who knows.

TRANSLATION

The saintly brāhmaṇa said: O King, the embodied living entity automatically experiences unhappiness in heaven or hell. Similarly, happiness will also be experienced, even without one's seeking it. Therefore a person of intelligent discrimination does not make any endeavor to obtain such material happiness.

PURPORT

One should not uselessly waste his life pursuing material sense gratification, because a specific quantity of material happiness will automatically come to one as a result of one's past and present fruitive activities. This lesson is

learned from the *ajagara*, or python, who lies down and accepts for his maintenance whatever comes of its own accord. Remarkably, in both material heaven and hell happiness and unhappiness come automatically, due to our previous activities, although the proportions of happiness and unhappiness certainly vary. Either in heaven or in hell one may eat, drink, sleep and have sex life, but these activities, being based on the material body, are temporary and inconsequential. An intelligent person should see that even the best material situation is actually a punishment for previous unlawful activities executed outside the scope of loving devotional service to God. A conditioned soul undergoes great trouble to obtain a little happiness. After struggling in material life, which is full of hardship and hypocrisy, one may receive a little sense gratification, but this illusory pleasure in no way offsets the burden of suffering one must bear to obtain it. After all, a pretty hat is no cure for a homely face. If one really wants to solve life's problems, one should live simply and reserve the major portion of one's life for loving service to Kṛṣṇa. Even those who do not serve God receive a certain standard of maintenance from Him; therefore we can just imagine the security the Lord affords to those who dedicate their lives to His devotional service.

Unrefined fruitive workers foolishly worry only about the present life, whereas more pious *karmīs* imprudently make elaborate arrangements for future material sense gratification, unaware that all such enjoyment is temporary. The real solution, however, is to understand that by pleasing the Personality of Godhead, who is the master of all senses and all desires, one can attain permanent happiness. Such knowledge easily solves the problems of life.

TEXT 8.2

*grāsam su-mṛṣṭam virasam
mahāntam stokam eva vā
yadṛcchayaivāpatitam
graset ājagaro'kriyaḥ*

grāsam - food; *su-mṛṣṭam* - clean and delicious; *virasam* - tasteless; *mahāntam* - a large quantity; *stokam* - a small quantity; *eva* - certainly; *vā* - either; *yadṛcchayā* - without personal endeavor; *eva* - indeed; *āpatitam* - obtained; *graset* - one should eat; *ājagaroḥ* - like the python; *akriyaḥ* - remaining neutral without endeavor.

TRANSLATION

Following the example of the python, one should give up material endeavors and accept for one's maintenance food that comes of its own accord, whether such food be delicious or tasteless, ample or meager.

TEXT 8.3

*śayītāhāni bhūrīṇi
nirāhāro'nupakramaḥ
yadi nopanayed grāso
mahāhir iva diṣṭa-bhuk*

śayīta – he should remain peacefully; *ahāni* – days; *bhūrīṇi* – for many; *nirāhāraḥ* – fasting; *anupakramaḥ* – without endeavor; *yadi* – if; *na upanayet* – does not come; *grāsaḥ* – food; *mahā-ahiḥ* – the great python; *iva* – like; *diṣṭa* – whatever is provided by providence; *bhuk* – eating.

TRANSLATION

If at any time food does not come, then a saintly person should fast for many days without making endeavor. He should understand that by God's arrangement he must fast. Thus, following the example of the python, he should remain peaceful and patient.

PURPORT

If by God's arrangement one is forced to suffer material hardship, then one should think, "Due to my past sinful activity I am now being punished. In this way, God is mercifully making me humble." The word *śayīta* means one should remain peaceful and patient without mental agitation. *Diṣṭa-bhuk* means one must accept the Personality of Godhead as the supreme controller and not foolishly give up one's faith due to material inconvenience. *Tat te 'nukampām su-samīkṣamāṇo bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam (Bhāg. 10.14.8)*. A devotee of the Lord always accepts material hardship as the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa; thus he becomes eligible for supreme liberation.

TEXT 8.4

*ojaḥ-saho-bala-yutaṁ
bibhrad deham akarmakam
śayāno vīta-nidraś ca
nehetendriyavān api*

ojaḥ – sensual strength; *sahaḥ* – mental strength; *bala* – physical strength; *yutaṁ* – endowed with; *bibhrat* – maintaining; *deham* – the body; *akarmakam* – without endeavor; *śayānaḥ* – remaining peacefully; *vīta* – freed; *nidraḥ* – from nescience; *ca* – and; *na* – not; *īheta* – should endeavor; *indriya-vān* – possessing full bodily, mental and sensual strength; *api* – even though.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person should remain peaceful and materially inactive, maintaining his body without much endeavor. Even though possessed of full sensual, mental and physical strength, a saintly person should not become active for material gain but rather should always remain alert to his actual self-interest.

PURPORT

The word *vīta-nidraḥ* in this verse is very significant. *Nidrā* means "sleep" or "ignorance," and *vīta* means "freed from." In other words, a transcendentalist should always be awake to his eternal relationship with the

Supreme Personality of Godhead and should carefully cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Being confident of his relationship with the Lord, he should not endeavor for his personal maintenance, knowing that the Lord is protecting him in all respects. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states that the example of the python is given so that one will not uselessly waste his time in bodily maintenance.

One should not think, however, that the purpose of life is to lie on the ground like a python or to make a show of starving the body. The example of the python should not encourage one to become completely inactive. One should rather become active in spiritual advancement and inactive in material sense gratification. If one becomes completely inactive, that is certainly *nidrā*, or the darkness of ignorance, in which one remains asleep to his identity as an eternal servant of the Personality of Godhead.

A transcendentalist is eager to execute his service to the Lord, and therefore he is grateful when the Lord provides material facilities for such service. Mere renunciation of the material world is *phalgu-vairāgya*, or an immature stage of spiritual understanding. One must come to the stage of *yukta-vairāgya*, engaging everything in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. It is our practical experience that a devotee absorbed in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness automatically receives all facilities for his personal maintenance.

TEXT 8.5

*muniḥ prasanna-gambhīro
durvigāhyo duratyayaḥ
ananta-pāro hy akṣobhyaḥ
stimitoda ivārṇavaḥ*

muniḥ – a saintly sage; *prasanna* – pleasing; *gambhīraḥ* – very grave; *durvigāhyaḥ* – unfathomable; *duratyayaḥ* – unsurpassable; *ananta-pāraḥ* – unlimited; *hi* – certainly; *akṣobhyaḥ* – not to be disturbed; *stimita* – calm; *udaḥ* – water; *iva* – like; *arṇavaḥ* – the ocean.

TRANSLATION

A saintly sage is happy and pleasing in his external behavior, whereas internally he is most grave and thoughtful. Because his knowledge is immeasurable and unlimited he is never disturbed, and thus in all respects he is like the tranquil waters of the unfathomable and unsurpassable ocean.

PURPORT

Even in the midst of great distress, a self-realized sage does not lose control of himself, nor is his spiritual knowledge lost. Thus he is *akṣobhya*, or undisturbed. His mind is fixed on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the reservoir of unlimited spiritual bliss, and having linked his consciousness with the supreme consciousness, his knowledge cannot be measured. A pure devotee, having taken shelter of the Lord's lotus feet, possesses great spiritual power, and therefore he cannot be surpassed or overwhelmed. In fact, having developed his spiritual body, he is not affected

by the deteriorating actions of time. Although outwardly he is friendly and pleasing to everyone, internally his mind is fixed in the Absolute Truth, and no one can understand his actual purpose or plan. Even the most intelligent human being cannot understand the mental activities of a self-realized devotee who has given up material life based on lust and greed and taken shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord. Such a great soul can be compared to the mighty ocean. Innumerable powerful rivers plunge into the ocean, but the ocean remains calm and peaceful. Thus, a saintly person is understood to be, like the ocean, pleasing, unfathomable, grave, unsurpassable, unlimited and unshakable.

TEXT 8.6

*samṛddha-kāmo hīno vā
nārāyaṇa-paro muniḥ
notsarpeta na śuṣyeta
saridbhir iva sāgaraḥ*

samṛddha – flourishing; *kāmaḥ* – material opulence; *hīnaḥ* – destitute; *vā* – or; *nārāyaṇa* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *paraḥ* – accepting as supreme; *muniḥ* – a saintly devotee; *na* – does not; *utsarpeta* – swell up; *na* – does not; *śuṣyeta* – dry up; *saridbhiḥ* – by the rivers; *iva* – like; *sāgaraḥ* – the ocean.

TRANSLATION

During the rainy season the swollen rivers rush into the ocean, and during the dry summer the rivers, now shallow, severely reduce their supply of water; yet the ocean does not swell up during the rainy season, nor does it dry up in the hot summer. In the same way, a saintly devotee who has accepted the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the goal of his life sometimes will receive by providence great material opulence, and sometimes he will find himself materially destitute. However, such a devotee of the Lord does not rejoice in a flourishing condition, nor is he morose when poverty-stricken.

PURPORT

A sincere devotee of the Lord is always eager to meet the Lord and render Him transcendental service. He wants to remain fixed as an atom at the lotus feet of the Lord because Lord Kṛṣṇa, or Nārāyaṇa, is the reservoir of all pleasure. He rejoices when experiencing pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness and is morose when Kṛṣṇa is not present in his mind. In his dealings with the material world, a devotee cannot be disturbed by ordinary, materialistic people who sometimes insult him and accuse him of neglecting material sense gratification, just as the ocean cannot be disturbed by the innumerable rivers that enter into it. Sometimes lusty women approach a pure devotee, and sometimes speculative philosophers try to argue against the Personality of Godhead, but with all such ordinary people, a pure devotee is detached and undisturbed in his blissful Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 8.7

*dṛṣṭvā striyaṁ deva-māyāṁ
tat-bhāvair ajitendriyaḥ
pralobhitaḥ pataty andhe
tamasy agnau pataṅga-vat*

dṛṣṭvā – seeing; *striyam* – a woman; *deva-māyām* – whose form is created by the illusory energy of the Lord; *tat-bhāvaiḥ* – by the alluring seductive activities of the woman; *ajita* – one who has not controlled; *indriyaḥ* – his senses; *pralobhitaḥ* – enticed; *patati* – falls down; *andhe* – into the blindness of ignorance; *tamasi* – into the darkness of hell; *agnau* – in the fire; *pataṅga-vat* – just like the moth.

TRANSLATION

One who has failed to control his senses immediately feels attraction upon seeing a woman’s form, which is created by the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord. Indeed, when the woman speaks with enticing words, smiles coquettishly and moves her body sensuously, his mind is immediately captured, and thus he falls blindly into the darkness of material existence, just as the moth maddened by the fire rushes blindly into its flames.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī explains in this regard that just as a moth is killed by its attraction to the form of fire, similarly a bee can easily be killed by exploiting its attraction to the fragrance of flowers. Furthermore, hunters may trap and kill an elephant by exploiting its sensuous desire to touch a captive female elephant and may also kill a deer by attracting it with the sounds of their horns; and a fish is killed by its desire to taste the bait on a hook. Thus, one who desires to learn detachment from material illusion should accept these five helpless creatures as *guru* and learn the needful. Certainly one who is lusty to enjoy the illusory form of woman will be quickly buried in material illusion. Of the five types of fatal attraction involving material sense objects, the lesson of *rūpa*, or form, is illustrated in this verse.

TEXT 8.8

*yoṣid-dhiraṇyābharaṇāambarādi-
dravyeṣu māyā-raciteṣu mūḍhaḥ
pralobhitātmā hy upabhoga-buddhyā
pataṅga-van naśyati naṣṭa-dṛṣṭiḥ*

yoṣit – of women; *hiraṇya* – golden; *ābharaṇa* – ornaments; *ambara* – clothing; *ādi* – and so on; *dravyeṣu* – upon seeing such things; *māyā* – by the illusory energy of the Lord; *raciteṣu* – manufactured; *mūḍhaḥ* – a fool with no discrimination; *pralobhita* – aroused by lusty desires; *ātmā* – such a person; *hi* – certainly; *upabhoga* – for sense gratification; *buddhyā* – with the desire;

pataṅga-vat – like the moth; *naśyati* – is destroyed; *naṣṭa* – is ruined; *dṛṣṭiḥ* – whose intelligence.

TRANSLATION

A foolish person with no intelligent discrimination is immediately aroused at the sight of a lusty woman beautifully decorated with golden ornaments, fine clothing and other cosmetic features. Being eager for sense gratification, such a fool loses all intelligence and is destroyed just like the moth who rushes into the blazing fire.

PURPORT

Actually, women have the power to attract men through all of the material senses. Men become lusty by seeing the body of a woman, by smelling her fragrance, by hearing her voice, by tasting her lips and by touching her body. However, the foolish relationship based on material sex attraction begins by seeing, and thus *rūpa*, or form, is very prominent in the process of ruining one's intelligence. This fact has been exploited in modern times by huge pornography industries, which prey on unfortunate men and women. The example of the foolish moth rushing into the fire and destroying itself is most appropriate in this regard, for one who becomes addicted to the momentary pleasure of sex indulgence certainly loses his power to understand the spiritual reality behind dull matter.

A lusty person becomes blind and foolish through sex indulgence, and his soul is lost in the fire of sense gratification. This whole disaster can be avoided by taking seriously to the process of chanting the holy names of the Lord: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His empowered representatives such as Śrīla Prabhupāda have created a movement to save people from the dungeon of material life, and we should all seriously take advantage of this opportunity.

TEXT 8.9

*stokaṁ stokaṁ grased grāsam
deho varteta yāvatā
grhān ahimsann ātiṣṭhet
vṛttim mādhu-karīm muniḥ*

stokam stokam – always, a little bit; *graset* – one should eat; *grāsam* – food; *dehaḥ* – the material body; *varteta* – that it may live; *yāvatā* – with that much; *grhān* – the householders; *ahimsan* – not harassing; *ātiṣṭhet* – one should practice; *vṛttim* – the occupation; *mādhu-karīm* – of the honeybee; *muniḥ* – a saintly person.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person should accept only enough food to keep his body and soul together. He should go from door to door accepting just a little bit of food from each family. Thus he should practice the occupation of the honeybee.

PURPORT

Sometimes a honeybee is attracted by the extraordinary aroma of a particular lotus flower and lingers there, neglecting his usual activity of flying from flower to flower. Unfortunately, at sunset the lotus flower closes, and thus the infatuated honeybee is trapped. Similarly, a *sannyāsī* or *brahmacārī* may discover that excellent foodstuff is available at a particular house, and therefore, instead of wandering from place to place, he may become a veritable resident of such a well-fed household. Thus he will become bewildered by the illusion of family life and fall down from the platform of renunciation. Also, if a mendicant takes unfair advantage of the Vedic custom of charity and takes too often from a single family, the resentment he causes will disturb the social order. An ideal sage should, like the honeybee, travel from place to place, but he must be careful not to become a chubby bee by going to many houses and eating sumptuously at each house. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, such a chubby bee will undoubtedly become entangled in the network of *māyā*. No one should be overly attached to the gratification of his tongue, because this will lead to an overstuffed belly and then uncontrollable lust. In conclusion, one should not endeavor very much for material sense gratification but should instead endeavor strenuously to spread the glories of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. This is the proper use of human energy.

TEXT 8.10

*aṇubhyaś ca mahadbhyaś ca
śāstrebhyaḥ kuśalo naraḥ
sarvataḥ sāram ādadyāt
puṣpebhya iva ṣaṭpadaḥ*

aṇubhyaḥ - from the smallest; *ca* - and; *mahadbhyaḥ* - from the greatest; *ca* - also; *śāstrebhyaḥ* - from religious scriptures; *kuśalaḥ* - intelligent; *naraḥ* - a man; *sarvataḥ* - from all; *sāram* - the essence; *ādadyāt* - should take; *puṣpebhyaḥ* - from the flowers; *iva* - like; *ṣaṭpadaḥ* - the honeybee.

TRANSLATION

Just as the honeybee takes nectar from all flowers, big and small, an intelligent human being should take the essence from all religious scriptures.

PURPORT

In human society the original knowledge is called *Veda*, and the essential part of *veda*, or knowledge, is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15), *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyāḥ*. From the honeybee, an intelligent human being should learn to take the essence, or nectar, of all knowledge. A honeybee does not waste its time trying to carry away an entire bush or garden, but rather takes the essential nectar. We may thus study the difference between the honeybee and the ass, who carries heavy loads. Education does not mean to become an intellectual ass carrying heavy

loads of useless knowledge; rather, one should accept the essential knowledge that leads to an eternal life of bliss and understanding. At the present time people generally have a sectarian concept of religion, and yet there is no scientific understanding of the Absolute Truth. Such complacent, dogmatic, sectarian religionists can certainly learn something from the example of the honeybee given in this verse.

TEXT 8.11

*sāyantanaṁ śvastanaṁ vā
na saṅgrhṇīta bhikṣitam
pāṇi-pātrodarāmatro
makṣikeva na saṅgrahī*

sāyantanam - meant for the night; *śvastanam* - meant for tomorrow; *vā* - either; *na* - not; *saṅgrhṇīta* - should accept; *bhikṣitam* - food in charity; *pāṇi* - with the hand; *pātra* - as one's plate; *udara* - with the belly; *amatraḥ* - as the storage container; *makṣikā* - the bee; *iva* - like; *na* - not; *saṅgrahī* - a collector.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person should not think, "This food I will keep to eat tonight and this other food I can save for tomorrow." In other words, a saintly person should not store foodstuffs acquired by begging. Rather, he should use his own hands as his plate and eat whatever fits on them. His only storage container should be his belly, and whatever conveniently fits into his belly should be his stock of food. Thus one should not imitate the greedy honeybee who eagerly collects more and more honey.

PURPORT

There are two types of honeybees: those who collect nectar from the flowers and those who actually manufacture honey in the beehive. This verse refers to the second class. The greedy honeybee eventually collects so much honey that he is trapped in his hive; and in the same way, a materialistic person becomes trapped under the burden of unnecessary material accumulation. One who is interested in making spiritual progress should avoid such a situation; however, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura points out that for the purpose of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness one may accumulate an unlimited amount of material opulence. This is called *yukta-vairāgya*, or using everything in the service of Kṛṣṇa. A saintly person who is unable to work in Lord Caitanya's mission should practice austerities and collect only what he can hold in his hands and belly. However, one who has given his life to Kṛṣṇa may collect unlimitedly on Lord Kṛṣṇa's behalf. In fact, without acquiring material opulence, how is it possible to spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world? But if one tries to personally enjoy the funds or facilities acquired for the missionary activities of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, he commits the greatest offense. Therefore, even in the name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one should collect only what he can immediately

engage in practical devotional service; otherwise one will fall down to the platform of ordinary greediness.

TEXT 8.12

*sāyantanaṁ śvastanaṁ vā
na saṅgrhṇīta bhikṣukaḥ
makṣikā iva saṅgrhṇan
saha tena vinaśyati*

sāyantanam - meant for the night; *śvastanam* - meant for tomorrow; *vā* - either; *na* - not; *saṅgrhṇīta* - should accept; *bhikṣukaḥ* - a saintly mendicant; *makṣikā* - honeybee; *iva* - like; *saṅgrhṇan* - collecting; *saha* - with; *tena* - that collection; *vinaśyati* - is destroyed.

TRANSLATION

A saintly mendicant should not even collect foodstuffs to eat later in the same day or the next day. If he disregards this injunction and like the honeybee collects more and more delicious foodstuffs, that which he has collected will indeed ruin him.

PURPORT

Bhramara refers to that honeybee who wanders about from flower to flower, and *makṣikā* is the honeybee who accumulates more and more honey in the beehive with great attachment. A saintly mendicant should be like the *bhramara* bee because if he imitates the *makṣikā* bee his spiritual consciousness will be ruined. This point is so important that it is repeated in this verse.

TEXT 8.13

*padāpi yuvatīm bhikṣur
na sprśed dāravīm api
sprśan karīva badhyeta
karīṇyā aṅga-saṅgataḥ*

padā - with the foot; *api* - even; *yuvatīm* - a young girl; *bhikṣur* - a saintly mendicant; *na* - not; *sprśet* - should touch; *dāravīm* - made of wood; *api* - even; *sprśan* - touching; *karī* - the elephant; *iva* - like; *badhyeta* - becomes captured; *karīṇyāḥ* - of the she-elephant; *aṅga-saṅgataḥ* - by contact with the body.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person should never touch a young girl. In fact, he should not even let his foot touch a wooden doll in the shape of a woman. By bodily contact with a woman he will surely be captured by illusion, just as the elephant is captured by the she-elephant due to his desire to touch her body.

PURPORT

Elephants are captured in the jungle in the following way. A large hole is dug and then covered over with grass, leaves, mud and so on. Then a she-elephant is exhibited in front of the male elephant, who chases after her with

lusty desire, falls into the hole and is captured. The lesson to be learned from the elephant is that the desire to relish the touch sensation is certainly the cause of ruining one's life. An intelligent person, noting the elephant's great propensity to sport with the she-elephant, will take this excellent example to heart. Therefore, somehow or other one should avoid being cheated by allurements to the sensuous form of woman. One should not allow one's mind to be lost in lusty dreams of sex pleasure. There are various types of sense gratification to be enjoyed between men and women, including speaking, contemplating, touching, sexual intercourse, etc., and all of these constitute the network of illusion by which one is helplessly bound like an animal. Somehow or other one should remain aloof from sense gratification in the form of sex pleasure; otherwise, there is no possibility of understanding the spiritual world.

TEXT 8.14

*nādhigacchet striyaṃ prājñāḥ
karhicin mṛtyum ātmanaḥ
balādhikaiḥ sa hanyeta
gajair anyair gajo yathā*

na adhigacchet – he should not approach to enjoy; *striyam* – a woman; *prājñāḥ* – one who can intelligently discriminate; *karhicit* – at any time; *mṛtyum* – death personified; *ātmanaḥ* – for oneself; *bala* – in strength; *adhikaiḥ* – by those who are superior; *saḥ* – he; *hanyeta* – will be destroyed; *gajaiḥ* – by elephants; *anyaiḥ* – by others; *gajaḥ* – an elephant; *yathā* – just as.

TRANSLATION

A man possessing intelligent discrimination should not under any circumstances try to exploit the beautiful form of a woman for his sense gratification. Just as an elephant trying to enjoy a she-elephant is killed by other bull elephants also enjoying her company, one trying to enjoy a lady's company can at any moment be killed by her other lovers who are stronger than he.

PURPORT

Just as one is enchanted by the beautiful form of a woman, many other men will also be enchanted, and there is danger that they will be stronger than oneself and may even jealously kill one. Crimes of passion are extremely common. This is another disadvantage of material life.

TEXT 8.15

*na deyaṃ nopabhogyam ca
lubdhair yad duḥkha-sañcitam
bhunkte tad api tac cānyo
madhu-hevārthavin madhu*

na – not; *deyam* – to be given in charity to others; *na* – not; *upabhogyam* – to be enjoyed personally; *ca* – also; *lubdhaiḥ* – by those who are greedy; *yat* –

that which; *duḥkha* – with great struggle and pain; *sañcitam* – is accumulated; *bhunkte* – he enjoys; *tat* – that; *api* – nevertheless; *tat* – that; *ca* – also; *anyaḥ* – someone else; *madhu-hā* – the one who steals the honey from the beehive; *iva* – like; *artha* – wealth; *vit* – one who knows how to recognize; *madhu* – the honey.

TRANSLATION

A greedy person accumulates a large quantity of money with great struggle and pain, but the person who has struggled so much to acquire this wealth is not always allowed to enjoy it himself or give it in charity to others. The greedy man is like the bee who struggles to produce a large quantity of honey, which is then stolen by a man who will enjoy it personally or sell it to others. No matter how carefully one hides his hard-earned wealth or tries to protect it, there are those who are expert in detecting the whereabouts of valuable things, and they will steal it.

PURPORT

One may argue that a wealthy man may conceal his money so expertly, by investing it in banks, stocks, properties, and so on, that there is no danger of theft. Only foolish people actually hide money by burying it in the ground or placing it under a mattress. But despite the fact that the majority of the world's wealth has been accumulated in highly developed capitalistic countries, these countries are being severely challenged by many enemies who threaten at any moment to overrun the capitalists and steal their wealth. Similarly, we often find that the children of wealthy people are kidnapped, and then their parents must pay huge ransoms. Sometimes the parents themselves may also be kidnapped. Furthermore, there are so-called investment counselors who are expert in stealing the money of rich people; and in the modern age governments have also become expert in stealing money by taxation. Thus, the word *artha-vit* indicates one who by hook or by crook is expert in stealing the hard-earned wealth of other people. The bees work frantically to produce honey, but they will not enjoy their honey. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *mṛtyuḥ sarva-haraś cāham*: "I will come as death personified and steal everything." (Bg. 10.34) Somehow or other one's hard-earned material opulence will be stolen, and therefore, as mentioned in this verse, one should not work uselessly like the foolish honeybee.

TEXT 8.16

*su-duḥkhopārjitair vittair
āśāsānām gṛhāśiṣaḥ
madhu-hevāgrato bhunkte
yatir vai gṛha-medhinām*

su-duḥkha – with great struggle; *upārjitaiḥ* – that which is acquired; *vittaiḥ* – material opulence; *āśāsānām* – of those fervently desiring; *gṛha* – related to domestic enjoyment; *āśiṣaḥ* – blessings; *madhu-hā* – the person who steals honey from the bees; *iva* – like; *agrataḥ* – first, before others; *bhunkte* –

enjoys; *yatiḥ* – a saintly mendicant; *vai* – certainly; *gr̥ha-medhinām* – of those dedicated to material family life.

TRANSLATION

Just as a hunter takes away the honey laboriously produced by the honeybees, similarly, saintly mendicants such as brahmacārīs and sannyāsīs are entitled to enjoy the property painstakingly accumulated by householders dedicated to family enjoyment.

PURPORT

The scriptures state: “Saintly mendicants in the *sannyāsa* order of life and *brahmacārīs* have first right to enjoy the sumptuous foodstuffs produced by the householders. If the householders enjoy such foodstuffs without first offering them in charity to the mendicants, such neglectful householders must undergo the lunar fast called *cāndrāyaṇam*.” In family life one must overcome the natural tendency toward selfishness by giving abundant charity. Modern society foolishly does not observe such Vedic injunctions, and as a result the world has become overrun by envious *gr̥ha-medhīs*, or persons wholly and solely dedicated to personal gratification in family life. Therefore, the whole world is seized in an uncontrollable spasm of violence and suffering. If one wants to live peacefully one must follow the Vedic injunctions regulating family life. Although the householders work very hard to accumulate money, the saintly *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs* have the right to first enjoy the fruits of such labor. The conclusion is that one should give first priority to spiritual advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thus perfect one’s life. Then even without personal endeavor, one will be supplied all of one’s necessities by the mercy of the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 8.17

*grāmya-gītaṁ na śṛṇuyād
yatir vana-caraḥ kvacit
śikṣeta hariṇād baddhān
mṛgayor gīta-mohitāt*

grāmya – relating to sense gratification; *gītam* – songs; *na* – not; *śṛṇuyāt* – he should hear; *yatiḥ* – a saintly mendicant; *vana* – in the forest; *caraḥ* – moving; *kvacit* – ever; *śikṣeta* – one should learn; *hariṇāt* – from the deer; *baddhāt* – bound up; *mṛgayoḥ* – of the hunter; *gīta* – by the song; *mohitāt* – bewildered.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person dwelling in the forest in the renounced order of life should never listen to songs or music promoting material enjoyment. Rather, a saintly person should carefully study the example of the deer, who is bewildered by the sweet music of the hunter’s horn and is thus captured and killed.

PURPORT

If one becomes attached to the sense gratification of materialistic music and songs, one will develop all the features of material entanglement. One should hear *Bhagavad-gītā*, or the song sung by the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 8.18

*nṛtya-vāditra-gītāni
juṣan grāmyāṇi yoṣitām
āsām krīḍanako vaśya
ṛṣyaśṛṅgo mṛgī-sutaḥ*

nṛtya – dancing; *vāditra* – musical performance; *gītāni* – songs; *juṣan* – cultivating; *grāmyāṇi* – related to sense gratification; *yoṣitām* – of women; *āsām* – of them; *krīḍanakaḥ* – a plaything; *vaśyaḥ* – fully controlled; *ṛṣyaśṛṅgaḥ* – the sage Ṛṣyaśṛṅga; *mṛgī-sutaḥ* – the son of a deer.

TRANSLATION

Becoming attracted to the worldly singing, dancing and musical entertainment of beautiful women, even the great sage Ṛṣyaśṛṅga, the son of a deer, fell totally under their control, just like a pet animal.

PURPORT

Ṛṣyaśṛṅga was intentionally brought up by his father in an atmosphere of complete innocence. The father thought that if his son were never exposed to the sight of women he would always remain a perfect *brahmacārī*. But by chance the inhabitants of the neighboring kingdom, who were suffering from a long-term drought, received divine advice that rain would return to their kingdom only after the *brāhmaṇa* named Ṛṣyaśṛṅga stepped foot in it. Therefore they sent beautiful women to Ṛṣyaśṛṅga's hermitage to entice him and bring him back with them. Since Ṛṣyaśṛṅga had never even heard about women, he easily fell for their trap.

The name *Ṛṣyaśṛṅga* indicates that the young sage was born with a deerlike horn growing out of his forehead. If like the deer a *ṛṣi* becomes attracted to sweet musical sounds promising sense gratification, then like the deer he is quickly vanquished. A thoughtful person should humbly take instruction from the deer, who is doomed by attraction to musical sense gratification.

TEXT 8.19

*jihvayāti-pramāthinyā
jano rasa-vimohitaḥ
mṛtyum ṛcchaty asad-buddhir
mīnas tu baḍīśaiḥ yathā*

jihvayā – by the tongue; *ati-pramāthinyā* – which is extremely disturbing; *janaḥ* – a person; *rasa-vimohitaḥ* – bewildered by attraction to taste; *mṛtyum* – death; *ṛcchati* – achieves; *asad* – useless; *buddhiḥ* – whose intelligence; *mīnaḥ* – the fish; *tu* – indeed; *baḍīśaiḥ* – by the hooks; *yathā* – just as.

TRANSLATION

Just as a fish, incited by the desire to enjoy his tongue, is fatally trapped on the fisherman's hook, similarly, a foolish person is bewildered by the extremely disturbing urges of the tongue and thus is ruined.

PURPORT

The fisherman places meaty bait on a sharp hook and easily attracts the unintelligent fish, who is greedy to enjoy its tongue. Similarly, people are mad after gratifying their tongues and lose all discrimination in their eating habits. For momentary gratification they construct huge slaughterhouses and kill millions of innocent creatures, and by inflicting such atrocious suffering they prepare a ghastly future for themselves. But even if one eats only the foods authorized in the *Vedas*, there is still danger. One may eat too sumptuously and then the artificially stuffed belly will create pressure on the sexual organs. Thus one will fall down into the lower modes of nature and commit sinful activities that lead to the death of one's spiritual life. From the fish one should carefully learn the real dangers involved in gratifying the tongue.

TEXT 8.20

*indriyāṇi jayanty āśu
nirāhārā manīṣiṇaḥ
varjayitvā tu rasanam
tan nirannasya vardhate*

indriyāṇi - the material senses; *jayanti* - they conquer; *āśu* - quickly; *nirāhārāḥ* - those who restrain the senses from their objects; *manīṣiṇaḥ* - the learned; *varjayitvā* - except for; *tu* - however; *rasanam* - the tongue; *tat* - its desire; *nirannasya* - for one who is fasting; *vardhate* - increases.

TRANSLATION

By fasting, learned men quickly bring all of the senses except the tongue under control, because by abstaining from eating such men are afflicted with an increased desire to gratify the sense of taste.

PURPORT

In South America there is a saying that when the belly is full the heart is content. Thus, one who is eating sumptuously is jolly, and if one is deprived of proper food one's appetite becomes even more voracious. An intelligent person, however, does not fall under the control of the tongue, but rather tries to make progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By accepting the remnants of food offered to the Lord (*prasādam*), one gradually purifies the heart and automatically becomes simple and austere.

In this connection, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura states that the business of the tongue is to gratify itself with the varieties of flavor, but by wandering in the twelve holy forests of Vraja-maṇḍala (Vṛndāvana), one can be freed from the twelve flavors of material sense gratification. The five principal divisions of material relationships are neutral admiration, servitude,

friendship, parental affection and conjugal love; the seven subordinate features of material relationships are material humor, astonishment, chivalry, compassion, anger, dread and ghastliness. Originally, these twelve *rasas*, or flavors of relationships, are exchanged between the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the living entity in the spiritual world; and by wandering in the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana one can respiritualize the twelve flavors of personal existence. Thus one will become a liberated soul, free from all material desires. If one artificially tries to give up sense gratification, especially that of the tongue, the attempt will be a failure, and in fact one's desire for sense gratification will increase as a result of artificial deprivation. Only by experiencing real, spiritual pleasure in relationship with Kṛṣṇa can one give up material desires.

TEXT 8.21

*tāvaj jitendriyo na syād
vijitānyendriyaḥ pumān
na jayed rasanam yāvaj
jitaṁ sarvaṁ jite rase*

tāvāt – still; *jita-indriyaḥ* – one who has conquered the senses; *na* – not; *syāt* – can be; *vijita-anya-indriyaḥ* – one who has conquered all of the other senses; *pumān* – a human being; *na jayet* – cannot conquer; *rasanam* – the tongue; *yāvāt* – as long as; *jitaṁ* – conquered; *sarvaṁ* – everything; *jite* – when conquered; *rase* – the tongue.

TRANSLATION

Although one may conquer all of the other senses, as long as the tongue is not conquered it cannot be said that one has controlled his senses. However, if one is able to control the tongue, then one is understood to be in full control of all the senses.

PURPORT

By eating, one gives energy and activity to all of the senses, and thus if the tongue is uncontrolled all of the senses will be dragged down to the material platform of existence. Therefore, by all means one must control the tongue. If one fasts, then all of the other senses become weak and lose their potency. The tongue, however, becomes more greedy to taste delicious preparations, and when one finally indulges the tongue, all of the senses quickly go out of control. Therefore, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura advises that one accept *mahā-prasādam*, or the remnants of the Lord's food, in a moderate proportion. Since the tongue's function is also to vibrate, one should vibrate the glorious holy name of the Supreme Lord and taste the ecstasy of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *rasa-varjaṁ raso 'py asya paraṁ dṛṣṭvā nivartate*: only by the higher taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness can one give up the deadly lower taste that keeps one imprisoned in material bondage.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura states that as long as one's intelligence is materially covered, one cannot understand the pleasure of

Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Trying to enjoy without Kṛṣṇa, the living entity leaves the abode of the Supreme Lord, called Vrajabhūmi, and comes down into the material world, where he quickly loses control of his senses. One becomes particularly victimized by the tongue, belly and genitals, which exert intolerable pressure on the conditioned soul. These desires subside, however, when one reestablishes one's blissful relationship with the Lord, who is actually the reservoir of all pleasure. One who is attached to the taste of Kṛṣṇa consciousness automatically follows all of the rules and regulations of religious life due to spontaneous attraction to *viśuddha-sattva*, or the mode of pure goodness. Without such spontaneous attraction, one is certainly bewildered by the pushing of the material senses. Even the beginning stage of devotional service, called *sādhana-bhakti* (regulatory practice), is so powerful that it brings one to the platform of *anartha-nivṛtti*, where one becomes free from unwanted sinful habits and gains relief from the pressure of the tongue, belly and genitals. Thus one is delivered from the bondage of material addiction and can no longer be cheated by the allurements of the material energy. As it is said, all that glitters is not gold. In this regard Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura recommends that we consider the following song written by his father, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:

*śarīra avidyā-jāl, jaḍendriya tāhe kāl,
jīve phele viṣaya-sāgare
tā'ra madhye jihvā ati, lobhamay sudurmati,
tā'ke jetā kaṭhina saṁsāre
kṛṣṇa baḍa dayāmay, karibāre jihvā jay,
sva-prasādānna dila bhāi
sei annāmṛta pāo, rādhā-kṛṣṇa-guṇa gāo,
preme ḍāko caitanya-nitāi*

“O Lord, this material body is a lump of ignorance, and the senses are a network of paths to death. Somehow, we have fallen into this ocean of material sense enjoyment, and of all the senses the tongue is most voracious and uncontrollable; it is very difficult to conquer the tongue in this world. But You, dear Kṛṣṇa, are very kind to us and have given us such nice *prasādam*, just to control the tongue. Now we take this *prasādam* to our full satisfaction and glorify Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and in love call for the help of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda.”

TEXT 8.22

*piṅgalā nāma veśyāsīd
videha-nagare purā
tasyā me śikṣitaṁ kiñcin
nibodha nṛpa-nandana*

piṅgalā nāma – of the name Piṅgalā; *veśyā* – a prostitute; *āsīt* – there was; *videha-nagare* – in the city named Videha; *purā* – in the past; *tasyāḥ* – from

her; *me* – by me; *śikṣitaṃ* – what was learned; *kiñcit* – something; *nibodha* – now you learn; *nṛpa-nandana* – O son of kings.

TRANSLATION

O son of kings, previously in the city of Videha there dwelled a prostitute named Piṅgalā. Now please hear what I have learned from that lady.

TEXT 8.23

*sā svairiṇy ekadā kāntaṃ
saṅketa upaneṣyatī
abhūt kāle bahir dvāre
bibhratī rūpam uttamam*

sā – she; *svairiṇī* – the prostitute; *ekadā* – once; *kāntam* – a paying lover or a customer; *saṅkete* – into her house of sex; *upaneṣyatī* – to bring; *abhūt* – she stood; *kāle* – at night; *bahiḥ* – outside; *dvāre* – in the doorway; *bibhratī* – holding up; *rūpam* – her form; *uttamam* – most beautiful.

TRANSLATION

Once that prostitute, desiring to bring a lover into her house, stood outside in the doorway at night showing her beautiful form.

TEXT 8.24

*mārga āgacchato vīkṣya
puruṣān puruṣarṣabha
tān śulka-dān vittavataḥ
kāntān mene'rtha-kāmukī*

mārge – in that street; *āgacchataḥ* – those who were coming; *vīkṣya* – seeing; *puruṣān* – men; *puruṣa-rṣabha* – O best among men; *tān* – them; *śulka-dān* – who could pay the price; *vitta-vataḥ* – possessing money; *kāntān* – lovers or customers; *mene* – she considered; *artha-kāmukī* – desiring money.

TRANSLATION

O best among men, this prostitute was very anxious to get money, and as she stood on the street at night she studied all the men who were passing by, thinking, “Oh, this one surely has money. I know he can pay the price, and I am sure he would enjoy my company very much.” Thus she thought about all the men on the street.

TEXTS 8.25-26

*āgateṣv apayāteṣu
sā saṅketopajivinī
apy anyo vittavān ko'pi
mām upaiṣyati bhūri-daḥ
evaṃ durāśayā dhvasta-
nidrā dvāry avalambatī*

*nirgacchantī praviśatī
niśītham samapadyata*

āgateṣu – when they came; *apayāteṣu* – and they went; *sā* – she; *saṅketa-upajīvinī* – she whose only income was from prostitution; *api* – maybe; *anyaḥ* – another one; *vitta-vān* – who has money; *kaḥ api* – someone; *mām* – me; *upaiśyati* – will approach for love; *bhūri-daḥ* – and he will give lots of money; *evam* – thus; *durāśayā* – with vain hope; *dhvasta* – spoiled; *nidrā* – her sleep; *dvāri* – in the doorway; *avalambatī* – hanging on; *nirgacchantī* – going out toward the street; *praviśatī* – going back into her house; *niśītham* – midnight; *samapadyata* – arrived.

TRANSLATION

As the prostitute Piṅgalā stood in the doorway, many men came and went, walking by her house. Her only means of sustenance was prostitution, and therefore she anxiously thought, “Maybe this one who is coming now is very rich... Oh, he is not stopping, but I am sure someone else will come. Surely this man who is coming now will want to pay me for my love, and he will probably give lots of money.” Thus, with vain hope, she remained leaning against the doorway, unable to finish her business and go to sleep. Out of anxiety she would sometimes walk out toward the street, and sometimes she went back into her house. In this way, the midnight hour gradually arrived.

TEXT 8.27

*tasyā vittāśayā śuśyad-
vaktrāyā dīna-cetaśḥ
nirvedaḥ paramo jajñe
cintā-hetuḥ sukhāvahaḥ*

tasyāḥ – of her; *vitta* – for money; *āśayā* – by the desire; *śuśyat* – dried up; *vaktrāyāḥ* – her face; *dīna* – morose; *cetaśḥ* – her mind; *nirvedaḥ* – detachment; *paramaḥ* – very great; *jajñe* – awakened; *cintā* – anxiety; *hetuḥ* – because of; *sukha* – happiness; *āvahaḥ* – bringing.

TRANSLATION

As the night wore on, the prostitute, who intensely desired money, gradually became morose, and her face dried up. Thus being filled with anxiety for money and most disappointed, she began to feel a great detachment from her situation, and happiness arose in her mind.

PURPORT

It appears from these verses that on this particular night the prostitute Piṅgalā was not at all successful in attracting customers to her house. Being completely frustrated and disappointed, she gradually became indifferent to her situation. Thus, great suffering sometimes leads one to the path of enlightenment; or, according to a Sanskrit proverb, disappointment gives rise to the greatest satisfaction.

The prostitute had dedicated her life to satisfying the lusty desires of many men. Engaging her mind, body and words in the service of paying lovers, she completely forgot the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus her mind was most unsteady and disturbed. Finally, being completely frustrated, her face and throat drying up, she began to feel indifferent to her situation, and happiness arose in her mind.

TEXT 8.28

*tasyā nirviṇṇa-cittāyā
gītaṁ śṛṇu yathā mama
nirveda āśā-pāśānām
puruṣasya yathā hy asiḥ*

tasyāḥ - of her; *nirviṇṇa* - disgusted; *cittāyāḥ* - whose mind; *gītam* - song; *śṛṇu* - please hear; *yathā* - as it is; *mama* - from me; *nirvedaḥ* - detachment; *āśā* - of hopes and yearnings; *pāśānām* - of the binding network; *puruṣasya* - of a person; *yathā* - just as; *hi* - certainly; *asiḥ* - the sword.

TRANSLATION

The prostitute felt disgusted with her material situation and thus became indifferent to it. Indeed, detachment acts like a sword, cutting to pieces the binding network of material hopes and desires. Now please hear from me the song sung by the prostitute in that situation.

PURPORT

The network of material desires is created when one falsely thinks that he can establish himself permanently in the material world. This binding network should be cut by the sword of detachment; otherwise one will be forced to wander in the illusory network of *māyā* with no understanding of liberated life on the spiritual platform.

TEXT 8.29

*na hy aṅgājāta-nirvedo
deha-bandhaṁ jihāsati
yathā vijñāna-rahito
manujo mamatām nṛpa*

na - does not; *hi* - certainly; *aṅga* - O King; *ajāta* - who has not developed; *nirvedaḥ* - detachment; *deha* - of the material body; *bandham* - bondage; *jihāsati* - he desires to give up; *yathā* - just as; *vijñāna* - realized knowledge; *rahitaḥ* - bereft of; *manujaḥ* - a human being; *mamatām* - false sense of proprietorship; *nṛpa* - O King.

TRANSLATION

O King, just as a human being who is bereft of spiritual knowledge never desires to give up his false sense of proprietorship over many material things, similarly, a person who has not developed detachment never desires to give up the bondage of the material body.

TEXT 8.30

*piṅgalovāca
aho me moha-vitatim
paśyatāvijitātmanaḥ
yā kāntād asataḥ kāmam
kāmaye yena bālīsā*

piṅgalā – Piṅgalā; *uvāca* – said; *aho* – oh; *me* – my; *moha* – of illusion; *vitatim* – expansion; *paśyata* – just see, everyone; *avijita-ātmanaḥ* – of one whose mind is not controlled; *yā* – which person (me); *kāntāt* – from a lover; *asataḥ* – useless, insignificant; *kāmam* – lusty pleasure; *kāmaye* – I desire; *yena* – because; *bālīsā* – I am a fool.

TRANSLATION

**The prostitute Piṅgalā said: Just see how greatly illusioned I am!
Because I cannot control my mind, just like a fool I desire lusty
pleasure from an insignificant man.**

PURPORT

In material existence all of the senses are attracted by different objects, and thus the conditioned soul becomes a first-class fool. The cause of material life is one's indifference to the Absolute Truth. The conditioned soul considers himself to be the lord and enjoyer of the material world and considers the purpose of life to be sense gratification. The more one tries to enjoy the material world, the more one's illusion increases.

It appears from this verse that the prostitute Piṅgalā was not only earning her livelihood through prostitution, but was actually enjoying her illicit contact with innumerable men. The words *kāntād asataḥ* indicate that she was freely selling herself without discrimination to the most ordinary and useless men, considering them to be "lovers." Thus she says, "I was a great fool." The word *bālīsā* means "one who has a childish mentality, without practical experience of right and wrong."

TEXT 8.31

*santam samīpe ramaṇam rati-pradam
vitta-pradam nityam imam vihāya
akāma-dam duḥkha-bhayādhi-śoka-
moha-pradam tuccham aham bhaje'jñā*

santam – being; *samīpe* – most near (in my heart); *ramaṇam* – the most dear; *rati* – actual love or pleasure; *pradam* – giving; *vitta* – prosperity; *pradam* – giving; *nityam* – eternal; *imam* – Him; *vihāya* – giving up; *akāma-dam* – who can never satisfy one's desires; *duḥkha* – misery; *bhaya* – fear; *ādhi* – mental distress; *śoka* – lamentation; *moha* – illusion; *pradam* – giving; *tuccham* – most insignificant; *aham* – I; *bhaje* – serve; *ajñā* – an ignorant fool.

TRANSLATION

I am such a fool that I have given up the service of that person who, being eternally situated within my heart, is actually most dear to me. That most dear one is the Lord of the universe, who is the bestower of real love and happiness and the source of all prosperity. Although He is in my own heart, I have completely neglected Him. Instead I have ignorantly served insignificant men who can never satisfy my real desires and who have simply brought me unhappiness, fear, anxiety, lamentation and illusion.

PURPORT

Piṅgalā laments that she chose to serve most sinful, useless men. She falsely thought they would bring her happiness and neglected to serve the actual Lord of the heart, Kṛṣṇa. She could understand how foolishly she had struggled for money, not knowing that the Supreme Lord is always inclined to award prosperity to His sincere devotee. The prostitute was proud of her ability to please men, but she now laments that she did not try to please the Supreme Lord by loving service. The Supreme Lord is completely aloof from the transactions of the material world. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the actual enjoyer of everyone and everything, but one must learn how to please the Lord by pure spiritual service.

TEXT 8.32

*aho mayātmā paritāpito vṛthā
sāṅketya-vṛttyāti-vigarhya-vārtayā
straiṅān narād yārtha-tṛṣo'nuśocyāt
krītena vittam ratim ātmanecchatī*

aho – oh; *mayā* – by me; *ātmā* – the soul; *paritāpitaḥ* – subjected to great pain; *vṛthā* – uselessly; *sāṅketya* – of a prostitute; *vṛttyā* – by the occupation; *ati-vigarhya* – most reprehensible; *vārtayā* – occupation; *straiṅāt* – from lusty woman-hunters; *narāt* – from men; *yā* – who (me); *artha-tṛṣaḥ* – from the greedy; *anuśocyāt* – the pitiable; *krītena* – with that which was sold; *vittam* – money; *ratim* – sex pleasure; *ātmanā* – with my body; *icchatī* – desiring.

TRANSLATION

Oh, how I have uselessly tortured my own soul! I have sold my body to lusty, greedy men who are themselves objects of pity. Thus practicing the most abominable profession of a prostitute, I hoped to get money and sex pleasure.

PURPORT

The art of prostitution is based on awakening the enjoying propensity in men. Apparently this prostitute was so foolish that she maintained a romantic conception of her profession and was actually trying to enjoy loving affairs with her customers, not realizing that they were the lowest of men with the most abominable motives. Like the prostitute Piṅgalā, one should understand that by giving up the devotional service of the Lord one simply becomes a victim of the illusory energy and suffers greatly.

TEXT 8.33

*yad asthibhir nirmīta-varṁśa-varṁśya-
sthūṇaṁ tvacā roma-nakhaiḥ pinaddham
kṣaran-nava-dvāram agāram etad
viṅ-mūtra-pūrṇaṁ mad upaiti kānyā*

yat – which; *asthibhiḥ* – with bones; *nirmīta* – constructed; *varṁśa* – the spine; *varṁśya* – the ribs; *sthūṇam* – the bones in the hands and legs; *tvacā* – by skin; *roma-nakhaiḥ* – by hair and nails; *pinaddham* – covered; *kṣarat* – oozing; *nava* – nine; *dvāram* – doors; *agāram* – house; *etad* – this; *viṅ* – stool; *mūtra* – urine; *pūrṇam* – full of; *mat* – besides me; *upaiti* – devotes oneself to; *kā* – what woman; *anyā* – other.

TRANSLATION

This material body is like a house in which I, the soul, am living. The bones forming my spine, ribs, arms and legs are like the beams, crossbeams and pillars of the house, and the whole structure, which is full of stool and urine, is covered by skin, hair and nails. The nine doors leading into this body are constantly excreting foul substances. Besides me, what woman could be so foolish as to devote herself to this material body, thinking that she might find pleasure and love in this contraption?

PURPORT

The nine doors leading into and out of the body are the two eyes, the two nostrils, the mouth, the two ears, the genitals and the anus. *Varṁśa*, or “spine,” also means “bamboo,” and indeed the skeleton appears to resemble a bamboo construction. Just as bamboo can be immediately burned to ashes or chopped into pieces, similarly, the material body, which is constantly deteriorating, may at any moment be crushed into powder, cut into pieces, drowned, burned, suffocated, and so on. Eventually the body must disintegrate, and therefore there is certainly no one as unfortunate as one who has dedicated his heart and soul to this flimsy body, which is filled with unpleasant elements.

TEXT 8.34

*videhānāṁ pure hy asminn
aham ekaiva mūḍha-dhīḥ
yānyam icchanty asaty asmād
ātma-dāt kāmam acyutāt*

videhānām – of the residents of Videha; *pure* – in the city; *hi* – certainly; *asmin* – this; *aham* – I; *ekā* – alone; *eva* – undoubtedly; *mūḍha* – fool; *dhīḥ* – whose intelligence; *yā* – (I am that one) who; *anyam* – another; *icchantī* – desiring; *asatī* – being most unchaste; *asmāt* – other than Him; *ātma-dāt* –

who awards us our real, spiritual form; *kāmam* – sense gratification; *acyutāt* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Acyuta.

TRANSLATION

Certainly in this city of Videha I alone am completely foolish. I neglected the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who awards us everything, even our original spiritual form, and instead I desired to enjoy sense gratification with many men.

TEXT 8.35

*suhṛt preṣṭhatamo nātha
ātmā cāyaṁ śarīriṇām
taṁ vikrīyātmanaivāhaṁ
rame'neṇa yathā ramā*

su-hṛt – well-wishing friend; *preṣṭha-tamaḥ* – absolutely the most dear one; *nāthaḥ* – Lord; *ātmā* – soul; *ca* – also; *ayaṁ* – He; *śarīriṇām* – of all embodied beings; *taṁ* – Him; *vikrīya* – purchasing; *ātmanā* – by surrendering myself; *eva* – certainly; *ahaṁ* – I; *rame* – will enjoy; *anena* – with the Lord; *yathā* – just like; *ramā* – Lakṣmīdevī.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is absolutely the most dear one for all living beings because He is everyone's well-wisher and Lord. He is the Supreme Soul situated in everyone's heart. Therefore I will now pay the price of complete surrender, and thus purchasing the Lord I will enjoy with Him just like Lakṣmīdevī.

PURPORT

The real friend of all conditioned souls is the Supreme Lord, and only He can award the highest perfection in life. By following the example of Lakṣmīdevī, who always remains at the lotus feet of the Lord, one will certainly obtain eternal happiness. One should make the best use of the material body, which is a bad bargain, and surrender one's body, mind and words to the Lord. Paying such a price, one can purchase the Lord, who is everyone's dearest well-wisher. Thus one's ancient propensity for sense gratification will automatically be controlled.

TEXT 8.36

*kiyat priyaṁ te vyabhajan
kāmā ye kāma-dā narāḥ
ādy-antavanto bhāryāyā
devā vā kāla-vidrutāḥ*

kiyat – how much; *priyaṁ* – actual happiness; *te* – they; *vyabhajan* – have provided; *kāmāḥ* – sense gratification; *ye* – and those; *kāma-dāḥ* – who give sense gratification; *narāḥ* – men; *ādi* – a beginning; *anta* – and an end; *vantaḥ* – having; *bhāryāyāḥ* – of a wife; *devāḥ* – the demigods; *vā* – or; *kāla* – by time; *vidrutāḥ* – separated and thus disturbed.

TRANSLATION

Men provide sense gratification for women, but all these men, and even the demigods in heaven, have a beginning and an end. They are all temporary creations who will be dragged away by time. Therefore how much actual pleasure or happiness could any of them ever give to their wives?

PURPORT

In this material world everyone is basically pursuing his personal sense gratification, and thus everyone is being ruined by the influence of time. On the material platform no one actually helps anyone else. So-called material love is simply a cheating process, as the lady Piṅgalā is now discovering.

TEXT 8.37

*nūnam me bhagavān pṛito
viṣṇuḥ kenāpi karmaṇā
nirvedo'yaṁ durāśāyā
yaṁ me jātaḥ sukhāvahaḥ*

nūnam - undoubtedly; *me* - with me; *bhagavān* - the Supreme Lord; *pṛitaḥ* - is pleased; *viṣṇuḥ* - the Personality of Godhead; *kena api* - by some; *karmaṇā* - activity; *nirvedaḥ* - detachment from sense gratification; *ayaṁ* - this; *durāśāyāḥ* - in one who so stubbornly hoped for material enjoyment; *yat* - because; *me* - in me; *jātaḥ* - it has arisen; *sukha* - happiness; *āvahaḥ* - bringing.

TRANSLATION

Although I most stubbornly hoped to enjoy the material world, somehow or other detachment has arisen in my heart, and it is making me very happy. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, must be pleased with me. Without even knowing it, I must have performed some activity satisfying to Him.

TEXT 8.38

*maivaṁ syur manda-bhāgyāyāḥ
kleśā nirveda-hetavaḥ
yenānubandham nirhṛtya
puruṣaḥ śamam ṛcchati*

mā - not; *evam* - thus; *syuḥ* - they could be; *manda-bhāgyāyāḥ* - of a woman who is truly unfortunate; *kleśāḥ* - miseries; *nirveda* - of detachment; *hetavaḥ* - the causes; *yena* - by which detachment; *anubandham* - the bondage; *nirhṛtya* - removing; *puruṣaḥ* - a person; *śamam* - real peace; *ṛcchati* - obtains.

TRANSLATION

A person who has developed detachment can give up the bondage of material society, friendship and love, and a person who undergoes great suffering gradually becomes, out of hopelessness, detached and indifferent to the material world. Thus, due to my

great suffering, such detachment awoke in my heart; yet how could I have undergone such merciful suffering if I were actually unfortunate? Therefore, I am in fact fortunate and have received the mercy of the Lord. He must somehow or other be pleased with me.

TEXT 8.39

*tenopakṛtam ādāya
śīrasā grāmya-saṅgatāḥ
tyaktvā durāśāḥ śaraṇam
vrajāmi tam adhīśvaram*

tena - by Him (the Lord); *upakṛtam* - the great help rendered; *ādāya* - accepting; *śīrasā* - upon my head, with devotion; *grāmya* - ordinary sense gratification; *saṅgatāḥ* - related to; *tyaktvā* - giving up; *durāśāḥ* - sinful desires; *śaraṇam* - for shelter; *vrajāmi* - I am now coming; *tam* - to Him; *adhīśvaram* - the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

With devotion I accept the great benefit that the Lord has bestowed upon me. Having given up my sinful desires for ordinary sense gratification, I now take shelter of Him, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 8.40

*santuṣṭā śraddadhaty etad
yathā-lābhena jīvatī
viharāmy amunaivāham
ātmanā ramaṇena vai*

santuṣṭā - completely satisfied; *śraddadhatī* - now having complete faith; *etat* - in the Lord's mercy; *yathā-lābhena* - with whatever comes of its own accord; *jīvatī* - living; *viharāmi* - I will enjoy life; *amunā* - with that one; *eva* - only; *aham* - I; *ātmanā* - with the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ramaṇena* - who is the real source of love and happiness; *vai* - there is no doubt about it.

TRANSLATION

I am now completely satisfied, and I have full faith in the Lord's mercy. Therefore I will maintain myself with whatever comes of its own accord. I shall enjoy life with only the Lord, because He is the real source of love and happiness.

TEXT 8.41

*saṁsāra-kūpe patitam
viṣayair muṣitekṣaṇam
grastam kālāhinātmānam
ko'nyas trātum adhīśvaraḥ*

saṁsāra - material existence; *kūpe* - in the dark well; *patitam* - fallen; *viṣayaiḥ* - by sense gratification; *muṣita* - stolen away; *īkṣaṇam* - vision;

grastam – seized; *kāla* – of time; *ahinā* – by the serpent; *ātmānam* – the living entity; *kaḥ* – who; *anyaḥ* – else; *trātum* – is capable of delivering; *adhīśvaraḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

The intelligence of the living entity is stolen away by activities of sense gratification, and thus he falls into the dark well of material existence. Within that well he is then seized by the deadly serpent of time. Who else but the Supreme Personality of Godhead could save the poor living entity from such a hopeless condition?

PURPORT

Piṅgalā stated in a previous verse that even the demigods are unable to give actual happiness to a woman. One may question who has authorized this lady to reject even such exalted personalities as Brahmā, Śiva and the other demigods. The answer given here is that if one actually wants to solve all the problems of life and go back home, back to Godhead, then the only solution is to take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord. It is well known that the demigods themselves are subject to birth and death. As stated by Lord Śiva himself, *mukti-pradātā sarveṣāṁ viṣṇur eva na saṁśayaḥ*: “There is no doubt that Viṣṇu is the deliverer of liberation for everyone.”

TEXT 8.42

*ātmaiva hy ātmano goptā
nirvidyeta yadākhilāt
apramatta idaṁ paśyed
grastam kālāhinā jagat*

ātmā – the soul; *eva* – alone; *hi* – certainly; *ātmanaḥ* – of himself; *goptā* – the protector; *nirvidyeta* – becomes detached; *yadā* – when; *akhilāt* – from all material things; *apramattaḥ* – without material fever; *idaṁ* – this; *paśyet* – can see; *grastam* – seized; *kāla* – of time; *ahinā* – by the serpent; *jagat* – the universe.

TRANSLATION

When the living entity sees that the entire universe has been seized by the serpent of time, he becomes sober and sane and at that time detaches himself from all material sense gratification. In that condition the living entity is qualified to be his own protector.

PURPORT

In this verse, Piṅgalā states that by the Lord’s mercy a self-realized soul can see that the entire universe is existing within the jaws of the great serpent of time. Certainly this is not a promising situation, and one who sees it loses his desire for sense gratification. Thus, by the Lord’s causeless mercy, the spiritually sane living entity can protect himself from illusion.

Since Piṅgalā is now glorifying the Personality of Godhead for His mercy in awarding salvation, the following question might arise: Is she worshiping the Lord out of love, or is she merely a salvationist desiring liberation from material existence? In answer it may be said that in her Kṛṣṇa conscious

situation she is already liberated, even though remaining in this world. Her program will now be simply to render loving service to the Personality of Godhead without any personal desire, including that of salvation.

TEXT 8.43

*śrī-brāhmaṇa uvāca
evam vyavasita-matir
durāsām kānta-tarṣa-jām
chittvopaśamam āsthāya
śayyām upaviveśa sā*

śrī-brāhmaṇaḥ uvāca – the *avadhūta* said; *evam* – thus; *vyavasita* – determined; *matih* – her mind; *durāsām* – the sinful desire; *kānta* – lovers; *tarṣa* – hankering for; *jām* – caused by; *chittvā* – cutting off; *upaśamam* – in tranquillity; *āsthāya* – being situated; *śayyām* – on her bed; *upaviveśa* – sat down; *sā* – she.

TRANSLATION

The *avadhūta* said: Thus, her mind completely made up, Piṅgalā cut off all her sinful desires to enjoy sex pleasure with lovers, and she became situated in perfect peace. Then she sat down on her bed.

TEXT 8.44

*āśā hi paramam duḥkham
nairāśyam paramam sukham
yathā sañchidya kāntāśām
sukham suṣvāpa piṅgalā*

āśā – material desire; *hi* – certainly; *paramam* – the greatest; *duḥkham* – unhappiness; *nairāśyam* – freedom from material desires; *paramam* – the greatest; *sukham* – happiness; *yathā* – in that way; *sañchidya* – completely cutting off; *kānta* – for lovers; *āśām* – the desire; *sukham* – happily; *suṣvāpa* – she slept; *piṅgalā* – the former prostitute, Piṅgalā.

TRANSLATION

Material desire is undoubtedly the cause of the greatest unhappiness, and freedom from such desire is the cause of the greatest happiness. Therefore, completely cutting off her desire to enjoy so-called lovers, Piṅgalā very happily went to sleep.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Eighth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Story of Piṅgalā.”

CHAPTER NINE

Detachment from All that Is Material

The *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* describes his seven remaining *gurus*, beginning with the *kurara* bird. He also describes an additional *guru*, one's own body. The instruction received from the *kurara* bird is that attachment creates misery, but the person who is unattached and has no material possessions is qualified to achieve unlimited happiness.

The *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* learned from the foolish, lazy child that by becoming free from anxiety a person becomes capable of worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead and experiencing supreme ecstasy. The instruction received from the young girl who kept just one conchshell bracelet on each wrist is that one should remain alone and thus steady one's mind. Then only will it be possible for one to fix one's mind completely on the Personality of Godhead. Once several men arrived to ask for the hand of the young girl, whose relatives had coincidentally left the house. She went inside and began to prepare food for the unexpected guests by beating rice. At that time her conchshell bracelets were making a loud noise, rattling against each other, and in order to stop this sound she broke off the bracelets one by one until at last only one remained on each arm. Just as two or more bracelets make noise, if even two people reside in the same place, what to speak of many, there is every chance of mutual quarrel and useless gossip. The *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* also received instruction from the arrow maker, who was so absorbed in constructing an arrow that he did not even notice that the king was passing right by him on the road. In the same way, one must strictly control one's mind, concentrating it in the worship of Lord Śrī Hari. The *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* learned from the serpent that a sage should wander alone, should not have any fixed residence should be always careful and grave, should not reveal his movements, should take assistance from no one and should speak little.

The instruction obtained from the spider, who spins his web from his mouth and then withdraws it, is that the Supreme Personality of Godhead similarly creates from out of Himself the whole universe and then winds it up into Himself.

From the weak insect who assumed the same form as the *peśaskṛt* wasp, the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* learned that the living entity, under the sway of affection, hatred and fear, attains in his next life the identity of that object upon which he fixes his intelligence.

Seeing that the fragile material body is subject to birth and death, one who is sober should become devoid of material attachment to this body and should properly utilize the rare gift of human life in the pursuit of knowledge, endeavoring always for the achievement of the highest goal.

TEXT 9.1

śrī-brāhmaṇa uvāca
parigraho hi duḥkhāya
yad yat priyatamaṁ nṛṇām

*anantaṁ sukham āpnoti
tad vidvān yas tv akiñcanaḥ*

śrī-brāhmaṇaḥ uvāca – the saintly *brāhmaṇa* said; *parigrahaḥ* – attachment to possession; *hi* – certainly; *duḥkhāya* – leading to misery; *yat yat* – whatever; *priya-tamam* – is most dear; *nṛṇām* – of men; *anantam* – unlimited; *sukham* – happiness; *āpnoti* – achieves; *tat* – that; *vidvān* – knowing; *yaḥ* – whoever; *tu* – indeed; *akiñcanaḥ* – is free from such attachment.

TRANSLATION

The saintly brāhmaṇa said: Everyone considers certain things within the material world to be most dear to him, and because of attachment to such things one eventually becomes miserable. One who understands this gives up material possessiveness and attachment and thus achieves unlimited happiness.

TEXT 9.2

*sāmiṣaṁ kuraram jaghnur
balino'nye nirāmiṣāḥ
tadāmiṣaṁ parityajya
sa sukhaṁ samavindata*

sa-āmiṣam – having meat; *kuraram* – a large hawk; *jaghnur* – they attacked; *balinaḥ* – very strong; *anye* – others; *nirāmiṣāḥ* – without meat; *tadā* – at that time; *āmiṣam* – the meat; *parityajya* – giving up; *saḥ* – he; *sukham* – happiness; *samavindata* – achieved.

TRANSLATION

Once a group of large hawks who were unable to find any prey attacked another, weaker hawk who was holding some meat. At that time, being in danger of his life, the hawk gave up his meat and experienced actual happiness.

PURPORT

Incited by the modes of nature, birds become violent and kill other birds to eat them or to steal meat captured by them. Hawks, vultures and eagles are in this category. However, one should give up the envious propensity to commit violence against others and should take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whereby one sees every living entity as equal to oneself. On this platform of actual happiness one does not envy anyone and thus sees no one as his enemy.

TEXT 9.3

*na me mānāpamānau sto
na cintā geha-putriṇām
ātma-kṛīḍa ātma-ratir
vicarāmīha bāla-vat*

na – not; *me* – in me; *māna* – honor; *apamānau* – dishonor; *staḥ* – exist; *na* – there is not; *cintā* – anxiety; *geha* – of those who have a home; *putriṇām* –

and children; *ātma* – by the self; *krīḍaḥ* – sporting; *ātma* – in the self alone; *ratiḥ* – enjoying; *vicarāmi* – I wander; *iha* – in this world; *bāla-vat* – like a child.

TRANSLATION

In family life, the parents are always in anxiety about their home, children and reputation. But I have nothing to do with these things. I do not worry at all about any family, and I do not care about honor and dishonor. I enjoy only the life of the soul, and I find love on the spiritual platform. Thus I wander the earth like a child.

TEXT 9.4

*dvāv eva cintayā muktau
paramānanda āplutau
yo vimugdho jaḍo bālo
yo guṇebhyaḥ param̐ gataḥ*

dvau – two; *eva* – certainly; *cintayā* – from anxiety; *muktau* – freed; *paramānande* – in great happiness; *āplutau* – merged; *yaḥ* – one who; *vimugdhaḥ* – is ignorant; *jaḍaḥ* – retarded without developing activities; *bālaḥ* – childish; *yaḥ* – one who; *guṇebhyaḥ* – to the modes of nature; *param* – the Lord, who is transcendental; *gataḥ* – has achieved.

TRANSLATION

In this world two types of people are free from all anxiety and merged in great happiness: one who is a retarded and childish fool and one who has approached the Supreme Lord, who is beyond the three modes of material nature.

PURPORT

Those who fervently seek material sense gratification are gradually pushed down into a miserable condition of life because as soon as one even slightly violates the laws of nature, one must suffer sinful reactions. Thus even materially alert and ambitious persons are constantly in anxiety, and from time to time they are plunged into great misery. Those who are nonsensical and retarded, however, live in a fool’s paradise, and those who have surrendered to Lord Kṛṣṇa are filled with transcendental bliss. Therefore both the fool and the devotee may be said to be peaceful, in the sense that they are free from the ordinary anxiety of the materially ambitious person. However, this does not mean that the devotee and the retarded fool are on the same platform. A fool’s peace is like that of a dead stone, whereas a devotee’s satisfaction is based on perfect knowledge.

TEXT 9.5

*kvacit kumārī tv ātmānaṁ
vṛṇānān gṛham āgatān
svayaṁ tān arhayām āsa
kvāpi yāteṣu bandhuṣu*

kvacit – once; *kumārī* – a young girl; *tu* – indeed; *ātmānam* – herself; *vṛṇānān* – desiring as a wife; *gṛham* – to the house; *āgatān* – arrived; *svayam* – herself; *tān* – those men; *arhayām āsa* – received with great hospitality; *kva api* – to another place; *yāteṣu* – when they had gone; *bandhuṣu* – all her relatives.

TRANSLATION

Once a marriageable young girl was alone in her house because her parents and relatives had gone that day to another place. At that time a few men arrived at the house, specifically desiring to marry her. She received them with all hospitality.

TEXT 9.6

teṣām abhyavahārārtham
śālīn rahasi pārthiva
avaghnantyāḥ prakoṣṭha-sthāś
cakruḥ śaṅkhāḥ svanam mahat

teṣām – of the guests; *abhyavahāra-artham* – so that they could eat; *śālīn* – rice; *rahasi* – being alone; *pārthiva* – O King; *avaghnantyāḥ* – of her who was beating; *prakoṣṭha* – on her forearms; *sthāḥ* – situated; *cakruḥ* – they made; *śaṅkhāḥ* – bracelets made of conchshell; *svanam* – a sound; *mahat* – great.

TRANSLATION

The girl went to a private place and began to make preparations so that the unexpected male guests could eat. As she was beating the rice, the conchshell bracelets on her arms were colliding and making a loud noise.

TEXT 9.7

sā taj jugupsitam matvā
mahatī vrīḍitā tataḥ
babhañjaikaikaśaḥ śaṅkhān
dvau dvau pāṇyoraśeṣayat

sā – she; *taj* – that noise; *jugupsitam* – shameful; *matvā* – thinking; *mahatī* – very intelligent; *vrīḍitā* – shy; *tataḥ* – from her arms; *babhañja* – she broke; *eka-ekaśaḥ* – one by one; *śaṅkhān* – the shell bracelets; *dvau dvau* – two each; *pāṇyoraḥ* – on her two hands; *aśeṣayat* – she kept on.

TRANSLATION

The young girl feared that the men would consider her family to be poor because their daughter was busily engaged in the menial task of husking rice. Being very intelligent, the shy girl broke the shell bracelets from her arms, leaving just two on each wrist.

TEXT 9.8

ubhayor apy abhūd ghoṣo
hy avaghnantyāḥ sva-śaṅkhayoḥ

*tatrāpy ekaṁ nirabhidad
ekasmān nābhavad dhvaniḥ*

ubhayoḥ – from the two (on each hand); *api* – still; *abhūt* – there was; *ghoṣaḥ* – noise; *hi* – indeed; *avaghnantyāḥ* – of her who was husking the rice; *sva-śaṅkhayoḥ* – from each set of two shell ornaments; *tatra* – therein; *api* – indeed; *ekam* – one only; *nirabhidad* – she separated; *ekasmāt* – from that one ornament; *na* – not; *abhavat* – there was; *dhvaniḥ* – a sound.

TRANSLATION

Thereafter, as the young girl continued to husk the rice, the two bracelets on each wrist continued to collide and make noise. Therefore she took one bracelet off each arm, and with only one left on each wrist there was no more noise.

TEXT 9.9

*anvaśikṣam imaṁ tasyā
upadeśam arindama
lokān anucarann etān
loka-tattva-vivitsayā*

anvaśikṣam – I have seen with my own eyes; *imaṁ* – this; *tasyāḥ* – of the young girl; *upadeśam* – lesson; *arim-dama* – O subduer of the enemy; *lokān* – worlds; *anucaran* – wandering; *etān* – these; *loka* – of the world; *tattva* – truth; *vivitsayā* – with a desire to know.

TRANSLATION

O subduer of the enemy, I travel throughout the surface of the earth learning constantly about the nature of this world, and thus I personally witnessed the lesson of the young girl.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇa* sage here explains to King Yadu that he is not presenting theoretical knowledge. Rather, by wandering throughout the world the observant and thoughtful *brāhmaṇa* has personally experienced the lessons learned from all of the above-mentioned *gurus*. Thus, instead of posing himself to be omniscient like God, he humbly explains that he has faithfully learned these lessons in his travels.

TEXT 9.10

*vāse bahūnām kalaho
bhaved vārtā dvayor api
eka eva vaset tasmāt
kumāryā iva kaṅkaṇaḥ*

vāse – in a residence; *bahūnām* – of many people; *kalahaḥ* – quarrel; *bhaved* – will be; *vārtā* – conversation; *dvayor* – of two people; *api* – even; *ekaḥ* – alone; *eva* – certainly; *vaset* – one should live; *tasmāt* – therefore; *kumāryāḥ* – of the young girl; *iva* – like; *kaṅkaṇaḥ* – the bracelet.

TRANSLATION

When many people live together in one place there will undoubtedly be quarreling. And even if only two people live together there will be frivolous conversation and disagreement. Therefore, to avoid conflict, one should live alone, as we learn from the example of the bracelet of the young girl.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given a nice example in this regard. Because the young girl mentioned in this story had no husband, she had to fulfill her duties as a host by removing her bracelets so that each wrist held one bracelet only. In the same way, the process of *jñāna-yoga*, or spiritual advancement by philosophical speculation, demands that the speculating sages live alone, without any other association. Since *jñānīs* have dedicated their lives to speculation, there will undoubtedly be endless argument and quarreling on technical points if many *jñānīs* live together. Therefore, to keep a peaceful atmosphere they must live alone. On the other hand, a king's daughter who has been duly married to an aristocratic prince fulfills her duties to her husband by dressing herself attractively with innumerable ornaments and approaching him for love. Similarly, the goddess of devotion, Bhaktidevī, decorates herself with the innumerable ornaments of the Vaiṣṇavas, who come together to relish the sweet sound of the holy name of the Lord. Because pure Vaiṣṇavas do not intimately associate with nondevotees, it may be said that they reside alone, and thus they also fulfill the purpose of this verse. There cannot be any quarrel among pure Vaiṣṇavas, because they are on the real platform of desirelessness, not wanting even salvation or mystic powers, what to speak of sense gratification. Because they are all devotees of Kṛṣṇa, they may freely associate with one another for glorifying the Lord. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.34):

*naikātmatām me sprhayanti kecin
mat-pāda-sevābhiratā mad-īhāḥ
ye'nyonyato bhāgavatāḥ prasajya
sabhājayante mama pauruṣāṇi*

“A pure devotee, who is attached to the activities of devotional service and who always engages in the service of My lotus feet, never desires to become one with Me. Such a devotee, who is unflinchingly engaged, always glorifies My pastimes and activities.”

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has commented on this verse as follows: “The young girl in the story kept only one bracelet on each wrist so that there would be no noisy conflict among the bracelets. Similarly, one should give up the association of those who are not devoted to the Supreme Lord.” This is the actual lesson to be learned. A real Vaiṣṇava is always pure and faultless in character. However, in those places where nondevotees congregate there will undoubtedly be envious criticism of the devotional service of the Lord, and those who falsely attempt to analyze reality without

the Supreme Personality of Godhead will create much disturbing noise in the name of philosophy. Therefore, one should remain in those places where the Supreme Lord is properly worshiped according to the Vedic standard. If everyone is dedicated to glorifying the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, there will not be any impediment in mutual association. However, in a place where people have many different purposes besides the pleasure of the Supreme Lord, social dealings will certainly be disrupted.

One should therefore avoid the association of those who are inimical to devotional service; otherwise one will be frustrated in achieving the spiritual purpose of life. One who always keeps himself in the company of the devotees of the Lord is actually living alone. If one lives in a community where the only consideration is the pleasure of the Lord, then one can avoid the contradictory situations caused by many persons competing to satisfy their own material desires. This is the lesson intelligently understood by the *brāhmaṇa* from the bracelets of the young girl.

In this connection Śrīla Madhvācārya quotes the following:

*asaj-janais tu saṁvāso
na kartavyaḥ kathañcana
yāvad yāvac ca bahubhiḥ
saj-janaiḥ sa tu mukti-daḥ*

“One should not under any circumstances live with those who are not devotees of the Lord. On the other hand, one should stay with many devotees, because such association awards liberation.”

TEXT 9.11

*mana ekatra saṁyuñjyāj
jita-śvāso jitāsanaḥ
vairāgyābhyāsa-yogena
dhriyamāṇam atandritaḥ*

manaḥ – the mind; *ekatra* – in one place; *saṁyuñjyāt* – one should fix; *jita* – conquered; *śvāsaḥ* – the breathing process; *jita* – conquered; *āsanaḥ* – the *yoga* sitting postures; *vairāgya* – by detachment; *abhyāsa-yogena* – by the regulated practice of *yoga*; *dhriyamāṇam* – the mind being steadied; *atandritaḥ* – very carefully.

TRANSLATION

Having perfected the *yoga* sitting postures and conquered the breathing process, one should make the mind steady by detachment and the regulated practice of *yoga*. Thus one should carefully fix the mind on the single goal of *yoga* practice.

PURPORT

One should develop *vairāgya*, or detachment, by observing that all material things are doomed. Thus one should take to the regulated practice of *yoga*, which in this age means the process of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* is

recommending *bhakti-miśra aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, or the eightfold mystic *yoga* process performed as an offering to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The desire to enjoy the material world is so strong that the mind wanders here and there uncontrollably. Therefore it is stated, *dhriyamāṇam*: the mind must be fixed in the goal of life, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the perfect stage of mental concentration called *samādhi* there is no longer any distinction between internal and external vision, since one can see the Absolute Truth everywhere.

In the mystic *yoga* process one must sit properly, and then it is possible to control the different airs within the body. When the breathing process is controlled, the mind, which is dependent upon the actions of the bodily airs, is easily fixed in higher consciousness. But although the mind may be momentarily controlled, if one is overcome by desire for sense gratification the mind will again be lost. Thus, this verse emphasizes *vairāgya*, detachment from material illusion. This is attained by *abhyāsa-yoga*, the regulated practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is the highest *yoga* system, as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.47):

*yoginām api sarveṣāṃ
mad-gatenāntar-ātmanā
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām
sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

“And of all *yogīs*, he who always abides in Me with great faith, worshiping Me in transcendental loving service, is most intimately united with Me in *yoga* and is the highest of all.”

TEXT 9.12

*yasmin mano labdha-padam yad etat
chanaiḥ śanair muñcati karma-reṇūn
sattvena vṛddhena rajas tamaś ca
vidhūya nirvāṇam upaiti anindhanam*

yasmin – in which (the Supreme Lord); *manaḥ* – the mind; *labdha* – having obtained; *padam* – a permanent situation; *yad etat* – that very mind; *śanaiḥ śanaiḥ* – gradually, step by step; *muñcati* – gives up; *karma* – of fruitive activities; *reṇūn* – the contamination; *sattvena* – by the mode of goodness; *vṛddhena* – which has grown strong; *rajaḥ* – the mode of passion; *tamaḥ* – the mode of ignorance; *ca* – also; *vidhūya* – giving up; *nirvāṇam* – the transcendental position in which one is united with the object of his meditation; *upaiti* – achieves; *anindhanam* – without fuel.

TRANSLATION

The mind can be controlled when it is fixed on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Having achieved a stable situation, the mind becomes free from polluted desires to execute material activities; thus as the mode of goodness increases in strength, one can completely give up the modes of passion and ignorance, and gradually one transcends even the material mode of goodness.

When the mind is freed from the fuel of the modes of nature, the fire of material existence is extinguished. Then one achieves the transcendental platform of direct relationship with the object of his meditation, the Supreme Lord.

PURPORT

The interaction of the three modes of nature creates great obstacles in one's path of spiritual advancement, and there is danger that one may be thrown down into the darkness of ignorance. Those who are experienced in practical psychology know the dangers of the uncontrolled mind and constantly endeavor to bring the mind under control. If one can free oneself from the influence of the material modes of passion and ignorance, then life becomes very auspicious. Controlling the mind, and thereby freeing oneself from the influence of the material modes of nature, is the only means of making actual progress in life. The word *yasmin* in this verse, according to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, indicates the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the reservoir of all pleasure. Giving up the material propensities of the mind does not mean merging into an impersonal existence, such as that experienced in dreamless sleep. As stated in this verse, *sattvena vṛddhena*: one must become firmly established in the mode of goodness and then gradually rise onto the spiritual platform, where one may dwell in the company of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 9.13

*tadaivam ātmany avaruddha-citto
na veda kiñcid bahir antaram vā
yatheṣu-kāro nṛpatiṁ vrajantam
iṣau gatātmā na dadarśa pārśve*

tadā - at that time; *evam* - thus; *ātmani* - in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *avaruddha* - fixed; *cittaḥ* - the mind; *na* - does not; *veda* - know; *kiñcit* - anything; *bahiḥ* - outside; *antaram* - inside; *vā* - either; *yathā* - just as; *iṣu* - of arrows; *kāraḥ* - a maker; *nṛ-patim* - the king; *vrajantam* - going; *iṣau* - in the arrow; *gata-ātmā* - being absorbed; *na dadarśa* - did not see; *pārśve* - right next to him.

TRANSLATION

Thus, when one's consciousness is completely fixed on the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one no longer sees duality, or internal and external reality. The example is given of the arrow maker who was so absorbed in making a straight arrow that he did not even see or notice the king himself, who was passing right next to him.

PURPORT

It is understood that when a king moves on a public street he is heralded by kettledrums and other musical instruments and is accompanied by soldiers and other members of his retinue. Thus, despite this royal extravaganza passing right by his workshop, the arrow maker did not even notice because

he was completely absorbed in his prescribed duty of making an arrow straight and sharp. One who is completely absorbed in loving devotional service to the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, no longer pays attention to material illusion. In this verse the word *bahis*, “external,” refers to the innumerable objects of material sense gratification, such as food, drink, sex, and so on, which drag the senses of the conditioned soul into material duality. The word *antaram*, or “internal,” refers to memory of previous sense gratification or hopes and dreams for future materialistic situations. One who is seeing everywhere the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, categorically rejects both internal and external illusion. This is called *mukti-pada*, or the status of liberation. On this platform there is neither attraction nor aversion to sense objects; rather, there is loving absorption in the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa, and an overwhelming desire to please Him by devotional service. One who gives up the reality of Kṛṣṇa will be forced to wander uselessly in the kingdom of mental speculation. One who cannot see that the Absolute Truth, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is the background and basis of everything that exists will be bewildered by the false concept that there is something that is not Kṛṣṇa. Everything emanates from the Lord, and He is the Lord of everything. This simple understanding is the actual existential situation.

TEXT 9.14

*eka-cāry aniketaḥ syād
apramatto guhāśayaḥ
alakṣyamāṇa ācārair
munir eko'lpā-bhāṣaṇaḥ*

eka – alone; *cārī* – moving; *aniketaḥ* – without fixed residence; *syāt* – should be; *apramattaḥ* – being very alert; *guhā-āśayaḥ* – remaining secluded; *alakṣyamāṇaḥ* – without being recognized; *ācārair* – by his activities; *munir* – a sage; *ekaḥ* – without companions; *alpa* – very little; *bhāṣaṇaḥ* – speaking.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person should remain alone and constantly travel without any fixed residence. Being alert, he should remain secluded and should act in such a way that he is not recognized or noticed by others. Moving without companions, he should not speak more than required.

PURPORT

The previous narration concerning the shell bracelets of the young girl demonstrates that even saintly persons engaged in ordinary *yoga* processes should remain alone to avoid conflict or disturbance. In other words, persons engaged in ordinary *yoga* processes should not even associate with each other. This verse indirectly refers to the serpent, who, fearing attack from human beings, keeps himself secluded. From this example we learn that a saintly person should not associate with ordinary materialistic people. He should also avoid having a fixed residence and should wander unnoticed by others.

Our engagement in material existence is the cause of our unhappiness. Such engagement destroys the real purpose of our life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Somehow or other one must give up the deep-rooted attachment to material society, friendship and love. One must practice detachment, and by surrender to the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness one's auspicious life will begin. By organizing one's life according to the *varṇāśrama* system one can take the first step in self-realization. In other words, one should accept an honest occupation and regulate his sex life, either by giving it up entirely as a *brahmacārī* or *sannyāsī* or by living as a married householder. Without regulating one's occupation and personal life, there will be chaos, and it will be very difficult to make spiritual advancement. The attachments to material society, friendship and love are based on a long previous experience in the material world. They are great obstacles in the path of transcendental understanding, and if one maintains them, spiritual progress will be most difficult. Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught by His example and precept what a devotee should and should not do, and obedience to such principles brings one to the path of supreme perfection. Thus, one has to rise above ordinary social custom, which directs the living entity toward useless sense gratification.

TEXT 9.15

*gṛhārambho hi duḥkhāya
viphalāś cādhruvātmanaḥ
sarpaḥ para-kṛtaṁ veśma
praviśya sukham edhate*

gṛha - of a home; *ārambhaḥ* - construction; *hi* - certainly; *duḥkhāya* - leads to unhappiness; *viphalāḥ* - fruitless; *ca* - also; *adhruva* - impermanent; *ātmanaḥ* - of the living being; *sarpaḥ* - a serpent; *parakṛtaṁ* - built by others; *veśma* - home; *praviśya* - having entered; *sukham* - happily; *edhate* - prospers.

TRANSLATION

When a person living in a temporary material body tries to construct a happy home, the result is fruitless and miserable. The snake, however, enters a home that has been built by others and prospers happily.

PURPORT

The snake does not have the proclivity to build his own home, but rather lives in a suitable place constructed by other creatures. Thus he does not entangle himself in the labor of home building. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura points out that although materialistic persons take unlimited pains to invent and mass-produce electricity, automobiles, airplanes, etc., ultimately these things are meant for the convenience of the Vaiṣṇavas who are preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The *karmīs* will always go to such trouble, and the devotees will always offer such laborious productions to the Supreme Personality of Godhead by engaging them in His

loving service. The devotees, being concerned with the ultimate perfection of life, do not personally struggle for material advancement. On the other hand, there is no need for the devotees to artificially imitate the austere lifestyle of ancient times. A devotee's goal is simply to serve Kṛṣṇa as nicely as possible; therefore the devotees willingly accept beautiful mansions and all types of material opulences, not with any personal attachment, but only so that these things can be engaged in the loving service of the Lord. If one engages such things with a desire to enjoy them, one falls down from the platform of pure devotional service. Materialistic persons are only interested in exploiting their so-called *yoga* practice in order to rejuvenate their sexual potency or to vainly remember their previous conditioned lives. Thus, applying mysticism to the endless search for sense gratification, they do not understand the actual goal of human life.

TEXT 9.16

*eko nārāyaṇo devaḥ
pūrva-sṛṣṭam sva-māyayā
samhṛtya kāla-kalayā
kalpānta idam īśvaraḥ
eka evādvitīyo'bhūd
ātmādhāro'khilāśrayaḥ*

ekaḥ – alone; *nārāyaṇaḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *devaḥ* – God; *pūrva* – previously; *sṛṣṭam* – created; *sva-māyayā* – by His own potency; *samhṛtya* – withdrawing within Himself; *kāla* – of time; *kalayā* – by the portion; *kalpa-ante* – at the time of annihilation; *idam* – this universe; *īśvaraḥ* – the supreme controller; *ekaḥ* – alone; *eva* – indeed; *advitīyaḥ* – without a second; *abhūt* – became; *ātmādhāraḥ* – one whose self is the reservoir and resting place of everything; *akhila* – of all potencies; *āśrayaḥ* – the reservoir.

TRANSLATION

The Lord of the universe, Nārāyaṇa, is the worshipable God of all living entities. Without extraneous assistance, the Lord creates this universe by His own potency, and at the time of annihilation the Lord destroys the universe through His personal expansion of time and withdraws all of the cosmos, including all the conditioned living entities, within Himself. Thus, His unlimited Self is the shelter and reservoir of all potencies. The subtle pradhāna, the basis of all cosmic manifestation, is conserved within the Lord and is in this way not different from Him. In the aftermath of annihilation the Lord stands alone.

PURPORT

As will be explained in verse 21 of this chapter, the Lord's independent creation and annihilation of the universe can be compared to the spider's creating and withdrawing his web. The word *eka*, or "one alone," is mentioned twice in this verse to emphasize that there is only one Supreme Personality of Godhead and that all universal affairs, as well as spiritual

pastimes, are conducted by His potency alone. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, this verse refers to Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu, or Mahā-Viṣṇu lying in the Causal Ocean. The words *ātmādhāra* and *akhilāśraya* both indicate that Nārāyaṇa is the reservoir or shelter of all existence. *Ātmādhāra* indicates that the Lord’s personal body is the shelter of everything. Mahā-Viṣṇu is a plenary portion of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, from whose body expand the innumerable potencies that manifest the material and spiritual worlds. According to the *Brahma-saṁhitā* these innumerable worlds rest within the *brahmajyoti*, or spiritual effulgence, also emanating from the Lord’s body. Thus Kṛṣṇa is *īśvara*, the supreme controller.

TEXTS 9.17-18

*kālenātmānubhāvena
sāmyam nītāsu śaktiṣu
sattvādiṣv ādi-puruṣaḥ
pradhāna-puruṣeśvaraḥ
parāvarāṇām parama
āste kaivalya-samjñitaḥ
kevalānubhavānanda-
sandoho nirupādhikaḥ*

kālena – by the time factor; *ātma-anubhāvena* – which is the Lord’s own potency; *sāmyam* – to equilibrium; *nītāsu* – being brought; *śaktiṣu* – the material potencies; *sattva-ādiṣu* – the mode of goodness, etc.; *ādi-puruṣaḥ* – the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pradhāna-puruṣa-īśvaraḥ* – the supreme controller of the neutral state of nature (*pradhāna*) and of the living entities; *para* – of the liberated living entities or the demigods; *avarāṇām* – of ordinary conditioned souls; *paramaḥ* – the supreme worshipable object; *āste* – exists; *kaivalya* – liberated existence; *samjñitaḥ* – that which is indicated by the term; *kevala* – pure without material tinge; *anubhava* – experience of revelation; *ānanda* – bliss; *sandohaḥ* – the totality; *nirupādhikaḥ* – devoid of materially designated relationships.

TRANSLATION

When the Supreme Personality of Godhead displays His own potency in the form of time and guides His material potencies, such as the mode of goodness, into a neutral condition of equilibrium, He remains as the supreme controller of that neutral state, called *pradhāna*, as well as of the living entities. He is also the supreme worshipable object for all beings, including liberated souls, demigods and ordinary conditioned souls. The Lord is eternally free from any material designation, and He constitutes the totality of spiritual bliss, which one experiences by seeing the Lord’s spiritual form. The Lord thus exhibits the fullest meaning of the word “liberation.”

PURPORT

One who fixes his mind in the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, gets immediate relief from the waves of material anxiety because the Lord's transcendental form is completely free of any material contamination or designation. Less intelligent persons accept the illogical doctrine that the Lord is transformed into His creation and maintains no separate, individual existence. They falsely imagine that they can merge their individuality into the universal oneness and become exactly equal to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, in the opinion of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the Personality of Godhead is not impersonal but is instead full of all transcendental qualities. The three modes of material nature constitute His inferior energy, and the omnipotent time factor, upon which the modes rest, is the personal expansion of the Lord. Thus, the Lord creates, maintains and annihilates the material manifestation and yet remains completely apart from it. The conditioned souls who desire to exploit the Lord's inferior creation are impelled by the Personality of Godhead to do so, and thus they become imitation enjoyers in the temporary world of matter. But when one gains practical experience that the gross and subtle material bodies are simply coverings of the eternal soul, one gives up the foolishness of material attachment and becomes attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He realizes that his constitutional position is neither to enjoy matter nor merge into the Lord's existence. His real nature is that he is a servant of God. Service rendered to the Lord is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge, and by the potency of such service one becomes liberated and his activities become glorious. Such service is eternal and gradually promotes one to the platform of *kevalānubhāvānanda-sandoha*, or merging into the ocean of bliss by seeing the transcendental personal form of the Lord.

TEXT 9.19

*kevalātmānubhāvena
sva-māyām tri-guṇātmikām
saṅkṣobhayan sṛjaty ādau
tayā sūtram arindama*

kevala - pure; *ātma* - of His own Self; *anubhāvena* - by the potency; *sva-māyām* - His own energy; *tri* - three; *guṇa* - modes; *ātmikām* - composed of; *saṅkṣobhayan* - agitating; *sṛjati* - He manifests; *ādau* - at the time of creation; *tayā* - with that energy; *sūtram* - the *mahat-tattva* distinguished by the power of action; *arindama* - O subduer of the enemies.

TRANSLATION

O subduer of the enemies, at the time of creation the Personality of Godhead expands His own transcendental potency in the form of time, and agitating His material energy, māyā, composed of the three modes of material nature, He creates the mahat-tattva.

PURPORT

The word *kevala* means “pure” and indicates that the Lord’s *kālaśakti*, or time potency, is a transcendental energy nondifferent from His personal body. The *brāhmaṇa* addresses King Yadu here as *arindama*, subduer of the enemies. This indicates that although the topic of *māyā*, or illusory creation, is being discussed, the King need not worry, because as a staunch devotee of the Lord, he is able to subdue the real enemies of life, namely lust, anger and greed, which make one a prisoner in *māyā*’s kingdom. The word *sūtram* indicates the *mahat-tattva*, on which many material creations rest, just like jewels rest on a thread. In the state of *pradhāna*, or material equilibrium, the modes of nature do not interact. In the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Lord Kapila explains in His Sāṅkhya teachings that the Supreme Personality of Godhead agitates the neutral state of nature and thus creation takes place. The created manifest form of nature in which fruitive activities are stimulated is called *mahat-tattva*, as indicated in this verse. If one tries to renounce the illusory creation of the Lord by taking shelter of impersonal Vedānta philosophy, thus artificially equating the infinite consciousness of the Lord and the infinitesimal consciousness of the conditioned soul, one’s analysis will fall far short of reality. The word *sva-māyām* in this verse indicates that the illusory potency that covers the conditioned souls is always subordinate to the Lord, whose consciousness is infallible and infinite and who is always a person.

TEXT 9.20

*tām āhus tri-guṇa-vyaktim
srjantīm viśvato-mukham
yasmin protam idaṁ viśvaṁ
yena saṁsarate pumān*

tām – the *mahat-tattva*; *āhuḥ* – they say; *tri-guṇa* – the three modes of material nature; *vyaktim* – manifesting as the cause; *srjantīm* – creating; *viśvataḥ-mukham* – many different categories of cosmic manifestation; *yasmin* – within the *mahat-tattva*; *protam* – strung and bound; *idaṁ* – this; *viśvam* – universe; *yena* – by which; *saṁsarate* – undergoes material existence; *pumān* – the living being.

TRANSLATION

According to great sages, that which is the basis of the three modes of material nature and which manifests the variegated universe is called the sūtra or mahat-tattva. Indeed, this universe is resting within that mahat-tattva, and due to its potency the living entity undergoes material existence.

PURPORT

The cosmic manifestation is a reality because it emanates from the supreme reality, the Personality of Godhead. The material world, however, is temporary and full of problems. The conditioned soul foolishly tries to become the lord of this inferior creation and becomes separated from his

real friend, the Supreme Lord. In this state, his only business is material sense gratification, and his real knowledge is lost.

TEXT 9.21

*yathorṇanābhir hṛdayād
ūrṇām santatya vaktrataḥ
tayā viḥṛtya bhūyaḥ tām
grasaty evaṁ maheśvaraḥ*

yathā – just as; *ūrṇa-nābhiḥ* – the spider; *hṛdayāt* – from within himself; *ūrṇām* – thread; *santatya* – expanding; *vaktrataḥ* – from his mouth; *tayā* – with that thread; *viḥṛtya* – enjoying; *bhūyaḥ* – again; *tām* – that thread; *grasati* – he swallows; *evam* – in the same way; *mahā-īśvaraḥ* – the Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

Just as from within himself the spider expands thread through his mouth, plays with it for some time and eventually swallows it, similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead expands His personal potency from within Himself. Thus, the Lord displays the network of cosmic manifestation, utilizes it according to His purpose and eventually withdraws it completely within Himself.

PURPORT

One who is intelligent obtains spiritual knowledge even from an insignificant creature like the spider. Thus, transcendental knowledge is visible everywhere for one whose eyes are opened in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 9.22

*yatra yatra mano dehī
dhārayet sakalam dhiyā
snehād dveṣād bhayād vāpi
yāti tat-tat-svarūpatām*

yatra yatra – wherever; *manaḥ* – the mind; *dehī* – the conditioned soul; *dhārayet* – fixes; *sakalam* – with complete concentration; *dhiyā* – with the intelligence; *snehāt* – because of affection; *dveṣāt* – because of envy; *bhayāt* – because of fear; *vā api* – either; *yāti* – he goes; *tat-tat* – to that, whatever it is; *svarūpatām* – particular state of existence.

TRANSLATION

If out of love, hate or fear an embodied soul fixes his mind with intelligence and complete concentration upon a particular bodily form, he will certainly attain the form that he is meditating upon.

PURPORT

From this verse it is not hard to understand that if one constantly meditates upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one will achieve a spiritual body just like that of the Lord. The word *dhiyā*, “with intelligence,” indicates complete intellectual conviction in a particular understanding, and similarly the word *sakalam* indicates one-pointed attention of the mind. With such

complete absorption of consciousness, surely one will attain in the next life a form exactly like that upon which one was meditating. This is another example learned from the insect kingdom, as explained in the following verse.

TEXT 9.23

*kīṭaḥ peśaskṛtam dhyāyan
kuḍyām tena praveśitaḥ
yāti tat-sātmatām rājan
pūrva-rūpam asantyajan*

kīṭaḥ – an insect; *peśaskṛtam* – a wasp; *dhyāyan* – meditating on; *kuḍyām* – in his hive; *tena* – by the wasp; *praveśitaḥ* – forced to enter; *yāti* – he goes; *tat* – of the wasp; *sa-ātmatām* – the same state of existence; *rājan* – O King; *pūrva-rūpam* – the previous body; *asantyajan* – not giving up.

TRANSLATION

O King, once a wasp forced a weaker insect to enter his hive and kept him trapped there. In great fear the weak insect constantly meditated upon his captor, and without giving up his body, he gradually achieved the same state of existence as the wasp. Thus one achieves a state of existence according to one's constant concentration.

PURPORT

The following question may be raised: Since the weaker insect in this story did not physically change his body, how can it be said that he achieved the same state of existence as the wasp? Actually, by constant meditation upon a particular object one's consciousness becomes filled with its qualities. Due to extreme fear the smaller insect was absorbed in the characteristics and activities of the large wasp and thus entered into the existence of the wasp. Due to such meditation, he actually took the body of a wasp in his next life. Similarly, although we are conditioned souls, if we absorb our consciousness in Lord Kṛṣṇa we can become liberated even before giving up our present body. If our intelligence becomes steady on the spiritual platform by understanding that Lord Kṛṣṇa is everything, then we can give up unnecessary consciousness of the external body and absorb ourselves in the spiritual pastimes of Vaikuṅṭha. Thus even before death one can raise oneself to the spiritual platform and enjoy life as a liberated soul. Or, if one is a stubborn fool, then even in this life one can become just like an animal, such as a hog or a dog, constantly thinking of eating and sex life. But human life is actually meant for understanding the science of consciousness and the future results of our meditation.

TEXT 9.24

*evam gurubhya etebhya
eṣā me śikṣitā matiḥ*

*svātmopāśikṣitām buddhim
śṛṇu me vadataḥ prabho*

evam – thus; *gurubhyaḥ* – from the spiritual masters; *etebhyaḥ* – from these; *eṣā* – this; *me* – by me; *śikṣitā* – learned; *matih* – knowledge; *sva-ātma* – from one’s own body; *opāśikṣitām* – learned; *buddhim* – knowledge; *śṛṇu* – please hear; *me* – from me; *vadataḥ* – as I am speaking; *prabho* – O King.

TRANSLATION

O King, from all these spiritual masters I have acquired great wisdom. Now please listen as I explain what I learned from my own body.

TEXT 9.25

*deho gurur mama virakti-viveka-hetur
bibhrat sma sattva-nidhanam satatarty-udarkam
tattvāny anena vimṛśāmi yathā tathāpi
pārakyam ity avasito vicarāmy asaṅgaḥ*

dehaḥ – the body; *guruḥ* – spiritual master; *mama* – my; *virakti* – of detachment; *viveka* – and intelligence which facilitates; *hetuḥ* – the cause; *bibhrat* – maintaining; *sma* – certainly; *sattva* – existence; *nidhanam* – destruction; *satata* – always; *ārti* – suffering; *udarkam* – future result; *tattvāni* – the truths of this world; *anena* – with this body; *vimṛśāmi* – I contemplate; *yathā* – even though; *tathā api* – nevertheless; *pārakyam* – belonging to others; *iti* – thus; *avasitaḥ* – being convinced; *vicarāmi* – I wander about; *asaṅgaḥ* – without attachment.

TRANSLATION

The material body is also my spiritual master because it teaches me detachment. Being subject to creation and destruction, it always comes to a painful end. Thus, although using my body to acquire knowledge, I always remember that it will ultimately be consumed by others, and remaining detached, I move about this world.

PURPORT

The words *yathā tathāpi* are significant in this verse. Although the body bestows great benefit by enabling one to learn about this world, one should always remember its unhappy, inevitable future. If cremated, the body is burned to ashes by fire; if lost in a lonely place, it is consumed by jackals and vultures; and if buried in a luxurious coffin, it decomposes and is consumed by insignificant insects and worms. Thus it is described as *pārakyam*, “ultimately to be consumed by others.” One should, however, carefully maintain bodily health to execute Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but without undue affection or attachment. By studying the body’s birth and death, one can acquire *virakti-viveka*, the intelligence to detach oneself from useless things. The word *avasita* indicates conviction. One should be convinced of all the truths of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 9.26

*jāyātmajārtha-paśu-bhṛtya-grhāpta-vargān
puṣṇāti yat-priya-cikīrṣayā vitanvan
svānte sa-kṛcchram avaruddha-dhanaḥ sa dehaḥ
sṛṣṭvāsya bījam avasīdati vṛkṣa-dharmaḥ*

jāyā – wife; *ātma-ja* – children; *artha* – money; *paśu* – domestic animals; *bhṛtya* – servants; *grha* – home; *āpta* – relatives and friends; *vargān* – all these categories; *puṣṇāti* – nourishes; *yat* – the body; *priya-cikīrṣayā* – with a desire to please; *vitanvan* – expanding; *sva-ante* – at the time of death; *sa-kṛcchram* – with great struggle; *avaruddha* – accumulated; *dhanaḥ* – wealth; *saḥ* – this; *dehaḥ* – body; *sṛṣṭvā* – having created; *asya* – of the living entity; *bījam* – the seed; *avasīdati* – falls down and dies; *vṛkṣa* – the tree; *dharmaḥ* – following the nature of.

TRANSLATION

A man attached to the body accumulates money with great struggle to expand and protect the position of his wife, children, property, domestic animals, servants, homes, relatives, friends, and so on. He does all this for the gratification of his own body. As a tree before dying produces the seed of a future tree, the dying body manifests the seed of one’s next material body in the form of one’s accumulated karma. Thus assuring the continuation of material existence, the material body sinks down and dies.

PURPORT

One might argue, “Among all the *gurus* mentioned thus far, the material body is certainly the best, since it awards the detachment and fine intelligence that enable one to engage in the devotional service of the Lord. Thus, we should serve the body, although it is temporary, with great attachment, or risk the offense of ungratefulness. How can detachment from the body be recommended when the body is endowed with so many wonderful qualities?” The answer is given in this verse. The body does not award detachment and knowledge in the manner of some benevolent teacher; rather, it causes so much pain and misery that any commonsense person cannot help being convinced of the uselessness of material life. Just as a tree produces the seeds of the next tree and then dies, the body’s lusty desires induce the conditioned soul to create a further chain of *karma*. Finally the body, having paved the way for unlimited suffering in material existence, drops dead.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, *deha* indicates both the gross body and the subtle, mental body. Those who do not clearly understand the difference between body and soul falsely think that body and soul are identical and that one can find perfect happiness in bodily sense gratification. But those who foolishly accept the temporary body as all-important cannot be compared with self-realized souls who intelligently understand the superiority of the eternal soul.

TEXT 9.27

*jihvaikato'mum apakarṣati karhi tarṣā
śiśno'nyatas tvag udaram śravaṇam kutaścīt
ghrāṇo'nyataś capala-dṛk kva ca karma-śaktir
bahvyaḥ sapatnya iva geḥa-patim lunanti*

jihvā – the tongue; *ekataḥ* – on one side; *amum* – the body or the conditioned soul who identifies with the body; *apakarṣati* – drags away; *karhi* – sometimes; *tarṣā* – thirst; *śiśnaḥ* – the genitals; *anyataḥ* – on another side; *tvak* – the sense of touch; *udaram* – the belly; *śravaṇam* – the ears; *kutaścīt* – from somewhere else; *ghrāṇaḥ* – the sense of smell; *anyataḥ* – from another side; *capala-dṛk* – the fickle eyes; *kva ca* – somewhere else; *karma-śaktiḥ* – the other active organs and limbs of the body; *bahvyaḥ* – many; *sa-patnyaḥ* – co-wives; *iva* – like; *geḥa-patim* – the head of the household; *lunanti* – pull in many directions.

TRANSLATION

A man who has many wives is constantly harassed by them. He is responsible for their maintenance, and thus all the ladies constantly pull him in different directions, each struggling for her self-interest. Similarly, the material senses harass the conditioned soul, pulling him in many different directions at once. On one side the tongue is pulling him to arrange tasty food; then thirst drags him to get a suitable drink. Simultaneously the sex organs clamor for satisfaction, and the sense of touch demands soft, sensuous objects. The belly harasses him until it is filled, the ears demand to hear pleasing sounds, the sense of smell hankers for pleasant aromas, and the fickle eyes clamor for pleasing sights. Thus the senses, organs and limbs, all desiring satisfaction, pull the living entity in many directions.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura mentions that after understanding this verse one should merely offer, without attachment, the bare necessities to the *guru* of one's body. One should keep one's body fit and working in the simplest possible way, and that is the sum and substance of service to this so-called *guru*. If one desires to faithfully serve the body, one should consider that the body pulls the consciousness of the conditioned soul in many ways at once, and thus for the servant of the body there is no possibility of understanding God or even of becoming peaceful.

TEXT 9.28

*sṛṣṭvā purāṇi vividhāny ajayātma-śaktyā
vṛkṣān sarīsrpa-paśūn khaga-dandaśūkān
tais tair atuṣṭa-hṛdayaḥ puruṣam vidhāya
brahmāvaloka-dhiṣaṇam mudam āpa devaḥ*

sṛṣṭvā – having created; *purāṇi* – material bodies that house the conditioned souls; *vividhāni* – many varieties; *ajayā* – through the agency of *māyā*; *ātma-śaktyā* – the Lord's own potency; *vṛkṣān* – trees; *sarīsrpa* – reptiles; *paśūn* –

animals; *khaga* – birds; *danda-śūkān* – snakes; *taiḥ taiḥ* – by all these different varieties of bodies; *atuṣṭa* – unsatisfied; *hṛdayaḥ* – His heart; *puruṣam* – the human form of life; *vidhāya* – creating; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *avaloka* – vision of; *dhiṣaṇam* – intelligence suitable for; *mudam* – happiness; *āpā* – achieved; *devaḥ* – the Lord.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, expanding His own potency, māyā-śakti, created innumerable species of life to house the conditioned souls. Yet by creating the forms of trees, reptiles, animals, birds, snakes and so on, the Lord was not satisfied within His heart. Then He created human life, which offers the conditioned soul sufficient intelligence to perceive the Absolute Truth, and became pleased.

PURPORT

God has specifically created the human form of life to facilitate the liberation of the conditioned soul. Therefore one who abuses human life prepares his path to hell. As stated in the *Vedas*, *puruṣatve cāvistarām ātmā*: “In the human form of life there is good possibility of understanding the eternal soul.” The *Vedas* also state:

*tābhyo gām ānayat tā abruvan
na vai no'yam alam iti
tābhyo'śvam ānayat tā abruvan
na vai no'yam alam iti
tābhyaḥ puruṣam ānayat tā
abruvan su-kṛtaṁ bata*

The purport of this *śruti-mantra* is that lower forms of life, such as the cow and horse, are not actually suitable to fulfill the purpose of creation. But human life awards the opportunity to understand one's eternal relationship with God. Thus, one must control the material senses and fulfill the real purpose of human life. If one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the Supreme Lord personally feels happiness and gradually reveals Himself to His devotee. The Lord's material creation consists of the living entities and dead matter, which the less intelligent try to enjoy. The Lord, however, is not satisfied by those species that blindly strive for sense gratification without understanding spiritual nature. We are suffering due to our forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa and the blissful situation of His abode. If we accept the Lord as protector and shelter and execute His order, we can easily revive our eternal, blissful nature as parts and parcels of the Personality of Godhead. It is for this purpose that the Lord has created human life.

TEXT 9.29

*labdhvā su-durlabham idaṁ bahu-sambhavānte
mānuṣyam artha-dam anityam apīha dhīraḥ
tūrṇaṁ yateta na pated anu-mṛtyu yāvan
niḥśreyasāya viṣayaḥ khalu sarvataḥ syāt*

labdhvā – having obtained; *su-durlabham* – that which is very difficult to obtain; *idam* – this; *bahu* – many; *sambhava* – births; *ante* – after; *mānuṣyam* – human form of life; *artha-dam* – which awards great value; *anityam* – not eternal; *api* – although; *iha* – in this material world; *dhīraḥ* – one who has sober intelligence; *tūrṇam* – immediately; *yateta* – should endeavor; *na* – not; *patet* – has fallen; *anu-mṛtyu* – always subject to death; *yāvat* – as long as; *niḥśreyasāya* – for ultimate liberation; *viśayaḥ* – sense gratification; *khalu* – always; *sarvataḥ* – in all conditions; *syāt* – is possible.

TRANSLATION

After many, many births and deaths one achieves the rare human form of life, which, although temporary, affords one the opportunity to attain the highest perfection. Thus a sober human being should quickly endeavor for the ultimate perfection of life as long as his body, which is always subject to death, has not fallen down and died. After all, sense gratification is available even in the most abominable species of life, whereas Kṛṣṇa consciousness is possible only for a human being.

PURPORT

Material life essentially means repeated birth and death. Even the lowest forms of life, such as reptiles, insects, pigs and dogs, have ample opportunity for sense gratification. Even ordinary houseflies have a busy sex life and thus multiply rapidly. Human life, however, enables one to understand the Absolute Truth and is therefore full of grave responsibility. Since the valuable human life is not eternal, we should do the needful to achieve the highest perfection, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Before death appears, we should seriously cultivate our real self-interest.

One can experience Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the association of devotees of the Lord. Without their association, one is in danger of being attracted to an impersonal conception of life, which causes one to fall away from devotional service to the Absolute Truth. Or, being discouraged by one's failure to understand the Absolute Truth, one may return to the false platform of sense gratification. In conclusion, human life is meant for cultivating Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the guidance of the experienced, self-realized devotees of the Lord.

TEXT 9.30

*evam sañjāta-vairāgyo
vijñānāloka ātmani
vicarāmi mahīm etām
mukta-saṅgo'nahaṅkṛtaḥ*

evam – thus; *sañjāta* – completely developed; *vairāgyaḥ* – detachment; *vijñāna* – realized knowledge; *ālokaḥ* – having vision; *ātmani* – in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *vicarāmi* – I wander; *mahīm* – the earth; *etām* – this; *mukta* – freed; *saṅgaḥ* – from attachment; *anahaṅkṛtaḥ* – without false ego.

TRANSLATION

Having learned from my spiritual masters, I remain situated in realization of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and, fully renounced and enlightened by realized spiritual knowledge, wander the earth without attachment or false ego.

TEXT 9.31

*na hy ekasmād guror jñānam
su-sthiram syāt su-puṣkalam
brahmaitad advitīyaṁ vai
gīyate bahudharṣibhiḥ*

na – not; *hi* – certainly; *ekasmāt* – from one; *guroḥ* – guru; *jñānam* – knowledge; *su-sthiram* – very steady; *syāt* – can be; *su-puṣkalam* – very complete; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *etat* – this; *advitīyam* – one without a second; *vai* – certainly; *gīyate* – is glorified; *bahudhā* – in many ways; *ṛṣibhiḥ* – by the sages.

TRANSLATION

Although the Absolute Truth is one without a second, the sages have described Him in many different ways. Therefore one may not be able to acquire very firm or complete knowledge from one spiritual master.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī comments on this verse as follows. “The statement that one requires many spiritual masters certainly needs explanation, since practically all great saintly persons of the past did not take shelter of many spiritual masters, but rather accepted one. The words *gīyate bahudharṣibhiḥ*, ‘the Absolute Truth is glorified in many ways by the sages,’ indicate the personal and impersonal understandings of the Absolute Truth. In other words, some sages describe only the Lord’s impersonal effulgence, which is without spiritual variety, whereas others describe the Lord’s manifest form as the Personality of Godhead. Thus, merely by hearing from many different authorities, one cannot actually learn the highest perfection of life. The proliferation of differing spiritual authorities is useful only to counteract the living entities’ tendency to be grossly materialistic. Different spiritual philosophers create faith in the existence of the soul and may be accepted at that level. But as will be clarified in later verses, the spiritual master who ultimately gives perfect knowledge is one.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments as follows on this verse. “Since it is commonly understood that one is to accept a single spiritual master, why is it recommended that one learn from many so-called spiritual masters appearing in the forms of ordinary material objects? The explanation is that one’s worshipable spiritual master will instruct one in many departments of knowledge by giving lessons gleaned from ordinary objects. As recommended by the *brāhmaṇa avadhūta*, one can strengthen the teachings received from one’s *ācārya* and avoid transgressing his orders by observing

ordinary things in nature. One should not mechanically receive the teachings of one's *guru*. The disciple should be thoughtful and with his own intelligence realize in practice what he has heard from his spiritual master by observing the world around him. In this sense one may accept many *gurus*, though not those who preach against the knowledge received from the bona fide spiritual master. In other words, one should not hear from persons like the atheist Kapila."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura also comments on this verse, as follows. "It is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*: 'Therefore one should approach a bona fide spiritual master if one actually desires to achieve the highest perfection in life.' Similarly, in Chapter Ten, verse 5 of this canto, the Personality of Godhead Himself states, *mad-abhijñāṁ gurum śāntam upāsīta mad-ātmakam*: 'One must serve a bona fide spiritual master who is in full knowledge of My personality and who is not different from Me.' There are many similar verses in Vedic literature indicating that one must take shelter of a single bona fide spiritual master. We also have the examples of innumerable great saintly persons who did not accept more than one spiritual master. Thus, it is a fact that we should accept one bona fide spiritual master and receive from him the particular *mantra* that one is to chant. I myself certainly follow this principle and worship my bona fide spiritual master. However, in worshiping one's *ācārya*, one may take help from good and bad examples. By observing examples of good behavior one will be strengthened in devotional service, and in seeing negative examples one will be forewarned and avoid danger. In this way, one may accept many ordinary material objects as one's spiritual masters, considering them as *śikṣā-gurus*, or *gurus* who give important lessons for spiritual advancement."

Thus in the Lord's own words, *mad-abhijñāṁ gurum śāntam upāsīta mad-ātmakam*: one should approach a single bona fide spiritual master who is in full knowledge of the Lord's personality and sincerely worship him, considering him to be *mad-ātmakam*, or nondifferent from the Lord Himself. This statement does not contradict what the Lord has presented in the teachings of the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa*. If one receives the teachings of one's *ācārya* but keeps them locked up in his brain as theoretical dogma, one will make little advancement. To develop steady, complete knowledge one must see the teachings of one's *ācārya* everywhere; thus a Vaiṣṇava offers all respects to anyone or anything that gives him further enlightenment in the path of worshiping his bona fide *ācārya*, who is nondifferent from Lord Kṛṣṇa. Among the many *gurus* mentioned by the *brāhmaṇa*, some give positive instructions and others give negative instructions. Piṅgalā the prostitute and the young girl who took off her bracelets provide examples of proper conduct, whereas the hapless pigeons and the foolish honeybee provide examples of behavior to be avoided. In both cases one's spiritual knowledge is enriched. Thus, one should not misunderstand the meaning of this verse in

a way contradictory to the Lord's statement *mad-abhijñam gurum śāntam upāsita mad-ātmakam* (Bhāg. 11.10.5).

TEXT 9.32

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ity uktvā sa yadum vipras
tam āmantrya gabhīra-dhīḥ
vanditaḥ sv-arcito rājñā
yayau prīto yathāgatam*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *iti* - thus; *uktvā* - having spoken; *saḥ* - he; *yadum* - to King Yadu; *vipraḥ* - the *brāhmaṇa*; *tam* - to the King; *āmantrya* - bidding farewell; *gabhīra* - extremely deep; *dhīḥ* - intelligence; *vanditaḥ* - being offered obeisances; *sv-arcitaḥ* - being properly worshiped; *rājñā* - by the King; *yayau* - he went; *prītaḥ* - with his mind satisfied; *yathā* - just as; *āgatam* - he had come.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Having thus spoken to King Yadu, the wise brāhmaṇa accepted obeisances and worship from the King and felt pleased within himself. Then bidding farewell, he left exactly as he had come.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī gives evidence from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that the *brāhmaṇa avadhūta* was actually the incarnation of Godhead Dattātreya. The *Bhāgavatam* (2.7.4) states:

*yat-pāda-paṅkaja-parāga-pavitra-dehā
yogardhim āpur ubhayīm yadu-haihayādyāḥ*

“Many Yodus, Haihayas, etc., became so purified, by the grace of the lotus feet of Dattātreya, the Lord, that they obtained both material and spiritual blessings.” This verse mentions that Yadu was purified by contact with the lotus feet of Dattātreya, and similarly the present verse states, *vandito sv-arcito rājñā*: King Yadu worshiped the lotus feet of the *brāhmaṇa*. Thus, according to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* is the Personality of Godhead Himself, and this is confirmed by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

TEXT 9.33

*avadhūta-vacaḥ śrutvā
pūrveṣām naḥ sa pūrva-jaḥ
sarva-saṅga-vinirmuktaḥ
sama-citto babhūva ha*

avadhūta - of the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa*; *vacaḥ* - the words; *śrutvā* - having heard; *pūrveṣām* - of the ancestors; *naḥ* - our; *saḥ* - he; *pūrvajaḥ* - himself a forefather; *sarva* - all; *saṅga* - from attachment; *vinirmuktaḥ* - being freed; *sama-cittaḥ* - with his consciousness on the spiritual platform and thus equal everywhere; *babhūva* - he became; *ha* - certainly.

TRANSLATION

O Uddhava, hearing the words of the avadhūta, the saintly King Yadu, who is the forefather of our own ancestors, became free from all material attachment, and thus his mind was evenly fixed on the spiritual platform.

PURPORT

Here the Lord praises His own dynasty, called Yadu-vaṁśa, because there appeared in that dynasty many great self-realized kings. King Yadu was enlightened by Dattātreya in the form of an *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* who taught the King to fix his consciousness on the spiritual platform of detachment by simply observing the creation of God.

Thus end the purports by the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Ninth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Detachment from All that Is Material."

CHAPTER TEN

The Nature of Fruitive Activity

In this chapter Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa refutes the philosophy of the followers of Jaimini and describes to Uddhava how the spirit soul bound within the material body can develop pure transcendental knowledge.

The Vaiṣṇava, or one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, should observe the rules and regulations found in the *Pañcarātra* and other revealed scriptures. According to his own natural qualities and work, he should follow the code of *varṇāśrama* in a spirit free from motivation. The so-called knowledge received through one's material senses, mind and intelligence is as useless as the dreams experienced by a sleeping person attached to sense gratification. Therefore, one should give up work performed for sense gratification and accept work as a matter of duty. When one has come to understand something of the truth of the self, he should give up material work performed out of duty and simply engage himself in the service of the bona fide spiritual master, who is the manifest representative of the Personality of Godhead. The servant of the spiritual master should have very firm affection for his *guru*, should be anxious to receive from him knowledge of the Absolute Truth, and should be devoid of envy and the tendency to talk nonsense. The soul is distinct from the gross and subtle material bodies. The spirit soul who has entered into the material body accepts bodily functions according to the reactions of his own past activities. Therefore, only the bona fide, transcendental spiritual master is capable of demonstrating pure knowledge of the self.

The followers of Jaimini and other atheistic philosophers accept regulated material work as the purpose of life. But Kṛṣṇa refutes this by explaining that the embodied soul who has come into contact with segmented material time takes upon himself a perpetual chain of births and deaths and is therefore forced to suffer the consequent happiness and distress. In this way there is no possibility that one who is attached to the fruits of his material work can achieve any substantial goal in life. The pleasures of heaven and other destinations, which are achieved by sacrificial rituals, can be experienced for only a short time. After one's enjoyment is finished, one must return to this mortal sphere to partake of lamentation and suffering. On the path of materialism there is certainly no uninterrupted or natural happiness.

TEXT 10.1

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
mayoditeṣv avahitaḥ
sva-dharmeṣu mad-āśrayaḥ
varṇāśrama-kulācāram
akāmātmā samācaret

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *mayā* – by Me; *uditeṣu* – spoken; *avahitaḥ* – with great care; *sva-dharmeṣu* – in the duties of devotional service to the Lord; *mat-āśrayaḥ* – one who accepts Me as shelter; *varṇa-āśrama* – the Vedic system of social and occupational

divisions; *kula* – of the society; *ācāram* – conduct; *akāma* – devoid of material desires; *ātmā* – such a person; *samācāret* – should practice.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Taking full shelter in Me, with the mind carefully fixed in the devotional service of the Lord as spoken by Me, one should live without personal desire and practice the social and occupational system called varṇāśrama.

PURPORT

In the previous chapters Lord Kṛṣṇa described through the story of an *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* the qualities and character of a saintly person. Now the Lord describes the practical means for achieving such a saintly position. In the *Pañcarātra* and other scriptures the Personality of Godhead gives instructions for executing devotional service. Similarly, in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.13) the Lord says, *cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ*: “I have personally created the *varṇāśrama* system.” There are innumerable rules and regulations in the *varṇāśrama* system, and the devotee should execute those which do not contradict the process of devotional service. The term *varṇa* indicates different classes of human beings, some in the mode of ignorance, some in the mode of passion and some in the mode of goodness. Devotional service to the Lord is executed on the liberated platform, and therefore some injunctions for those persons in passion and ignorance may be contradictory to the regulative principles for those on the liberated platform. Therefore, under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master who is nondifferent from the Lord, one should execute the basic principles of *varṇāśrama* in a way favorable for advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 10.2

*anvīkṣeta viśuddhātmā
dehinām viṣayātmanām
guṇeṣu tattva-dhyānena
sarvārambha-viparyayam*

anvīkṣeta – one should see; *viśuddha* – purified; *ātmā* – soul; *dehinām* – of the embodied beings; *viṣaya-ātmanām* – of those who are dedicated to sense gratification; *guṇeṣu* – in the material objects of pleasure; *tattva* – as truth; *dhyānena* – by conceiving; *sarva* – of all; *ārambha* – endeavors; *viparyayam* – the inevitable failure.

TRANSLATION

A purified soul should see that because the conditioned souls who are dedicated to sense gratification have falsely accepted the objects of sense pleasure as truth, all of their endeavors are doomed to failure.

PURPORT

In this verse the Lord describes the process of becoming desireless. All material sense objects, including those perceived by their form, taste, flavor, touch or sound, are temporary. We now see our family and nation, but

ultimately they will disappear. Even our own body, by which we perceive them, will disappear. Thus, the inevitable result of material enjoyment is *viparyaya*, or great suffering. The word *viśuddhātmā* indicates those who have purified themselves by executing the regulative duties of devotional service. They can clearly see the hopeless frustration of material life, and thus they become *akāmātmā*, or great souls free from material desire.

TEXT 10.3

*suptasya viṣayāloko
dhyāyato vā manorathaḥ
nānātmakatvād viphalas
tathā bhedātma-dhīḥ guṇaiḥ*

suptasya – of one who is sleeping; *viṣaya* – sense gratification; *ālokaḥ* – seeing; *dhyāyataḥ* – of one who is meditating; *vā* – or; *manaḥ-rathaḥ* – merely a creation of the mind; *nānā* – a large variety; *ātmakatvāt* – due to having the nature of; *viphalas* – bereft of the real perfection; *tathā* – in that way; *bheda-ātma* – in that which is separately constituted; *dhīḥ* – intelligence; *guṇaiḥ* – by the material senses.

TRANSLATION

One who is sleeping may see many objects of sense gratification in a dream, but such pleasurable things are merely creations of the mind and are thus ultimately useless. Similarly, the living entity who is asleep to his spiritual identity also sees many sense objects, but these innumerable objects of temporary gratification are creations of the Lord’s illusory potency and have no permanent existence. One who meditates upon them, impelled by the senses, uselessly engages his intelligence.

PURPORT

Because the fruits of material work are temporary, it ultimately does not matter whether or not one obtains them; the final result is the same. Materialistic activities can never award the highest perfection of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The material intelligence, impelled by the senses, strongly desires sense gratification. As stated here (*bhedātma-dhīḥ*), such intelligence actually separates one from one’s real self-interest. Thus the intelligence, absorbed in that which is materially favorable and unfavorable, becomes divided in pursuit of innumerable categories of material advancement. Such divided intelligence is impotent and cannot understand the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The devotees of the Lord, however, have their intelligence fixed on one point – Lord Kṛṣṇa. They meditate upon the Lord’s form, qualities, pastimes and devotees, and thus their intelligence is never separated from the Absolute Truth. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.41):

*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir
ekeha kuru-nandana*

*bahu-śākhā hy anantāś ca
buddhayo'vyavasāyinām*

“Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the intelligence of those who are irresolute is many branched.”

If one is not Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is uselessly dreaming without any understanding of his eternal situation. The material intelligence will always devise novel means of achieving happiness, and therefore one bounces from one fruitless program of sense gratification to another, ignoring the simple fact that all material things are temporary and will disappear. In this way one's intelligence becomes infected with material lust and greed, and such infected intelligence cannot bring one to the true goal of life. One should hear from the bona fide spiritual master whose intelligence is pure, and then one will come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the highest perfection of life.

TEXT 10.4

*nivṛttam karma seveta
pravṛttam mat-paras tyajet
jijñāsāyām sampravṛtto
nādryet karma-codanām*

nivṛttam – regulative duties; *karma* – such work; *seveta* – one should perform; *pravṛttam* – activities for sense gratification; *mat-paraḥ* – one who is dedicated to Me; *tyajet* – should give up; *jijñāsāyām* – in searching for spiritual truth; *sampravṛttaḥ* – being perfectly engaged; *na* – not; *ādryet* – one should accept; *karma* – any material activity; *codanām* – injunctions governing.

TRANSLATION

One who has fixed Me within his mind as the goal of life should give up activities based on sense gratification and should instead execute work governed by the regulative principles for advancement. When, however, one is fully engaged in searching out the ultimate truth of the soul, one should not accept the scriptural injunctions governing fruitive activities.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the words *jijñāsāyām sampravṛttaḥ* refer to one who is *yoga-ārūḍha*, or advanced in the *yoga* process. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.3-4) it is stated:

*ārurukṣor muner yogam
karma kāraṇam ucyate
yogārūḍhasya tasyaiva
śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate
yadā hi nendriyārtheṣu
na karmasv anuṣajjate
sarva-saṅkalpa-sannyāsī
yogārūḍhas tadocyate*

“For one who is a neophyte in the eightfold *yoga* system, work is said to be the means; and for one who has already attained to *yoga*, cessation of all material activities is said to be the means. A person is said to have attained to *yoga* when, having renounced all material desires, he neither acts for sense gratification nor engages in fruitive activities.” The example may be given that an ordinary man will try to enjoy the company of women for material sense pleasure. This is called *pravṛtta-karma*, or the path of sense gratification. A religious person will also enjoy the company of a woman, but under the regulative principles of the *varṇāśrama* system. However, one who is fully absorbed in spiritual advancement will ultimately give up all sense gratification derived from sexual association, either regulated or illicit. Similarly, in the stage of *pravṛtta-karma*, or ordinary sense gratification, one will eat whatever pleases his tongue. On the other hand, a materialistic devotee will sometimes cook sumptuous preparations and offer them to the Deity, not in order to satisfy the Lord but rather with the intention of satisfying his own tongue and belly. However, one who is *sampravṛtta*, or fully engaged in spiritual consciousness, is never interested in simply gratifying his tongue. He avoids ordinary foods prepared by materialistic persons, and just for the purpose of keeping his body fit for serving Kṛṣṇa he eats moderate quantities of food that has first been offered to the Deity for the Deity’s pleasure.

The process of spiritual realization gradually brings a conditioned soul from the lowest point of materialistic consciousness to total absorption in loving service to the Personality of Godhead. In the beginning one is taught to dovetail one’s enjoying propensities by first offering to the Lord the fruit of one’s work. In the advanced stage, however, the impulse to execute fruitive activities (*karma-codanām*) is absent, and one simply engages in the loving service of the Lord without any selfish motive. For example, a renounced *sannyāsī* preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or even a renounced householder preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is not required to execute all of the injunctions governing sense gratification in family life. Ultimately, every human being should take to the transcendental duties of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Rather than working to fulfill one’s own desires and then offering the results to Kṛṣṇa, one should fully engage in pleasing the Lord directly according to His own intimate desires.

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, any attempt to enjoy the material world, either religiously or irreligious, ultimately will be full of contradictions. One should come to the platform of desirelessness, pure love of Godhead, and thus solve all of the problems of life.

TEXT 10.5

*yamān abhīkṣṇaṁ seveta
niyamān mat-paraḥ kvacit
mad-abhijñāṁ guruṁ śāntam
upāsīta mad-ātmakam*

yamān – major regulative principles, such as not to kill; *abhīkṣṇam* – always; *seveta* – one should observe; *niyamān* – minor regulations, such as cleansing the body; *mat-paraḥ* – one who is devoted to Me; *kvacit* – as far as possible; *mat-abhijñam* – one who knows Me as I am in My personal form; *gurum* – the spiritual master; *śāntam* – peaceful; *upāsīta* – one should serve; *mat-ātmakam* – who is not different from Me.

TRANSLATION

One who has accepted Me as the supreme goal of life should strictly observe the scriptural injunctions forbidding sinful activities and, as far as possible, should execute the injunctions prescribing minor regulative duties such as cleanliness. Ultimately, however, one should approach a bona fide spiritual master who is full in knowledge of Me as I am, who is peaceful, and who by spiritual elevation is not different from Me.

PURPORT

The word *yamān* refers to major regulative injunctions necessary for preserving one's purity. In the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all bona fide members must give up eating meat, fish and eggs, and they must also avoid intoxication, gambling and illicit sex. The word *abhīkṣṇam* indicates that one cannot at any time perform such forbidden activities, even in difficult circumstances. The word *niyamān* refers to less obligatory injunctions, such as bathing three times daily. In certain difficult situations one may not bathe three times daily yet may still maintain one's spiritual position. But if one engages in sinful, forbidden activities, even in difficult circumstances, there undoubtedly will be a spiritual falldown. Ultimately, as explained in *Upadeśāmṛta*, mere adherence to rules and regulations cannot give one spiritual perfection. One must approach a bona fide spiritual master who is *mad-abhijñam*, or in full knowledge of the personal form of Godhead. The word *mat* ("Me") negates the possibility of a bona fide spiritual master having an impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth. Furthermore, the *guru* must be in complete control of his senses; therefore he is called *śānta*, or peaceful. Because of being completely surrendered to the mission of the Lord, such a spiritual master is *mad-ātmakam*, or nondifferent from the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 10.6

*amāny amatsaro dakṣo
nirmamo dṛḍha-sauhṛdaḥ
asatvaro'rtha-jijñāsur
anasūyur amogha-vāk*

amānī – without false ego; *amatsaraḥ* – not considering oneself to be the doer; *dakṣaḥ* – without laziness; *nirmamaḥ* – without any sense of proprietorship over one's wife, children, home, society, etc.; *dṛḍha-sauhṛdaḥ* – being fixed in the mood of loving friendship with the spiritual master, who is one's worshipable deity; *asatvaraḥ* – without becoming bewildered due to

material passion; *artha-jijñāsuḥ* – desiring knowledge of the Absolute Truth; *anasūyuh* – free from envy; *amogha-vāk* – completely free from useless conversation.

TRANSLATION

The servant or disciple of the spiritual master should be free from false prestige, never considering himself to be the doer. He should be active and never lazy and should give up all sense of proprietorship over the objects of the senses, including his wife, children, home and society. He should be endowed with feelings of loving friendship toward the spiritual master and should never become deviated or bewildered. The servant or disciple should always desire advancement in spiritual understanding, should not envy anyone and should always avoid useless conversation.

PURPORT

No one can claim to be the permanent proprietor of his so-called wife, family, home, society, and so on. Such material relationships appear and disappear like bubbles on the surface of the ocean. No one can claim to be the creator of the material elements that produced one's home, society and family. If it were a fact that parents were the ultimate creators of the bodies of their children, children would never die before their parents; the parents would simply create new bodies for the children. Similarly, parents would also not die, because they would create new bodies for themselves to replace the old ones. Actually, God creates everyone's bodies as well as the material elements with which we build our material societies. Therefore, before death drags these things out of our grasp, we should voluntarily engage them in the loving service of the spiritual master, who is the bona fide representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Then such material objects, instead of causing lamentation, will be the cause of happiness.

TEXT 10.7

*jāyāpatya-gr̥ha-kṣetra-
svajana-draviṇādiṣu
udāsīnaḥ samam paśyan
sarveṣu artham ivātmanaḥ*

jāyā – to wife; *apatya* – children; *gr̥ha* – home; *kṣetra* – land; *svajana* – relatives and friends; *draviṇa* – bank account; *ādiṣu* – and so on; *udāsīnaḥ* – remaining indifferent; *samam* – equally; *paśyan* – seeing; *sarveṣu* – in all of these; *artham* – purpose; *iva* – like; *ātmanaḥ* – of oneself.

TRANSLATION

One should see one's real self-interest in life in all circumstances and should therefore remain detached from wife, children, home, land, relatives, friends, wealth and so on.

PURPORT

A devotee of the Lord recognizes that his wife, children, home, land, friends and money are meant to be engaged in the loving service of the Supreme

Lord. Therefore, he does not frantically make arrangements for the sense gratification of his family and friends. He is not eager to enjoy the false prestige of being the master of his wife and the lord of his children, nor is he anxious to gain prestige from his friends and society. Thus he does not envy anyone and is not lazy in the matter of self-realization. He is free from the false sense of proprietorship and is always eager to develop his understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is free from false egotism and automatically turns away from useless materialistic conversation. Thus he is steady and not whimsical, and he is always firmly situated in loving friendship at the lotus feet of the spiritual master. The question may be raised as to how one can develop freedom from false proprietorship. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given the following example. An ordinary man is very eager to accumulate more and more money, and he maintains his wealth in the form of bank accounts, properties, gold, and so on. As long as these different assets are contributing to his financial well-being, he sees them equally and considers that they belong to him. But if some of his assets are taken by the government for taxes, or if they are lost in an unfortunate business arrangement, then he is forced to give up his sense of proprietorship. In the same way, everyone should be intelligent enough to observe that one's sense of ownership over innumerable material objects is not permanent; therefore one should develop detachment from these things. If one does not cultivate a loving feeling of friendship for the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His pure devotee, the spiritual master, one will undoubtedly be entangled by the network of material society, friendship and love. One will then remain bound up on the material platform with no hope of permanent happiness.

TEXT 10.8

*vilakṣaṇaḥ sthūla-sūkṣmād
dehād ātmekṣitā sva-dṛk
yathāgnir dāruṇo dāhyād
dāhako'nyaḥ prakāśakaḥ*

vilakṣaṇaḥ - having different characteristics; *sthūla* - from the gross; *sūkṣmāt* - and the subtle; *dehāt* - from the body; *ātmā* - the spirit soul; *īkṣitā* - the seer; *sva-dṛk* - self-enlightened; *yathā* - just as; *agniḥ* - fire; *dāruṇaḥ* - from firewood; *dāhyāt* - from that which is to be burned; *dāhakaḥ* - that which burns; *anyaḥ* - other; *prakāśakaḥ* - that which illuminates.

TRANSLATION

Just as fire, which burns and illuminates, is different from firewood, which is to be burned to give illumination, similarly the seer within the body, the self-enlightened spirit soul, is different from the material body, which is to be illuminated by consciousness. Thus the spirit soul and the body possess different characteristics and are separate entities.

PURPORT

It is analytically demonstrated in this verse that one should never falsely identify the ego with the material body. Such misidentification is called false ego, or material illusion. The following question may be raised. Since it is commonly known that the Supreme Personality of Godhead enlightens the conditioned soul, why is the term *sva-dṛk*, or “self-enlightened,” used in this verse? Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that although the Supreme Personality of Godhead certainly furnishes consciousness to the living entity, the living entity, being endowed with the potency of the Lord, has himself the capacity to revive and expand his pure consciousness. He may therefore be considered, in a secondary sense, self-enlightened. The example may be given that gold or silver domes brilliantly reflect the rays of the sun. Although the light comes from the sun, the inherent properties of gold and silver can also be considered causes for the brilliant reflection, since other substances do not possess suitable properties to reflect the sun’s light. Similarly, the spirit soul can be considered *sva-dṛk*, or self-enlightened, because he possesses characteristics by which he can brilliantly reflect the potency of the Personality of Godhead, thus illuminating his existential situation, just as a gold or silver dome shines due to its reflective properties. A nice example is given in this verse to illustrate the different characteristics of the body and soul. Fire, which burns and illuminates, is always different from that which is burned for illumination. It may be said, however, that fire is present in an unmanifest form within wood. Similarly, in the conditioned life of ignorance, the spirit soul is present, though unmanifest, within the body. The enlightened condition of the living entity can be compared to the act of arousing fire within wood. Just as fire quickly burns wood to ashes, similarly the spirit soul, when enlightened, burns to ashes the darkness of ignorance. We are conscious of the body; therefore it may be said that the body is illuminated by consciousness, which is the energy, or symptom, of the spirit soul. Identifying the body and soul as one is just as foolish as considering fire and wood to be the same. In both cases, the intimate circumstantial connection between fire and wood or between the soul and the body does not alter the fact that fire is different from wood or that the soul is always different from the body.

TEXT 10.9

*nirodhotpatty-aṇu-br̥han-
nānātvam̐ tat-kṛtān guṇān
antaḥ praviṣṭa ādhatta
evam̐ deha-guṇān paraḥ*

nirodha – dormancy; *utpatti* – manifestation; *aṇu* – tiny; *br̥hat* – large; *nānātvam* – the variety of characteristics; *tat-kṛtān* – produced by that; *guṇān* – qualities; *antaḥ* – within; *praviṣṭaḥ* – having entered; *ādhatte* – accepts; *evam* – thus; *deha* – of the material body; *guṇān* – qualities; *paraḥ* – the transcendental entity.

TRANSLATION

Just as fire may appear differently as dormant, manifest, weak, brilliant and so on, according to the condition of the fuel, similarly, the spirit soul enters a material body and accepts particular bodily characteristics.

PURPORT

Although fire may appear and disappear within a particular object, the element fire always exists. Similarly, the eternal soul appears within a suitable body and then disappears from that body, but the soul always exists. Just as fire is different from its fuel, the soul is different from the body. A match makes a tiny fire, whereas the explosion of a huge gasoline tank will send flames shooting up into the sky. But still, fire is one. Similarly, one spirit soul may appear in the body of Brahmā and another in the body of an ant, but the spirit soul is qualitatively the same in every body. Because of ignorance we impose the bodily characteristics upon the soul, and thus we say that a particular person is American, Russian, Chinese, African or Mexican or that he is old or young. Although such designations certainly apply to the body, they do not apply to the spirit soul, which is described here as *paraḥ*, or a transcendental entity. As long as the bewildered spirit soul remains inimical to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the designations of the gross and subtle bodies will wrap themselves around him, keeping him in darkness. If one intellectually identifies oneself with various materialistic philosophies of life, he becomes covered by the subtle mind. Ultimately everything that exists is part and parcel of the Absolute Truth, Lord Kṛṣṇa. When the living entity realizes this, he becomes *nirupādhi*, or free from material designations. This is his constitutional position.

TEXT 10.10

*yo'sau guṇair viracito
deho'yaṁ puruṣasya hi
saṁsāras tan-nibandho'yaṁ
puṁso vidyā cchid ātmanaḥ*

yaḥ - which; *asau* - that(subtle body); *guṇaiḥ* - by the material modes; *viracitaḥ* - constructed; *dehaḥ* - the body; *ayaṁ* - this (gross body); *puruṣasya* - of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *hi* - certainly; *saṁsāraḥ* - material existence; *tat-nibandhaḥ* - tied to that; *ayaṁ* - this; *puṁsaḥ* - of the living entity; *vidyā* - knowledge; *chit* - that which cuts apart; *ātmanaḥ* - of the soul.

TRANSLATION

The subtle and gross material bodies are created by the material modes of nature, which expand from the potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Material existence occurs when the living entity falsely accepts the qualities of the gross and subtle bodies as being his own factual nature. This illusory state, however, can be destroyed by real knowledge.

PURPORT

Regarding the analogy comparing fire and its fuel to the soul and the body, one may argue that to some extent fire is dependent upon its fuel and cannot exist without it. Since we do not experience the existence of fire independent of fuel, one may therefore still question how it is possible for the living entity to exist separately from the body, become covered by it and eventually become free from it. Only through the Supreme Personality of Godhead's knowledge potency (*vidyā*) can one clearly understand the nature of the living entity. By *vidyā*, or real knowledge, one may cut material existence to pieces and even in this lifetime experience spiritual reality. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, our material existence is an artificial imposition. By the Lord's inconceivable potency of nescience, the qualities of gross and subtle material forms are psychologically imposed upon the living being, and because of misidentification with the body, the living entity initiates a series of illusory activities. As explained in the previous chapter, the present material body is like a tree that produces the karmic seed of the next body. However, this cycle of ignorance can be cut to pieces by the transcendental knowledge explained by the Lord. Unfortunately, the conditioned souls, being inimical to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, do not accept the perfect knowledge spoken by the Lord. Instead they remain absorbed in gross and subtle illusion. But if the living entity accepts the Lord's knowledge, his whole situation can be rectified, and he can return to his original, eternal, blissful life of perfect knowledge in the direct association of the Lord.

TEXT 10.11

*tasmāj jijñāsayātmānam
ātma-sthaṁ kevalaṁ param
saṅgamyā nirased etad
vastu-buddhiṁ yathā-kramam*

tasmāt – therefore; *jijñāsayā* – by the cultivation of knowledge; *ātmānam* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ātma* – within oneself; *stham* – situated; *kevalam* – pure; *param* – transcendental and supreme; *saṅgamyā* – approaching by realized knowledge; *niraset* – one should give up; *etat* – this; *vastu* – within material objects; *buddhim* – concept of reality; *yathā-kramam* – gradually, step by step.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, by the cultivation of knowledge one should approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead situated within oneself. By understanding the Lord's pure, transcendental existence, one should gradually give up the false vision of the material world as independent reality.

PURPORT

The word *yathā-kramam* (“step by step”) means that after first realizing oneself to be different from the gross material body one should then

progressively detach oneself from material mental activities. In this verse *etad vastu-buddhim* means seeing the material world as existing independently rather than correctly seeing all things as emanations of the Absolute Truth.

When one correctly identifies oneself as eternal spiritual form, one achieves the real fruit of knowledge. The Lord is eternally manifest in His eternal form, and the living entity is similarly manifest in his eternal form as the loving servitor of the Lord. When we falsely assume that temporary, illusory material objects are real, knowledge of our eternal spiritual form is covered by ignorance. If, however, one meditates upon the Lord's supreme presence within everything, one can return to the normal, blissful state of spiritual life. Every human being should seriously endeavor to understand the Absolute Truth, as indicated in this verse by the word *jijñāsayā*.

TEXT 10.12

*ācāryo'raṇir ādyaḥ syād
ante-vāsy uttarāraṇiḥ
tat-sandhānam pravacanam
vidyā-sandhiḥ sukhāvahaḥ*

ācāryaḥ – the spiritual master; *araṇiḥ* – sacred kindling wood used in the sacrificial fire; *ādyaḥ* – held beneath; *syāt* – is to be considered; *ante-vāsī* – the disciple; *uttara* – at the top; *araṇiḥ* – kindling wood; *tat-sandhānam* – the stick in the middle, which connects the upper and lower wood; *pravacanam* – instructions; *vidyā* – transcendental knowledge; *sandhiḥ* – like the fire, arising from the friction, that spreads throughout the firewood; *sukha* – happiness; *āvahaḥ* – bringing.

TRANSLATION

The spiritual master can be compared to the lower kindling stick, the disciple to the upper kindling stick, and the instruction given by the guru to the third stick placed in between. The transcendental knowledge communicated from guru to disciple is compared to the fire arising from the contact of these, which burns the darkness of ignorance to ashes, bringing great happiness both to guru and disciple.

PURPORT

When the darkness of ignorance is burned to ashes, the dangerous life of ignorance is also eradicated, and one can work for his true self-interest in full knowledge. In this verse the word *ādyaḥ* means “original,” and it indicates the spiritual master, who is compared to the sacred kindling stick held below. From the spiritual master transcendental knowledge, like fire, is spread to the disciple. Just as friction between two sticks of firewood produces fire, similarly, bona fide contact between the spiritual master, who is the representative of Kṛṣṇa, and a sincere disciple produces the fire of knowledge. When the disciple takes shelter of the lotus feet of the spiritual

master, he automatically acquires perfect knowledge of his original, spiritual form.

TEXT 10.13

*vaiśāradī sāti-viśuddha-buddhir
dhunoti māyāṁ guṇa-samprasūtām
gunāṁś ca sandahya yad-ātmam etat
svayaṁ ca śāmyaty asamid yathāgniḥ*

vaiśāradī – available from the expert; *sā* – this; *ati-viśuddha* – most pure; *buddhiḥ* – intelligence or knowledge; *dhunoti* – repels; *māyāṁ* – illusion; *guṇa* – from the modes of material nature; *samprasūtām* – produced; *guṇān* – the modes of nature themselves; *ca* – also; *sandahya* – completely burning up; *yad* – from which modes; *ātmam* – constituted; *etat* – this (material existence); *svayam* – itself; *ca* – also; *śāmyati* – is pacified; *asamid* – without fuel; *yathā* – just as; *agniḥ* – fire.

TRANSLATION

By submissively hearing from an expert spiritual master, the expert disciple develops pure knowledge, which repels the onslaught of material illusion arising from the three modes of material nature. Finally this pure knowledge itself ceases, just as fire ceases when the stock of fuel has been consumed.

PURPORT

The Sanskrit word *vaiśāradī* means “that which is derived from the expert [*viśārada*].” Perfect transcendental knowledge comes from the expert spiritual master, and when such knowledge is heard by the expert disciple, it curbs the waves of material illusion. Since the Lord’s illusory energy acts eternally within the material world, there is no possibility of destroying illusion. One may, however, destroy the presence of illusion within one’s own heart. To accomplish this the disciple must become expert in pleasing the expert spiritual master. As one advances to the perfectional stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, experiencing the presence of the Lord everywhere, one’s attention shifts to the transcendental platform. At that time, pure knowledge itself, one’s constant technical awareness of illusion, diminishes, just as fire diminishes and is extinguished after consuming its stock of fuel.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted from several Vedic scriptures to show that *māyā*, or material illusion, is just like a witch who always haunts the conditioned souls. *Māyā* offers the conditioned souls whatever they like within the three modes of nature, but such offerings are all just like fire that burns the heart to ashes. Therefore, one must understand that the material world is a hellish place, offering a permanent situation to no one. Externally we experience many things, and internally we contemplate our experience, formulating plans for future action. Thus internally and externally we are victims of ignorance. Real knowledge comes from the *Vedas*, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form of perfect wisdom. If we become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious, taking complete shelter of the Lord, there will be no

scarcity of pleasure, because the Lord is the reservoir of all pleasure, and His devotees freely move within that reservoir.

TEXTS 10.14-16

*athaiṣām karma-kartṛṇām
bhoktṛṇām sukha-duḥkhayoḥ
nānātvam atha nityatvam
loka-kālāgamātmanām
manyase sarva-bhāvānām
samsthā hy autpattikī yathā
tat-tad-ākṛti-bhedena
jāyate bhidyate ca dhīḥ
evam apy aṅga sarveṣām
dehinām deha-yogataḥ
kālavayavataḥ santi
bhāvā janmādayo'sakṛt*

atha – thus; *eṣām* – of those; *karma* – fruitive activities; *kartṛṇām* – of the performers; *bhoktṛṇām* – of the enjoyers; *sukha-duḥkhayoḥ* – of happiness and distress; *nānātvam* – variegatedness; *atha* – moreover; *nityatvam* – perpetual existence; *loka* – of the materialistic world; *kāla* – material time; *āgama* – Vedic literatures recommending fruitive activities; *ātmanām* – and the self; *manyase* – if you think; *sarva* – of all; *bhāvānām* – material objects; *samsthā* – the actual situation; *hi* – certainly; *autpattikī* – original; *yathā* – as; *tat-tat* – of all different objects; *ākṛti* – of their forms; *bhedena* – by the difference; *jāyate* – is born; *bhidyate* – and changes; *ca* – also; *dhīḥ* – intelligence or knowledge; *evam* – thus; *api* – even though; *aṅga* – O Uddhava; *sarveṣām* – of all; *dehinām* – embodied beings; *deha-yogataḥ* – by contact with a material body; *kāla* – of time; *avayavataḥ* – by the portions or limbs; *santi* – there are; *bhāvāḥ* – states of existence; *janma* – birth; *ādayaḥ* – and so on; *asakṛt* – constantly.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, I have thus explained to you perfect knowledge. There are philosophers, however, who challenge My conclusion. They state that the natural position of the living entity is to engage in fruitive activities, and they see him as the enjoyer of the happiness and unhappiness that accrue from his own work. According to this materialistic philosophy, the world, time, the revealed scriptures and the self are all variegated and eternal, existing as a perpetual flow of transformations. Knowledge, moreover, cannot be one or eternal, because it arises from the different and changing forms of objects; thus knowledge itself is always subject to change. Even if you accept such a philosophy, My dear Uddhava, there will still be perpetual birth, death, old age and disease, since all living entities must accept a material body subject to the influence of time.

PURPORT

In this verse, according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks the following to Uddhava. “My dear Uddhava, I have clearly established the actual goal of life in the instructions I have just imparted to you. There are those, however, who challenge My conclusion, especially the followers of Jaimini Kavi. If you are favorable to their understanding and thus do not accept My instructions, then kindly hear the following explanation.

“According to the followers of Jaimini, the living entity is originally and naturally a performer of fruitive activities, and his happiness and distress are derived from the fruits of his own work. The world in which the living entities find their enjoyment, the time during which they enjoy, the revealed scriptures that explain the means for achieving enjoyment, and the subtle bodies through which the living entities experience enjoyment all exist not only in manifold variety but also eternally.

“The living entity need not develop detachment from material sense gratification, either by seeing the temporariness of individual material objects and situations or by seeing the material world as an illusory creation (*māyā*). According to such materialistic philosophy, material objects such as garlands, sandalwood or beautiful women are temporary in specific manifestations but perpetually exist through the natural flow of creation and destruction. In other words, although a particular woman’s form is temporary, there will eternally be beautiful women within the material world. Thus, by carefully executing fruitive rituals according to religious scriptures, one can maintain enjoyable contact with women and wealth life after life. In this way one’s sense gratification will be eternal.

“The Jaimini philosophers further say that there never was a time when the world did not exist as it does today, which implies that there is no supreme controller who has created it. They claim that the arrangement of this world is real and appropriate and thus is not illusory. Moreover, they say that there is no eternal knowledge of an original perpetual form of the soul. In fact, they say, knowledge arises not from some absolute truth but from the differences among material objects. Knowledge therefore is not eternal and is subject to change. The assumption hidden in this statement is that there is no spirit soul who possesses eternal, constant knowledge of a single, unchanging reality. Rather, the nature of consciousness or knowledge is that it undergoes constant transformation. They state, however, that eternality is not refuted by the perpetually transforming nature of consciousness. Consciousness perpetually exists, they say, but not in the same form.

“Thus, the followers of Jaimini conclude that the transformation of knowledge does not negate its eternality; rather, they state that knowledge eternally exists within the perpetual nature of its transformation. They therefore naturally come to the path of regulated sense gratification rather than the path of renunciation, for in the state of *mukti*, or liberation, the living entity would not have any material senses, and thus the transformation of material understanding would not be possible. Such philosophers consider that the

achievement of an unchanging state of *mukti* would stunt or paralyze the natural activity of the living entity and thus would not be in his self-interest. The path of *nivṛtti* (aiming toward renunciation and transcendence of the material world) is naturally not interesting to such materialistic philosophers. Accepting for argument's sake the validity of such materialistic philosophy, one can easily demonstrate that the path of regulated sense gratification brings many unwanted and miserable results to the living entity. Therefore even from a materialistic viewpoint, detachment is desirable. Material time is divided into different sections such as days, weeks, months and years, and by material time the living entity is repeatedly forced to undergo the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease. That such real miseries occur everywhere throughout the universe is well known." In this way, states Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Lord Kṛṣṇa has pointed out the defect of materialistic philosophy to Uddhava.

We may further elaborate that if one falsely accepts the atheistic philosophy of Jaimini and his innumerable modern followers. then the living entity perpetually remains entangled in the anguish of birth, death, old age and disease. This bogus, atheistic philosophy encourages material gratification as the only logical goal of life, but the living entity will inevitably commit mistakes in the execution of regulated sense gratification and eventually go to hell. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, personally tells Uddhava that this materialistic philosophy is false and irrelevant to the actual self-interest of the living entity.

TEXT 10.17

*tatrāpi karmaṇām kartur
asvātantryam ca lakṣyate
bhoktuś ca duḥkha-sukhayoḥ
ko nv artho vivaśam bhajet*

tatra - in the matter of one's ability to obtain happiness; *api* - furthermore; *karmaṇām* - of fruitive activities; *kartuḥ* - of the performer; *asvātantryam* - the lack of independence; *ca* - also; *lakṣyate* - is clearly seen; *bhoktuḥ* - of the one who is trying to enjoy; *ca* - also; *duḥkha-sukhayoḥ* - happiness and unhappiness; *kaḥ* - what; *nu* - indeed; *arthaḥ* - value; *vivaśam* - for one who is not in control; *bhajet* - can be derived.

TRANSLATION

Although the performer of fruitive activities desires perpetual happiness, it is clearly observed that materialistic workers are often unhappy and only occasionally satisfied, thus proving that they are not independent or in control of their destiny. When a person is always under the superior control of another, how can he expect any valuable results from his own fruitive actions?

PURPORT

Although materialistic persons reject Kṛṣṇa consciousness and instead pursue temporary sense gratification, even that sense gratification is often

beyond their reach. If a person could really control his destiny, why would he create problems for himself? No intelligent person would impose death, old age or disease upon himself or his loved ones. One should recognize that these unwanted miseries are forced upon one by a higher power. Since we are all obviously under superior control, the atheistic philosophy advising one to simply perform fruitive activities and create a happy life is most imperfect. Due to the influence of time, happiness and misery are created. When a woman becomes pregnant, her husband, relatives and friends eagerly await the birth of the child. As time passes and the child is born, everyone feels great happiness. But as the child grows into old age and eventually dies, that same passage of time is a cause of suffering. Ignorant persons vainly seek help from scientists who work feverishly and fruitlessly in their laboratories to stop death. In modern times, inventions have been created to eliminate the inconveniences of life, but the maintenance and production of such conveniences has proven to be unbearably inconvenient for hundreds of millions of people throughout the world. Only the most foolish person will propose that there is no superior controller and that one can achieve favorable results by expert performance of material activities. Ultimately all material activities are useless because they end in annihilation. If one is driving a car but has only limited control, the situation is most dangerous and must lead inevitably to disaster. Similarly, although we are trying to direct the material body to happiness, we are not in full control of the bodily demands, and therefore there will inevitably be disaster. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.3):

*aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā
dharmasyāśya parantapa
aprāpya māṁ nivartante
mṛtyu-saṁsāra-vartmani*

“Those who are not faithful on the path of devotional service cannot attain Me, O conqueror of foes, but return to birth and death in this material world.” If one is not a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the eventual result of his activities is simply *mṛtyu-saṁsāra* – repeated birth and death.

TEXT 10.18

*na dehinām sukhaṁ kiñcid
vidyate viduṣām api
tathā ca duḥkhaṁ mūḍhānām
vṛthāhaṅkaraṇaṁ param*

na – not; *dehinām* – of embodied beings; *sukhaṁ* – happiness; *kiñcid* – some; *vidyate* – there is; *viduṣām* – of those who are intelligent; *api* – even; *tathā* – similarly; *ca* – also; *duḥkhaṁ* – unhappiness; *mūḍhānām* – of the big fools; *vṛthā* – useless; *ahaṅkaraṇaṁ* – false ego; *param* – only, or completely.

TRANSLATION

It is observed within the material world that sometimes even an intelligent person is not happy. Similarly, sometimes even a great

fool is happy. The concept of becoming happy through expertly performing material activities is simply a useless exhibition of false egotism.

PURPORT

It may be argued that an intelligent person can expertly perform pious activities within the material world and thus never experience suffering, since unhappiness is caused by sinful or impious activities. However, we often observe great suffering even among pious, intelligent persons, because they sometimes fail in the execution of their duty and sometimes consciously or unconsciously perform a forbidden activity. With this argument the Lord refutes the theory that simply on the strength of material piety one may remain perpetually happy without Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

On the other hand, we observe that even the most foolish or sinful persons sometimes experience happiness, because even those completely dedicated to sin sometimes accidentally perform pious activities by inadvertently traveling through a holy place or helping a saintly person. The material creation of God is so complex and bewildering that even those dedicated to piety sometimes commit sins, and even those dedicated to sinful life sometimes perform pious actions. Therefore, within the material world we do not find absolute happiness or unhappiness. Rather, every conditioned soul is hovering in confusion, without perfect knowledge. Piety and sin are relative material ideas that bestow relative happiness and unhappiness. Absolute happiness is experienced on the spiritual platform in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or love of God. Thus material life is always ambiguous and relative, whereas Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the actual platform of perfect happiness.

TEXT 10.19

*yadi prāptim vighātam ca
jānanti sukha-duḥkhaḥ
te'py addhā na vidur yogam
mṛtyur na prabhaved yathā*

yadi – if; *prāptim* – achievement; *vighātam* – removal; *ca* – also; *jānanti* – they know; *sukha* – of happiness; *duḥkhaḥ* – and of distress; *te* – they; *api* – still; *addhā* – directly; *na* – not; *viduḥ* – do know; *yogam* – the process; *mṛtyuḥ* – death; *na* – not; *prabhaved* – would exert its power; *yathā* – by which.

TRANSLATION

Even if people know how to achieve happiness and avoid unhappiness, they still do not know the process by which death will not be able to exert its power over them.

PURPORT

If the so-called intelligent materialists know the means of achieving happiness and destroying unhappiness, then they should deliver people from inevitable death. The scientists are busily working to solve this problem, but

since they have completely failed, it is understood that they are not actually intelligent and that they do not know the means of achieving happiness and eliminating misery. It is most foolish to think that one can be happy with an ax hanging over one's neck. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *mṛtyuḥ sarva-haraś cāham*: "I Myself come before you as death and take everything away." We should not blindly ignore the disaster of material life, but should instead accept the Lord's causeless mercy, which He so magnanimously offers in His incarnation as Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We should surrender to the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya, who offers the real means for achieving unqualified happiness: the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. This is the Lord's desire, and it is in our own self-interest to take up this process.

TEXT 10.20

*ko'nv arthaḥ sukhayaty enam
kāmo vā mṛtyur antike
āghātaṁ nīyamānasya
vadhyasyeva na tuṣṭi-daḥ*

kaḥ – what; *nu* – certainly; *arthaḥ* – material object; *sukhayati* – gives happiness; *enam* – to a person; *kāmaḥ* – sense gratification derived from material things; *vā* – or; *mṛtyuḥ* – death; *antike* – standing nearby; *āghātam* – to the place of execution; *nīyamānasya* – of one who is being led; *vadhyasya* – of one who is to be killed; *iva* – like; *na* – not at all; *tuṣṭi-daḥ* – gives satisfaction.

TRANSLATION

Death is not at all pleasing, and since everyone is exactly like a condemned man being led to the place of execution, what possible happiness can people derive from material objects or the gratification they provide?

PURPORT

It is customary throughout the world that a condemned man is offered a sumptuous last meal. For the condemned man, however, such a feast is a chilling reminder of his imminent death, and therefore he cannot enjoy it. Similarly, no sane human being can be satisfied in material life, because death is standing near and may strike at any moment. If one is sitting in one's living room with a deadly snake at one's side, knowing that at any moment the poisonous fangs might pierce the flesh, how can one sit peacefully and watch television or read a book? Similarly, unless one is more or less crazy, one cannot be enthusiastic or even peaceful in material life. Knowledge of the inevitability of death should encourage one to become determined in spiritual life.

TEXT 10.21

*śrutaṁ ca dṛṣṭa-vad duṣṭaṁ
spardhāsūyātyaya-vyayaiḥ*

*bahv-antarāya-kāmatvāt
kṛṣi-vac cāpi niṣphalam*

śrutam – material happiness which is heard of; *ca* – also; *dr̥ṣṭa-vat* – just like that which we have already seen; *duṣṭam* – is contaminated; *spardhā* – by jealousy; *asūyā* – by envy; *atyaya* – by death; *vyayaiḥ* – and by decay; *bahu* – many; *antarāya* – obstacles; *kāmatvāt* – because of accepting happiness with such characteristics; *kṛṣi-vat* – like agriculture; *ca* – also; *api* – even; *niṣphalam* – fruitless.

TRANSLATION

That material happiness of which we hear, such as promotion to heavenly planets for celestial enjoyment, is just like that material happiness we have already experienced. Both are polluted by jealousy, envy, decay and death. Therefore, just as an attempt to raise crops becomes fruitless if there are many problems like crop disease, insect plague or drought, similarly, the attempt to attain material happiness, either on earth or on the heavenly planets, is always fruitless because of innumerable obstacles.

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments as follows on this verse. “Ordinarily, if there is no specific impediment, agricultural endeavors will yield their fruits. If, however, there is a defect in the seed, or if the soil is too salty or barren, or if there is drought, plague, excessive rain or heat out of season, or if there are disturbances caused by animals, birds or insects, then agricultural activities will not yield the desired harvest. Similarly, those who are expert in analyzing the material world see that the heavenly situations offered in the *Vedas* are not basically different from life on the earth. By the interaction of conditioned souls there will inevitably be jealousy as one becomes distinguished as superior and another as inferior. By the power of time these positions are reversed, and therefore violence and intrigue disturb life even on the heavenly planets. In fact, the attempt to promote oneself to the heavenly planets is itself full of problems and disturbances. One should therefore understand that the kingdom of God, *Vaikuṅṭha*, is transcendental to the limitations and disturbances imposed by the laws of material nature in this world. If one wrongly concludes that such imperfections are also present in the kingdom of God, then one will be polluted by material contamination.”

TEXT 10.22

*antarāyair avihito
yadi dharmāḥ sv-anuṣṭhitaḥ
tenāpi nirjitaṁ sthānaṁ
yathā gacchati tac chṛṇu*

antarāyaiḥ – by obstacles and discrepancies; *avihitaḥ* – not affected; *yadi* – if; *dharmāḥ* – one’s execution of regulated duties according to Vedic injunctions; *sv-anuṣṭhitaḥ* – excellently performed; *tena* – by that; *api* – even;

nirjitam – accomplished; *sthānam* – status; *yathā* – the manner in which; *gacchati* – it perishes; *tat* – that; *śṛṇu* – please hear.

TRANSLATION

If one performs Vedic sacrifices and fruitive rituals without any mistake or contamination, one will achieve a heavenly situation in the next life. But even this result, which is only achieved by perfect performance of fruitive rituals, will be vanquished by time. Now hear of this.

PURPORT

The word *gacchati* means “going.” In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *āgamāpāyino 'nityāḥ*: all material experiences, good or bad, come and go. Therefore the word *gacchati* refers to the disappearance of the results of even the most meticulously performed fruitive sacrifices. Any material situation, from the worst to the best, is imperfect. Thus one should strive only for pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 10.23

iṣṭveha devatā yajñaiḥ
svar-lokaṁ yāti yājñikaḥ
bhuñjīta deva-vat tatra
bhogān divyān nijāritān

iṣṭvā – having worshiped; *iha* – in this world; *devatāḥ* – the demigods; *yajñaiḥ* – with sacrifices; *svaḥ-lokaṁ* – to the heavenly planets; *yāti* – goes; *yājñikaḥ* – the performer of sacrifice; *bhuñjīta* – he may enjoy; *deva-vat* – like a god; *tatra* – therein; *bhogān* – pleasures; *divyān* – celestial; *nija* – by himself; *arjitān* – achieved.

TRANSLATION

If on earth one performs sacrifices for the satisfaction of the demigods, he goes to the heavenly planets, where, just like a demigod, he enjoys all of the heavenly pleasures he has earned by his performances.

TEXT 10.24

sva-puṇyopacite śubhre
vimāna upagīyate
gandharvair viharan madhye
devīnām hṛdya-veṣa-dhṛk

sva – his own; *puṇya* – by the pious activities; *upacite* – accumulated; *śubhre* – shining; *vimāne* – in an airplane; *upagīyate* – is glorified by songs; *gandharvaiḥ* – by the heavenly Gandharvas; *viharan* – enjoying life; *madhye* – in the middle; *devīnām* – of heavenly goddesses; *hṛdya* – charming; *veṣa* – clothes; *dhṛk* – wearing.

TRANSLATION

Having achieved the heavenly planets, the performer of ritualistic sacrifices travels in a glowing airplane, which he obtains as the

result of his piety on earth. Being glorified by songs sung by the Gandharvas and dressed in wonderfully charming clothes, he enjoys life surrounded by heavenly goddesses.

TEXT 10.25

*strībhiḥ kāmaga-yānena
kiṅkiṇī-jāla-mālinā
krīḍan na vedātma-pātaṁ
surākrīḍeṣu nirvṛtaḥ*

strībhiḥ - with heavenly women; *kāma-ga* - going wherever one desires; *yānena* - with such an airplane; *kiṅkiṇī-jāla-mālinā* - decorated with circles of bells; *krīḍan* - having a good time; *na* - not; *veda* - does consider; *ātma* - his own; *pātam* - fall down; *sura* - of the demigods; *ākrīḍeṣu* - in the pleasure gardens; *nirvṛtaḥ* - being comfortable, relaxed and happy.

TRANSLATION

Accompanied by heavenly women, the enjoyer of the fruits of sacrifice goes on pleasure rides in a wonderful airplane, which is decorated with circles of tinkling bells and which flies wherever he desires. Being relaxed, comfortable and happy in the heavenly pleasure gardens, he does not consider that he is exhausting the fruits of his piety and will soon fall down to the mortal world.

TEXT 10.26

*tāvat sa modate svarge
yāvat puṇyam samāpyate
kṣīṇa-puṇyaḥ pataty arvāg
anicchan kāla-cālitaḥ*

tāvat - that long; *saḥ* - he; *modate* - enjoys life; *svarge* - in the heavenly planets; *yāvat* - until; *puṇyam* - his pious results; *samāpyate* - are used up; *kṣīṇa* - exhausted; *puṇyaḥ* - his piety; *patati* - he falls; *arvāk* - down from heaven; *anicchan* - not desiring to fall; *kāla* - by time; *cālitaḥ* - pushed down.

TRANSLATION

Until his pious results are used up, the performer of sacrifice enjoys life in the heavenly planets. When the pious results are exhausted, however, he falls down from the pleasure gardens of heaven, being moved against his desire by the force of eternal time.

TEXTS 10.27-29

*yady adharmataḥ saṅgād
asatām vājitendriyaḥ
kāmātmā kṛpaṇo lubdhaḥ
straiṇo bhūta-vihimsakaḥ
paśūn avidhinālabhya
preta-bhūta-gaṇān yajan*

*narakān avaśo jantur
gatvā yāty ulbaṇam tamaḥ
karmāṇi duḥkhodarkāṇi
kurvan dehena taiḥ punaḥ
deham ābhajate tatra
kim sukham martya-dharmināḥ*

yadi – if; *adharmā* – in irreligion; *rataḥ* – he is engaged; *saṅgāt* – due to association; *asatām* – of materialistic people; *vā* – or; *ajita* – due to not conquering; *indriyaḥ* – the senses; *kāma* – material lusty desires; *ātmā* – living for; *kṛpaṇaḥ* – miserly; *lubdhaḥ* – greedy; *straiṇaḥ* – a woman-hunter; *bhūta* – against other living beings; *vihimsakaḥ* – committing violence; *paśūn* – animals; *avidhinā* – without the authority of Vedic injunctions; *ālabhya* – killing; *preta-bhūta* – ghosts and spirits; *gaṇān* – the groups of; *yajan* – worshiping; *narakān* – to hells; *avaśaḥ* – helplessly, being under the control of fruitive activities; *jantuḥ* – a living being; *gatvā* – having gone; *yāti* – approaches; *ulbaṇam* – extreme; *tamaḥ* – darkness; *karmāṇi* – activities; *duḥkha* – great unhappiness; *udarkāṇi* – bringing in the future; *kurvan* – performing; *dehena* – with such a body; *taiḥ* – by such activities; *punaḥ* – again; *deham* – a material body; *ābhajate* – accepts; *tatra* – therein; *kim* – what; *sukham* – happiness; *martya* – always leading to death; *dharmināḥ* – of one sworn to activities.

TRANSLATION

If a human being is engaged in sinful, irreligious activities, either because of bad association or because of his failure to control his senses, then such a person will certainly develop a personality full of material desires. He thus becomes miserly toward others, greedy and always anxious to exploit the bodies of women. When the mind is so polluted one becomes violent and aggressive and without the authority of Vedic injunctions slaughters innocent animals for sense gratification. Worshiping ghosts and spirits, the bewildered person falls fully into the grip of unauthorized activities and thus goes to hell, where he receives a material body infected by the darkest modes of nature. In such a degraded body, he unfortunately continues to perform inauspicious activities that greatly increase his future unhappiness, and therefore he again accepts a similar material body. What possible happiness can there be for one who engages in activities inevitably terminating in death?

PURPORT

In the Vedic analysis of civilized life there are two paths. One who takes to the path of *nivṛtti-mārga* immediately renounces material sense gratification and purifies his existence by performance of austerity and devotional activities. On the path of *pravṛtti-mārga* one furnishes a steady supply of sense objects to the senses, but one consumes such sense objects under strict regulations and through ritualistic ceremonies, thus gradually purifying the heart and satiating the material senses. Unfortunately, as explained in

this and the previous verse, the path of *pravṛtti-mārga* is extremely volatile because rather than becoming detached, the living entity often becomes uncontrolled and fully addicted to further sense gratification. In the previous verse the path of regulated, authorized sense gratification was described, and in this verse the path of unauthorized, demoniac sense gratification is described.

In this verse, the words *saṅgād asatām vājitendriyaḥ* are very significant. One may fall down into sinful life by bad association, or even in good association one may fail to control his senses. Ultimately each living entity is responsible for his existential situation. The word *adharmā-rataḥ* in this verse indicates those engaged in excessive sex life, meat-eating, drinking and other inauspicious activities that transgress the codes of civilized human life. Being in the mode of ignorance, these persons develop such a cruel mentality that they do not consider any festive occasion complete without the consumption of large quantities of meat obtained by slaughtering helpless animals. Eventually such persons become influenced by ghosts and spirits, who deprive them of all ability to discriminate between right and wrong. Losing all sense of decency, they become fit candidates for entrance into the darkest modes of material existence. Sometimes these lusty, intoxicated carnivores, considering themselves pious, pray to God in a useless way. Afflicted by innumerable material desires, they rotate from one material body to another without experiencing true happiness. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has noted that material life is so disturbing that even if one is allowed to live for an entire day of Brahmā – approximately 8,640,000,000 years – one will eventually be afflicted by the fear of death. In fact, Brahmā himself is disturbed by fear of death, what to speak of tiny human beings who live a paltry seventy or eighty years at most. Thus, as stated here, *kiṁ sukhaṁ martya-dharmināḥ*: what possible happiness can one find within the painful grip of material illusion?

TEXT 10.30

*lokānām loka-pālānām
mad bhayaṁ kalpa-jīvinām
brahmaṇo'pi bhayaṁ matto
dvi-parārdha-parāyuṣaḥ*

lokānām – in all the planetary systems; *loka-pālānām* – and for all the planetary leaders, such as the demigods; *mat* – of Me; *bhayaṁ* – there is fear; *kalpa-jīvinām* – for those who live for a *kalpa*, or a day of Brahmā; *brahmaṇaḥ* – of Lord Brahmā; *api* – even; *bhayaṁ* – there is fear; *mattaḥ* – from Me; *dvi-parārdha* – two *parārdhas*, totalling 311,040,000,000,000 years; *para* – supreme; *āyuṣaḥ* – whose duration of life.

TRANSLATION

In all the planetary systems, from the heavenly to the hellish, and for all of the great demigods who live for one thousand yuga cycles, there is fear of Me in My form of time. Even Brahmā, who possesses

the supreme life span of 311,040,000,000,000 years, is also afraid of Me.

PURPORT

There are many statements throughout Vedic literature proving that even the great demigods fear the time potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even in the heavenly planets there is no relief from the miseries of material life. No conditioned soul can live eternally, as clearly demonstrated by the deaths of Hiraṇyakaśipu and other demons. Since even the demigods fear the time potency of the Personality of Godhead, one may easily conclude that Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth and that He is eternally the supreme controller of everything and everyone. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the only real shelter.

TEXT 10.31

*guṇāḥ sṛjanti karmāṇi
guṇo'nusṛjate guṇān
jīvas tu guṇa-saṁyukto
bhukte karma-phalāny asau*

guṇāḥ – the material senses; *sṛjanti* – create; *karmāṇi* – pious and impious material activities; *guṇaḥ* – the three modes of nature; *anusṛjate* – set into motion; *guṇān* – the material senses; *jīvaḥ* – the minute living entity; *tu* – indeed; *guṇa* – the material senses or the material modes of nature; *saṁyuktaḥ* – fully engaged in; *bhukte* – experiences; *karma* – of activities; *phalāni* – the various results; *asau* – the spirit soul.

TRANSLATION

The material senses create material activities, either pious or sinful, and the modes of nature set the material senses into motion. The living entity, being fully engaged by the material senses and modes of nature, experiences the various results of fruitive work.

PURPORT

It has been explained in the previous verses that the living entity under the control of fruitive activities is pushed down into a hellish condition of life. In this verse the exact nature of the living entity's dependence on fruitive activities is described. One can observe that one's activities are performed by the material senses and that the living entity himself is merely conscious of such activities. One may be worshiping the demigods, enjoying sex or performing agricultural or intellectual activities, but in all cases the material senses are performing the work.

One may argue that the spirit soul initiates the activities of the senses and thus is the ultimate doer, but such false egotism is negated in this verse by the statement *guṇāḥ sṛjanti karmāṇi guṇo'nusṛjate guṇān*. The three modes of nature – goodness, passion and ignorance – stimulate the functions of the material senses, and the living entity, coming under the control of a particular mode of nature, merely experiences the good and bad results of his work. This does not negate the concept of free will, since the living entity

chooses to associate with different modes of nature. By one's eating, speaking, sexual activities, occupation, etc., one associates with various modes of nature and acquires a particular mentality. But in all cases the modes of nature themselves are acting, not the living entity. The word *asau* in this verse indicates that the living entity falsely considers himself to be the performer of work carried out by nature. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.27):

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

“The bewildered spirit soul, under the influence of the three modes of material nature, thinks himself to be the doer of activities, which are in actuality carried out by nature.” The conditioned soul can be liberated simply by giving up this false egoistic conception of life and taking to the devotional service of the Lord, by which the living entity, or marginal potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, escapes the disturbing influence of the external potency called *māyā*. In the devotional service of the Lord the liberated entity realizes his actual form of eternity, knowledge and bliss. It is natural to perform activities with a desire to achieve a good result. The best results, however, can be attained by one who engages in the devotional service of the Lord with a desire to be reinstated in his constitutional position as the Lord's loving servant. In this way the tendency to exploit one's own activities for a particular result can be purified; then the modes of nature and the material senses will no longer engage the living entity in illusion. The living entity is by nature blissful, and when his illusion ceases, all suffering comes to an end. The liberated soul is then fit to reside in *Vaikuṅṭha*, the kingdom of God.

TEXT 10.32

*yāvat syād guṇa-vaiṣamyam
tāvan nānātvam ātmanaḥ
nānātvam ātmano yāvat
pāratantryam tadaiva hi*

yāvat - as long as; *syāt* - there is; *guṇa* - of the modes of material nature; *vaiṣamyam* - separate existences; *tāvat* - then there will be; *nānātvam* - different states of existence; *ātmanaḥ* - of the soul; *nānātvam* - different states of existence; *ātmanaḥ* - of the soul; *yāvat* - as long as there are; *pāratantryam* - dependence; *tadā* - then there will be; *eva* - certainly; *hi* - indeed.

TRANSLATION

As long as the living entity thinks that the modes of material nature have separate existences, he will be obliged to take birth in many different forms and will experience varieties of material existence. Therefore, the living entity remains completely dependent on fruitive activities under the modes of nature.

PURPORT

The word *guṇa-vaiṣamyam* indicates forgetfulness of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which causes one to see material varieties as separate states of existence. The living entity, being attracted to material varieties and having faith in them, is forced to experience these varieties in different material bodies, such as those of demigods, pigs, businessmen, insects, and so on. According to the *karma-mīmāṃsā* philosophers, there is no transcendental living entity who is the background of all existence. They accept material variety as the final reality. However, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is the actual basis of everything. Everything is within Him, and He is within everything. A pure devotee of the Lord sees Kṛṣṇa everywhere and sees all of the variegated modes of nature as the potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who does not see Lord Kṛṣṇa will certainly see material variegatedness as the supreme reality. Such vision is called *māyā*, or gross illusion, and is similar to the vision of an animal. *Pāratantryam* means one will remain caught in the web of fruitive activities unless one gives up this superficial, separatist vision.

TEXT 10.33

*yāvad asyāsvatantratvam
tāvad īśvarato bhayam
ya etat samupāsīraṁs
te muhyanti śucārpitāḥ*

yāvat – as long as; *asya* – of the living being; *asvatantratvam* – there is no freedom from dependence on the modes of nature; *tāvat* – then there will be; *īśvarataḥ* – from the supreme controller; *bhayam* – fear; *ye* – those who; *etat* – to this material concept of life; *samupāsīran* – devote themselves; *te* – they; *muhyanti* – are bewildered; *śucā* – in lamentation; *arpitāḥ* – always absorbed.

TRANSLATION

The conditioned soul who remains dependent on fruitive activities under the material modes of nature will continue to fear Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, since I impose the results of one's fruitive activities. Those who accept the material concept of life, taking the variegatedness of the modes of nature to be factual, devote themselves to material enjoyment and are therefore always absorbed in lamentation and grief.

PURPORT

The living entity is bound in the network of illusion, but although he can understand that he is dependent upon superior powers, he does not want to serve the Supreme Lord. He thus becomes filled with fear of life itself. Desiring material sense gratification, the living entity, like the demon Kāṁsa, always fears destruction of his material arrangement. Remaining addicted to the flavors of material nature, one gradually sinks down into an irrational form of life.

Māyā has two potencies – the first covers the living entity, and the second throws him down into a hellish condition of life. When one is covered by *māyā*, one loses all power of discrimination, and *māyā* then throws such a fool into the darkness of ignorance. When one wrongly considers oneself to be independent of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, one becomes a worshiper of temporary material objects, hoping to enjoy material sense gratification, and as one grows older, one’s life becomes filled with fear and anxiety. A conditioned soul considers himself to be in control of his life, but since he does not have any actual controlling potency, his situation is contradictory and not at all pleasing. As all of one’s material possessions are taken away by time, one becomes filled with lamentation. All in all, material life is truly abominable, and it is only because of dense illusion that we accept it as satisfactory.

TEXT 10.34

*kāla ātmāgamo lokaḥ
svabhāvo dharma eva ca
iti mām bahudhā prāhur
guṇa-vyatikare sati*

kālaḥ – time; *ātmā* – the self; *āgamaḥ* – Vedic knowledge; *lokaḥ* – the universe; *svabhāvaḥ* – different natures of different living entities; *dharmaḥ* – religious principles; *eva* – certainly; *ca* – also; *iti* – thus; *mām* – Me; *bahudhā* – in many ways; *prāhuḥ* – they call; *guṇa* – of the modes of nature; *vyatikare* – agitation; *sati* – when there is.

TRANSLATION

When there is agitation and interaction of the material modes of nature, the living entities then describe Me in various ways such as all-powerful time, the Self, Vedic knowledge, the universe, one’s own nature, religious ceremonies and so on.

PURPORT

One can experience the potency of the Personality of Godhead by observing how different species of life – demigods, human beings, animals, fish, birds, insects, plants, etc. – gradually evolve their natures and activities. Each species of life executes a particular process of sense gratification, and this function is called the *dharma* of the species. Lacking knowledge of the Personality of Godhead, ordinary persons catch a glimpse of the Lord’s potencies in the above-mentioned manifestations. Śrīla Madhvācārya has cited the following information from the *Tantra-bhāgavata*. The Lord is called *kāla*, or time, because He is the mover and controller of all material qualities. Because He is complete and perfect, He is called *ātmā*, or the Self; and He is the personification of all knowledge. The word *svabhāva* indicates that the Lord fully controls His own destiny; and as the maintainer of everyone He is called *dharma*. One on the liberated platform can achieve unlimited bliss by worshiping the Personality of Godhead, whereas those who are ignorant of the Lord try to find happiness by concocting other objects of worship. If one

stubbornly imagines that anything is independent of the Lord, one will remain in the grip of the illusory network of the Lord's potency. Seeing the inevitability of the destruction of material things, one is constantly fearful and perpetually laments in the darkness of ignorance. In such darkness there is no question of happiness. Therefore, one should never think that anything is independent of the Personality of Godhead. As soon as one considers anything to be independent of the Lord, one is immediately gripped by the Lord's illusory network, called *māyā*. One should always remain humble and obedient to the Personality of Godhead, even when one is liberated, and thus one will achieve the supreme spiritual happiness.

TEXT 10.35

śrī-uddhava uvāca
guṇeṣu vartamāno'pi
deha-jeṣv anapāvṛtaḥ
guṇair na badhyate dehī
badhyate vā katham vibho

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *guṇeṣu* – in the modes of material nature; *vartamānaḥ* – being situated; *api* – although; *deha* – from the material body; *jeṣu* – born; *anapāvṛtaḥ* – being uncovered; *guṇaiḥ* – by the modes of nature; *na* – not; *badhyate* – is bound; *dehī* – the living entity within the material body; *badhyate* – is bound; *vā* – or; *katham* – how does it happen; *vibho* – O my Lord.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: O my Lord, a living entity situated within the material body is surrounded by the modes of nature and the happiness and distress that are born of activities caused by these modes. How is it possible that he is not bound by this material encirclement? It may also be said that the living entity is ultimately transcendental and has nothing to do with the material world. Then how is he ever bound by material nature?

PURPORT

Due to the influence of the modes of nature the material body generates fruitive activities, which in turn generate material happiness and distress. This material chain reaction is indicated by the word *deha-jeṣu*. The Personality of Godhead has shown Uddhava that the actual goal of life is liberation, not sense gratification. Although the Lord has indicated that the living entity is liberated by devotional service performed with knowledge and renunciation, Uddhava apparently does not understand the specific means of perfection. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Uddhava's question implies that we observe even in the activities of liberated souls such external activities as eating, sleeping, walking, hearing, speaking, etc., which are functions of the gross and subtle bodies. Thus, if even liberated souls are situated within the gross and subtle material bodies, then how are they not bound by the material modes of nature? If it is argued that the

living entity is like the sky, which never mixes with any other object and therefore is not bound, then one may ask how such a transcendental living entity can ever be bound by material nature. In other words, how would material existence be possible? In order to completely clarify the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Uddhava presents this question to the supreme spiritual authority, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

In the kingdom of *māyā* there are innumerable speculations about the Supreme Lord, who is variously described as nonexistent, or as possessing material qualities, or as being devoid of all qualities, or as being a neuter object like a eunuch. But through mundane speculation it is not possible to understand the nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore Uddhava wants to clear the path of spiritual liberation so that people can actually understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As long as one is affected by the modes of nature, perfect understanding is not possible. Lord Kṛṣṇa will now describe to Uddhava further details of spiritual emancipation on the road back home, back to Kṛṣṇa.

TEXTS 10.36-37

*katham varteta viharet
kair vā jñāyeta lakṣaṇaiḥ
kim bhujñīta visrjet
chayītāsīta yāti vā
etat acyuta me brūhi
praśnam praśna-vidām vara
nitya-baddho nitya-mukta
eka eveti me bhramaḥ*

katham – in what way; *varteta* – he is situated; *viharet* – he enjoys; *kaiḥ* – by which; *vā* – or; *jñāyeta* – would be known; *lakṣaṇaiḥ* – by symptoms; *kim* – what; *bhujñīta* – he would eat; *uta* – and; *visrjet* – would evacuate; *śayīta* – would lie down; *āsīta* – would sit; *yāti* – goes; *vā* – or; *etat* – this; *acyuta* – O Acyuta; *me* – to me; *brūhi* – explain; *praśnam* – the question; *praśna-vidām* – of all those who know how to answer questions; *vara* – O the best; *nitya-baddhaḥ* – eternally conditioned; *nitya-muktaḥ* – eternally liberated; *ekaḥ* – singular; *eva* – certainly; *iti* – thus; *me* – my; *bhramaḥ* – confusion.

TRANSLATION

O my Lord, Acyuta, the same living entity is sometimes described as eternally conditioned and at other times as eternally liberated. I am not able to understand, therefore, the actual situation of the living entity. You, my Lord, are the best of those who are expert in answering philosophical questions. Please explain to me the symptoms by which one can tell the difference between a living entity who is eternally liberated and one who is eternally conditioned. In what various ways would they remain situated, enjoy life, eat, evacuate, lie down, sit or move about?

PURPORT

In previous verses Lord Kṛṣṇa has explained to Uddhava that an eternally liberated soul is beyond the three modes of material nature. Since a liberated soul is considered to be beyond even the superior mode of goodness, how can he be recognized? By false identification with the modes of nature, which produce one's own material body, one is bound by illusion. On the other hand, by transcending the modes of nature, one is liberated. However, in ordinary activities – such as eating, evacuating, relaxing, sitting and sleeping – a liberated soul and a conditioned soul appear to be the same. Therefore Uddhava is inquiring, “By what symptoms can I recognize that one living entity is performing such external activities without false ego, and by what symptoms can I recognize one who is working under the illusory bondage of material identification? This is difficult, because the ordinary bodily functions of liberated and conditioned personalities appear similar.” Uddhava has approached the Supreme Personality of Godhead, taking Him as his personal spiritual master, and wants to be enlightened about how to understand the differences between material and spiritual life. Since the living entity is sometimes called eternally conditioned, how could he ever be considered eternally liberated, or vice versa? This is an apparent contradiction, which will be cleared up by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Tenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Nature of Fruitive Activity.”

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The Symptoms of Conditioned and Liberated Living Entities

In this chapter, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes to Uddhava the difference between conditioned and liberated living entities, the characteristics of a saintly person and the different aspects of the practice of devotional service. In the previous chapter Uddhava had presented questions regarding conditioned and liberated souls. In His replies, the almighty Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa states that although the spirit soul is part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, on account of his infinitesimal nature, he falls into contact with the material energy, which causes him to accept the covering designations of the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. Thus the soul has been bound up since time immemorial. But when he achieves the shelter of pure devotional service, he becomes designated as eternally liberated. Transcendental knowledge is therefore the cause of the living entity's liberation, and ignorance is the cause of his bondage. Both knowledge and ignorance are produced by the *māyā* energy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and are His eternal potencies. The living entities who become attracted to the modes of nature are bewildered by false ego, which causes them to see themselves as the enjoyers of misery, confusion, happiness, distress, danger, and so on. In this way, they meditate upon such states of being, although in the real, or spiritual, world these things do not exist. Both the *jīva* (individual soul) and the Supersoul reside within the same body. The difference between them is that the almighty Supersoul, being fully cognizant, does not indulge in enjoying the fruits of material work but remains simply as a witness, whereas the infinitesimal conditioned *jīva*, being ignorant, suffers the consequences of his own work. The liberated *jīva*, in spite of being within a material body because of the remaining reactions of his past activities, does not become disturbed by the happiness and suffering of the body. He sees such bodily experiences in the same way that a person who has just awakened from a dream sees his dream experiences. On the other hand, although the conditioned living entity is by nature not the enjoyer of the happiness and misery of the body, he imagines himself to be the enjoyer of his bodily experiences, just as a person in a dream imagines his dream experiences to be real. Just as the sun reflected upon water is not actually bound up in the water, and just as the air is not confined to some particular segment of the sky, similarly a detached person takes advantage of his broad outlook on the world to cut off all his doubts with the sword of appropriate renunciation, *yukta-vairāgya*. Since his life force, senses, mind and intelligence have no tendency to fix themselves on sense objects, he remains liberated even while situated within the material body. Regardless of whether he is harassed or worshiped, he remains equipoised. He is therefore considered liberated even in this life. A liberated person has nothing to do with the piety and sin of this world, but rather sees everything equally. A self-satisfied sage does not praise or condemn anyone. He does not speak uselessly to anyone and does not fix his mind on material things. Rather, he is always merged in meditation upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so in the eyes of fools he seems to be a speechless, crazy person.

Even if someone has studied or even taught all the different Vedic literatures, if he has not developed pure attraction to the service of the Personality of Godhead, he has accomplished nothing beyond his own labor. One should study only those scriptures in which the nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, His enchanting pastimes and the nectarean topics of His various incarnations are scientifically discussed; thus one gains the highest good fortune. However, by studying scriptures other than these one simply acquires misfortune.

With full determination one should properly understand the identity of the soul and give up false identification with this material body. He may then offer his heart at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of all love, and attain real peace. When the mind is carried away by the three modes of nature, it can no longer meditate properly on the transcendental Supreme Truth. After many lifetimes, faithful persons who have performed Vedic sacrifices for acquiring religiosity, economic development and sense gratification finally engage in hearing, chanting and constantly thinking of the Supreme Lord's all-auspicious pastimes, which purify the entire universe. Such persons then achieve the association of a bona fide spiritual master and the saintly devotees. After that, by the mercy of the spiritual master they begin to follow the paths set out by the standard authorities of spiritual life, the *mahājanas*, and become actually perfect in realization of their own true identity.

Having heard these instructions from Lord Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava further desired to understand the characteristics of a factually saintly person and the different aspects of devotional practice. Lord Kṛṣṇa replied that a real *sādhū*, or Vaiṣṇava, is qualified with the following characteristics. He is merciful, nonenvious, always truthful, self-controlled, faultless, magnanimous, gentle, clean, nonpossessive, helpful to all, peaceful, dependent on Kṛṣṇa alone, free from lust, devoid of material endeavor, steady, in control of the six enemies of the mind, moderate in eating, never bewildered, always respectful to others, never desirous of respect for himself, sober, compassionate, friendly, poetic, expert and silent. The principal characteristic of a *sādhū* is that he takes shelter of Kṛṣṇa alone. One who engages exclusively in Kṛṣṇa's service and understands Him as the limitless, indwelling Lord who comprises eternity, knowledge and bliss, is the topmost devotee. The practice of devotional service includes sixty-four kinds of activities. Among these are: (1-6) seeing, touching, worshiping, serving, glorifying and offering obeisances to the Deity of the Lord and His pure devotees; (7) developing attachment for hearing the chanting of the Lord's qualities, pastimes, and so on; (8) remaining always in meditation upon the Lord; (9) offering everything one acquires to the Lord; (10) accepting oneself to be the Lord's servant; (11) offering the Lord one's heart and soul; (12) engaging in glorification of the Lord's birth and activities; (13) observing holidays related to the Lord; (14) performing festivals in the Lord's temple in the company of other devotees, and with music, singing and dancing; (15) celebrating all varieties

of yearly functions; (16) offering foodstuffs to the Lord; (17) taking initiation according to the *Vedas* and *tantras*; (18) taking vows related to the Lord; (19) being eager to establish Deities of the Lord; (20) endeavoring either alone or in association with others in constructing, for the service of the Lord, vegetable and flower gardens, temples, cities, and so on; (21) humbly cleansing the temple of the Lord; and (22) rendering service to the Lord's house by painting it, washing it with water and decorating it with auspicious designs.

After this, the process of worshiping the Deity of the Supreme Lord is described in brief.

TEXT 11.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
baddho mukta iti vyākhyā
guṇato me na vastutaḥ
guṇasya māyā-mūlatvān
na me mokṣo na bandhanam*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *baddhaḥ* – in bondage; *muktaḥ* – liberated; *iti* – thus; *vyākhyā* – the explanation of the living entity; *guṇataḥ* – due to the modes of material nature; *me* – which are My potency; *na* – not; *vastutaḥ* – in reality; *guṇasya* – of the modes of material nature; *māyā* – My illusory energy; *mūlatvāt* – because of being the cause; *na* – not; *me* – of Me; *mokṣaḥ* – liberation; *na* – nor; *bandhanam* – bondage.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, due to the influence of the material modes of nature, which are under My control, the living entity is sometimes designated as conditioned and sometimes as liberated. In fact, however, the soul is never really bound up or liberated, and since I am the Supreme Lord of māyā, which is the cause of the modes of nature, I also am never to be considered liberated or in bondage.

PURPORT

In this chapter the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, explains the different characteristics of conditioned and liberated life, the symptoms by which one can recognize saintly persons, and the various processes of devotional service to the Lord. In the previous chapter, Uddhava inquired from the Lord how conditioned and liberated life are possible. The Lord now replies that Uddhava's question is somewhat superficial, since the pure spirit soul is never entangled in the material energy of the Lord. The living entity imagines a false connection with the three modes of nature and accepts the material body as the self. The living entity therefore suffers the consequences of his own imagination, just as one suffers the illusory activities of a dream. This does not indicate that the material world is illusory in the sense that it is nonexistent. The material world is certainly real, being

the potency of the Personality of Godhead, and the living entity, being the superior potency of God, is also real. But the living entity's dream of being part and parcel of the material world is an illusion that drags him into the contradictory state called material conditioned life. The living entity is never actually *baddha*, or bound up, since he merely imagines a false connection with the material world.

Because there is ultimately no permanent connection between the living entity and matter, there is no actual liberation. The living entity, being eternally transcendental to the inferior material energy of the Lord, is eternally liberated. Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals that in one sense the living entity is factually not bound up and thus cannot be liberated. But in another sense, the terms *bondage* and *liberation* can be conveniently applied to indicate the particular situation of the individual soul, who is the marginal potency of the Lord. Although the individual soul is never actually bound to matter, he suffers the reactions of material nature because of false identification, and thus the term *baddha*, or "bound up," may be used to indicate the nature of a living entity's experience within the inferior energy of the Lord. Since *baddha* describes a false situation, freedom from such a false situation may also be described as *mokṣa*, or liberation. Therefore the terms *bondage* and *liberation* are acceptable if one understands that such terms only refer to temporary situations created by illusion and do not refer to the ultimate nature of the living entity. In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *guṇasya māyā-mūlatvān na me mokṣo na bandhanam*: the terms *liberation* and *bondage* can never be applied to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, since He is the Absolute Truth and the supreme controller of everything. Lord Kṛṣṇa is eternally the supreme transcendental entity, and He can never be bound by illusion. It is the duty of the illusory potency of the Personality of Godhead to attract the living entities to ignorance by creating the false impression of a blissful existence separate from Lord Kṛṣṇa. The illusory conception of existence apart from the Personality of Godhead is called *māyā*, or material illusion. Since Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme absolute controller of *māyā*, there is no possibility that *māyā* could have any influence over the Personality of Godhead. Thus the term *bandhanam*, or "bondage," cannot be applied to the eternal, blissful and omniscient Personality of Godhead. The term *mokṣa*, or "liberation," indicating freedom from *bandhana*, is equally irrelevant to the Lord.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has commented on this verse as follows. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is endowed with great spiritual potencies. Because of mundane concoction, the conditioned soul imagines that the Absolute Truth is devoid of variegated spiritual potencies by which He may enjoy blissful life. Although the living entity is the spiritual potency of the Lord, he is presently situated in the inferior, illusory potency, and by engaging in mental speculation he becomes bound in conditioned life. Liberation means that the living entity should transfer himself to the spiritual potency of the Lord, which can be divided into three categories - *hlādinī*, the

potency of bliss; *sandhinī*, the potency of eternal existence; and *saṁvit*, the potency of omniscience. Since the Personality of Godhead is eternally endowed with a pure existence of bliss and knowledge, He is never conditioned or liberated. The living entity, however, being entangled in the Lord's material potency, is sometimes conditioned and sometimes liberated. The neutral, original state of the three modes of nature is called *māyā*. When the three modes of nature interact, one of them will become powerful, subordinating the other two modes until another mode becomes prominent. In this way, the three can be distinguished in their variety of manifestation. Although the threefold material potency expands from the Personality of Godhead, the Lord Himself in His personal form is the actual abode of the three spiritual potencies, namely eternity, bliss and knowledge. If one desires to become free from the entanglement of conditioned life within the material sky, called the kingdom of *māyā*, one must come to the spiritual sky, wherein the living entities are filled with bliss, possess eternal spiritual bodies and engage in the loving devotional service of the Lord. By developing one's eternal, spiritual form in the loving service of the Lord, one immediately transcends the duality of conditioned life and impersonal liberation and can directly experience the spiritual potencies of the Lord. At that time there is no possibility of false identification with the material world. Realizing oneself to be eternal spirit soul, the living entity can understand that he is never truly connected to matter, because he is part of the superior energy of the Lord. Therefore, both material bondage and liberation are ultimately meaningless within the reality of the spiritual sky. The living entity is the marginal potency of the Lord and should exercise his free will to engage in the pure devotional service of the Lord. By reviving one's eternal, spiritual body one can understand oneself to be a minute particle of the spiritual potency of the Lord. In other words, the living entity is a minute particle of eternity, bliss and omniscience, and thus in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness there is no possibility of his being carried away by the illusion of the three modes of nature. In conclusion, it may be stated that the individual living entity is never actually entangled in matter and is thus not liberated, although his illusory state may be accurately described as entangled and liberated. On the other hand, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally situated in His own spiritual potencies and can never be described as being bound up, and thus there is no meaning to the concept of the Lord's freeing Himself from such a nonexistent condition.

TEXT 11.2

*śoka-mohau sukham duḥkham
dehāpattiś ca māyayā
svapno yathātmanaḥ khyātiḥ
saṁsṛtir na tu vāstavī*

śoka - lamentation; *mohau* - and illusion; *sukham* - happiness; *duḥkham* - distress; *deha-āpattiḥ* - accepting a material body; *ca* - also; *māyayā* - by

the influence of *māyā*; *svapnaḥ* – a dream; *yathā* – just as; *ātmanaḥ* – of the intelligence; *khyātiḥ* – merely an idea; *samsṛtiḥ* – material existence; *na* – is not; *tu* – indeed; *vāstavī* – real.

TRANSLATION

Just as a dream is merely a creation of one’s intelligence but has no actual substance, similarly, material lamentation, illusion, happiness, distress and the acceptance of the material body under the influence of *māyā* are all creations of My illusory energy. In other words, material existence has no essential reality.

PURPORT

The word *deha-āpattiḥ* indicates that the living entity falsely identifies himself with the external material body and thus transmigrates from one body to another. *Āpatti* also indicates great suffering or misfortune. Because of such false identification under the influence of illusion, the living entity experiences the miserable symptoms described here. *Māyā* means the false concept that anything can exist without Lord Kṛṣṇa or for any purpose other than the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Although the conditioned living entities are trying to enjoy material sense gratification, the result is always painful, and such painful experiences turn the conditioned soul back toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In other words, the ultimate purpose of the material creation is to bring the living entity back to the loving devotional service of the Lord. Therefore, even the sufferings of the material world may be seen as the transcendental mercy of the Personality of Godhead. The conditioned soul, imagining that material objects are meant for his personal enjoyment, bitterly laments the loss of such objects. In this verse, the example is given of a dream in which the material intelligence creates many illusory objects. Similarly, our polluted material consciousness creates the false impression of material sense gratification, but this phantasmagoria, being devoid of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, has no real existence. By surrendering to polluted material consciousness, the living entity is afflicted with innumerable troubles. The only solution is to see Lord Kṛṣṇa within everything and everything within Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus, one understands that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme enjoyer, the proprietor of everything and the well-wishing friend of all living beings.

In material illusion there is no understanding of one’s eternal, spiritual body, nor is there knowledge of the Absolute Truth. Therefore, material existence, even in its most sophisticated or pious form, is always foolishness. One should not misunderstand the example of the dream to mean that the material world has no real existence. Material nature is the manifestation of the Lord’s external potency, just as the spiritual sky is the manifestation of the Lord’s internal potency. Although material objects are subject to transformation and thus have no permanent existence, the material energy is real because it comes from the supreme reality, Lord Kṛṣṇa. It is only our false acceptance of the material body as the factual self and our foolish dream that the material world is meant for our pleasure that have no real

existence. They are merely mental concoctions. One should cleanse oneself of material designations and wake up to the all-pervading reality of the Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 11.3

*vidyāvidye mama tanū
viddhy uddhava śarīriṇām
mokṣa-bandha-karī ādye
māyayā me vinirmite*

vidyā – knowledge; *avidye* – and ignorance; *mama* – My; *tanū* – manifested energies; *viddhi* – please understand; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *śarīriṇām* – of the embodied living entities; *mokṣa* – liberation; *bandha* – bondage; *karī* – causing; *ādye* – original, eternal; *māyayā* – by the potency; *me* – My; *vinirmite* – produced.

TRANSLATION

O Uddhava, both knowledge and ignorance, being products of māyā, are expansions of My potency. Both knowledge and ignorance are beginningless and perpetually award liberation and bondage to embodied living beings.

PURPORT

By the expansion of *vidyā*, or knowledge, a conditioned soul is liberated from the clutches of *māyā*, and similarly, by the expansion of *avidyā*, or ignorance, the conditioned soul is driven further into illusion and bondage. Both knowledge and ignorance are products of the mighty potency of the Personality of Godhead. The living being is bound by illusion when he considers himself the proprietor of the subtle and gross material bodies. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī the living entity may be designated as *jīva-māyā*, whereas matter is called *guṇa-māyā*. The living entity places his living potency (*jīva-māyā*) in the grip of the mundane qualitative potency (*guṇa-māyā*) and falsely dreams that he is part and parcel of the material world. Such an artificial mixture is called illusion or ignorance. When all of the Lord’s potencies are correctly perceived in their proper categories, the living entity is liberated from material bondage and returns to his blissful eternal residence in the spiritual sky.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is not different from His potencies, yet He is always above them as the supreme controller. The Supreme Personality of Godhead may be designated as *mukta*, or liberated, only to indicate that He is eternally free from material contamination and never to indicate that the Lord has been freed from actual entanglement in a material situation. According to Śrīla Madhvācārya, *vidyā* indicates the goddess of fortune, the internal potency of the Lord, whereas *avidyā* indicates Durgā, the external potency of the Lord. Ultimately, however, the Personality of Godhead can transform His potencies according to His own desire, as explained by Śrīla Prabhupāda in his commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.34), “Because the Lord is the absolute Transcendence, all of His forms, names, pastimes,

attributes, associates and energies are identical with Him. His transcendental energy acts according to His omnipotency. The same energy acts as His external, internal and marginal energies, and by His omnipotency He can perform anything and everything through the agency of any of the above energies. He can turn the external energy into internal by His will.” Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī notes in this regard that although the Lord has explained in the first verse of this chapter that the living entity is never actually in bondage, and therefore never actually liberated, one may apply the terms *bondage* and *liberation* if one remembers that the living entity is eternally a transcendental fragment of the Personality of Godhead. Further, one should not misinterpret the words *māyayā me vinirmite* to indicate that both material bondage and liberation are temporary states, being creations of the potency of the Lord. Therefore, the term *ādye*, or “primeval and eternal,” is used in this verse. The *vidyā* and *avidyā* potencies of the Lord are stated to be creations of *māyā* because they carry out the functions of the Lord’s potencies. The *vidyā* potency engages the living entities in the Lord’s pastimes, whereas the *avidyā* potency engages the living entities in forgetting the Lord and merging into darkness. Actually, both knowledge and ignorance are eternal alternatives of the marginal potency of the Lord, and in this sense it is not incorrect to state that the living entity is either eternally conditioned or eternally liberated. The term *vinirmite*, or “produced,” in this case indicates that the Lord expands His own energy as knowledge and ignorance, which display the functions of the Lord’s internal and external potencies. Such potential exhibitions may appear and disappear in different times, places and circumstances, but material bondage and spiritual freedom are eternal options of the marginal potency of the Lord.

TEXT 11.4

*ekasyaiva mamāṁśasya
jīvasyaiva mahā-mate
bandho’syāvidyayānādir
vidyayā ca tathetaraḥ*

ekasya – of the one; *eva* – certainly; *mama* – My; *āṁśasya* – part and parcel; *jīvasya* – of the living entity; *eva* – certainly; *mahā-mate* – O most intelligent one; *bandhaḥ* – bondage; *asya* – of him; *avidyayā* – by ignorance; *anādir* – beginningless; *vidyayā* – by knowledge; *ca* – and; *tathā* – similarly; *itaraḥ* – the opposite of bondage, liberation.

TRANSLATION

O most intelligent Uddhava, the living entity, called jīva, is part and parcel of Me, but due to ignorance he has been suffering in material bondage since time immemorial. By knowledge, however, he can be liberated.

PURPORT

Just as the sun reveals itself through its own light or covers itself by creating clouds, the Personality of Godhead reveals and covers Himself by knowledge

and ignorance, which are expansions of His potency. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.5):

*apareyam itas tv anyāṁ
prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parāṁ
jīva-bhūtāṁ mahā-bāho
yayedam dhāryate jagat*

“Besides this inferior nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine, consisting of all living entities who are struggling with material nature and are sustaining the universe.” Śrīla Prabhupāda states in connection with this verse: “The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is the only controller, and all living entities are controlled by Him. These living entities are His superior energy because the quality of their existence is one and the same with the Supreme, but they are never equal to the Lord in quantity of power.”

Because of quantitative inferiority of potency, the living entity becomes covered by *māyā* and is again liberated by surrendering to the Lord. The word *aṁśa*, or “part and parcel,” is also mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.7): *mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*. The living entity is *aṁśa*, or a minute particle, and therefore subject to liberation and bondage. As stated in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

*viṣṇu-śaktiḥ parā proktā
kṣetrajñākhyā tathā parā
avidyā-karma-saṁjñānyā
tṛtīyā śaktir iṣyate*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, possesses His superior internal potency as well as the potency called *kṣetrajñā śakti*. This *kṣetrajñā śakti* is also spiritual potency, but it is sometimes covered by the third, or material, potency called ignorance. Thus because of the various stages of covering, the second, or marginal, potency is manifested in different evolutionary phases.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written that the living entity has been executing fruitive activities since time immemorial. Thus his conditioned life may be called beginningless. Such conditioned life, however, is not endless, since the living entity may achieve liberation through the loving devotional service of the Lord. Since the living entity may acquire liberation, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states that his liberated life begins at a certain point but is endless, because liberated life is understood to be eternal. In any case, one who has achieved the shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, may be understood to be eternally liberated, since such a person has entered into the eternal atmosphere of the spiritual sky. Since there is no material time in the spiritual sky, one who has achieved his eternal spiritual body on Lord Kṛṣṇa’s planet is not subject to the influence of time. His eternal blissful life with Kṛṣṇa is not designated in terms of material past, present and future and is therefore called eternal liberation. Material time is conspicuous by its absence in the spiritual sky, and every living entity there

is eternally liberated, having attained the supreme situation. Such liberation can be achieved by *vidyā*, or perfect knowledge, which is understood in three phases called Brahman, Paramātmā and Bhagavān, as described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The ultimate phase of *vidyā*, or knowledge, is to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In *Bhagavad-gītā* such knowledge is called *rāja-vidyā*, or the king of all knowledge, and it awards the supreme liberation.

TEXT 11.5

*atha baddhasya muktasya
vailakṣaṇyam vadāmi te
viruddha-dharminoḥ tāta
sthitayoḥ eka-dharmini*

atha – thus; *baddhasya* – of the conditioned soul; *muktasya* – of the liberated Personality of Godhead; *vailakṣaṇyam* – different characteristics; *vadāmi* – I will now speak; *te* – unto you; *viruddha* – opposing; *dharminoḥ* – whose two natures; *tāta* – My dear Uddhava; *sthitayoḥ* – of the two who are situated; *eka-dharmini* – in the one body which manifests their different characteristics.

TRANSLATION

Thus, My dear Uddhava, in the same material body we find opposing characteristics, such as great happiness and misery. That is because both the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is eternally liberated, as well as the conditioned soul are within the body. I shall now speak to you about their different characteristics.

PURPORT

In verse 36 of the previous chapter, Uddhava inquired about the different symptoms of liberated and conditioned life. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī explains that the characteristics of bondage and liberation may be understood in two divisions – as the difference between the ordinary conditioned soul and the eternally liberated Personality of Godhead, or as the difference between conditioned and liberated living entities in the *jīva* category. The Lord will first explain the difference between the ordinary living entity and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which may be understood as the difference between the controlled and the controller.

TEXT 11.6

*suparṇāv etau sadṛśau sakhāyau
yadṛcchayaitau kṛta-nīḍau ca vṛkṣe
ekas tayoh khādati pippalānam
anyo niranno'pi balena bhūyān*

suparṇau – two birds; *etau* – these; *sadṛśau* – similar; *sakhāyau* – friends; *yadṛcchayā* – by chance; *etau* – these two; *kṛta* – made; *nīḍau* – a nest; *ca* – and; *vṛkṣe* – in a tree; *ekaḥ* – one; *tayoh* – of the two; *khādati* – is eating;

pippala – of the tree; *annam* – the fruits; *anyaḥ* – the other; *nirannaḥ* – not eating; *api* – although; *balena* – by strength; *bhūyān* – He is superior.

TRANSLATION

By chance, two birds have made a nest together in the same tree. The two birds are friends and are of a similar nature. One of them, however, is eating the fruits of the tree, whereas the other, who does not eat the fruits, is in a superior position due to His potency.

PURPORT

The example of two birds in the same tree is given to illustrate the presence within the heart of the material body of both the individual soul and the Supersoul, the Personality of Godhead. Just as a bird makes a nest in a tree, the living entity sits within the heart. The example is appropriate because the bird is always distinct from the tree. Similarly, both the individual soul and the Supersoul are distinct entities, separate from the temporary material body. The word *balena* indicates that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is satisfied by His own internal potency, which consists of eternality, omniscience and bliss. As indicated by the word *bhūyān*, or “having superior existence,” the Supreme Lord is always in a superior position, whereas the living entity is sometimes in illusion and sometimes enlightened. The word *balena* indicates that the Lord is never in darkness or ignorance, but is always full in His perfect, blissful consciousness.

Thus, the Lord is *niranna*, or uninterested in the bitter fruits of material activities, whereas the ordinary conditioned soul busily consumes such bitter fruits, thinking them to be sweet. Ultimately, the fruit of all material endeavor is death, but the living entity foolishly thinks material things will bring him pleasure. The word *sakhāyau*, or “two friends,” is also significant. Our real friend is Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is situated within our heart. Only He knows our actual needs, and only He can give us real happiness.

Lord Kṛṣṇa is so kind that He patiently sits in the heart, trying to guide the conditioned soul back home, back to Godhead. Certainly no material friend would remain with his foolish companion for millions of years, especially if his companion were to ignore him or even curse him. But Lord Kṛṣṇa is such a faithful, loving friend that He accompanies even the most demoniac living entity and is also in the heart of the insect, pig and dog. That is because Lord Kṛṣṇa is supremely Kṛṣṇa conscious and sees every living entity as part and parcel of Himself. Every living being should give up the bitter fruits of the tree of material existence. One should turn one’s face to the Lord within the heart and revive one’s eternal loving relationship with one’s real friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa. The word *sadrśau*, or “of similar nature,” indicates that both the living entity and the Personality of Godhead are conscious entities. As part and parcel of the Lord we share the Lord’s nature, but in infinitesimal quantity. Thus the Lord and the living entity are *sadrśau*. A similar statement is found in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (4.6):

*dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā
samānam vṛkṣam pariśasvajāte*

*tayor anyah pippalam svādu atty
anaśnann anyo'bhicākaśīti*

“There are two birds in one tree. One of them is eating the fruits of the tree, while the other is witnessing the actions. The witness is the Lord, and the fruit-eater is the living entity.”

TEXT 11.7

*ātmānam anyam ca sa veda vidvān
apippalādo na tu pippalādaḥ
yo'vidyayā yuk sa tu nitya-baddho
vidyā-mayo yaḥ sa tu nitya-muktaḥ*

ātmānam – Himself; *anyam* – the other; *ca* – also; *saḥ* – He; *veda* – knows; *vidvān* – being omniscient; *apippala-adaḥ* – not eating the fruits of the tree; *na* – not; *tu* – but; *pippala-adaḥ* – the one who is eating the fruits of the tree; *yaḥ* – who; *avidyayā* – with ignorance; *yuk* – filled; *saḥ* – he; *tu* – indeed; *nitya* – eternally; *baddhaḥ* – conditioned; *vidyā-mayaḥ* – full of perfect knowledge; *yaḥ* – who; *saḥ* – he; *tu* – indeed; *nitya* – eternally; *muktaḥ* – liberated.

TRANSLATION

The bird who does not eat the fruits of the tree is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who by His omniscience perfectly understands His own position and that of the conditioned living entity, represented by the eating bird. That living entity, on the other hand, does not understand himself or the Lord. He is covered by ignorance and is thus called eternally conditioned, whereas the Personality of Godhead, being full of perfect knowledge, is eternally liberated.

PURPORT

The word *vidyā-maya* in this verse indicates the internal potency of the Lord and not the external potency, *mahā-māyā*. Within the material world there is *vidyā*, or material science, and *avidyā*, or material ignorance, but in this verse *vidyā* means the internal spiritual knowledge by which the Personality of Godhead is fixed in omniscience. The example of two birds in a tree, which is given in many Vedic literatures, demonstrates the statement *nityo nityānām*: there are two categories of eternal living entities, namely the Supreme Lord and the minute *jīva* soul. The conditioned *jīva* soul, forgetting his identity as an eternal servant of the Lord, tries to enjoy the fruits of his own activities and thus comes under the spell of ignorance. This bondage of ignorance has existed since time immemorial and can be rectified only by one's taking to the loving devotional service of the Lord, which is full of spiritual knowledge. In conditioned life the living entity is forced by the laws of nature to engage in pious and impious fruitive activities, but the liberated position of every living entity is to offer the fruits of his work to the Lord, the supreme enjoyer. It should be understood that even when the living entity is in a liberated condition, his knowledge is never equal in quantity to that of

the Personality of Godhead. Even Lord Brahmā, the supreme living entity within this universe, acquires only partial knowledge of the Personality of Godhead and His potencies. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.5), the Lord explains His superior knowledge to Arjuna:

*bahūni me vyatītāni
janmāni tava cārjuna
tāny ahaṁ veda sarvāṇi
na tvaṁ vettha parantapa*

“The Blessed Lord said: Many, many births both you and I have passed. I can remember all of them, but you cannot, O subduer of the enemy!”

The term *baddha*, or “bound,” is also understood to refer to the living entity’s eternal dependence upon the Lord, either in the conditioned or liberated state. In the kingdom of *māyā* the living entity is bound to the cruel laws of birth and death, whereas in the spiritual sky the living entity is fixed in a bond of love to the Lord. Liberation means freedom from the miseries of life, but never freedom from one’s loving relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa, which is the essence of one’s eternal existence. According to Śrīla Madhvācārya, the Lord is the only eternally free living entity, and all other living entities are eternally dependent and bound to the Lord, either through blissful loving service or through the bondage of *māyā*. The conditioned soul should give up tasting the bitter fruits of the tree of material existence and turn to his dearest friend, Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is sitting within his heart. There is no pleasure equal to or greater than the pleasure of pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and by tasting the fruit of love of Kṛṣṇa, the liberated living entity enters the ocean of happiness.

TEXT 11.8

*deha-stho’pi na deha-stho
vidvān svapnād yathotthitaḥ
adeha-stho’pi deha-sthaḥ
kumatiḥ svapna-dṛg yathā*

deha - in the material body; *sthaḥ* - situated; *api* - although; *na* - not; *deha* - in the body; *sthaḥ* - situated; *vidvān* - an enlightened person; *svapnāt* - from a dream; *yathā* - just as; *utthitaḥ* - having risen; *adeha* - not in the body; *sthaḥ* - situated; *api* - although; *deha* - in the body; *sthaḥ* - situated; *kumatiḥ* - a foolish person; *svapna* - a dream; *dṛk* - seeing; *yathā* - just as.

TRANSLATION

One who is enlightened in self-realization, although living within the material body, sees himself as transcendental to the body, just as one who has arisen from a dream gives up identification with the dream body. A foolish person, however, although not identical with his material body but transcendental to it, thinks himself to be situated in the body, just as one who is dreaming sees himself as situated in an imaginary body.

PURPORT

In Lord Kṛṣṇa's discussion of the different characteristics of liberated and conditioned souls, the Lord first clarified the distinction between the eternally liberated Personality of Godhead and the marginal potency, the innumerable *jīvas*, who are sometimes conditioned and sometimes liberated. In this and the next nine verses, the Lord describes the different symptoms of liberated and conditioned *jīva* souls. In a dream one sees oneself in an imaginary body, but upon waking one gives up all identification with that body. Similarly, one who has awakened to Kṛṣṇa consciousness no longer identifies with the gross or subtle material bodies, nor does he become affected by the happiness and distress of material life. On the other hand, a foolish person (*kumati*) does not awaken from the dream of material existence and is afflicted with innumerable problems due to false identification with the gross and subtle material bodies. One should become situated in one's eternal spiritual identity (*nitya-svarūpa*). By properly identifying oneself as the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, one becomes relieved of his false material identity, and therefore the miseries of illusory existence immediately cease, just as the anxiety of a troublesome dream ceases as soon as one awakens to his normal, pleasant surroundings. It should be understood, however, that the analogy of awakening from a dream can never be applied to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is never in illusion. The Lord is eternally awake and enlightened in His own unique category called *viṣṇu-tattva*. Such knowledge is easily understood by one who is *vidvān*, or enlightened in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 11.9

*indriyair indriyārtheṣu
guṇair api guṇeṣu ca
grhyamāṇeṣv ahaṁ kuryān
na vidvān yaḥ tv avikriyaḥ*

indriyaiḥ – by the senses; *indriya* – of the senses; *artheṣu* – in the objects; *guṇaiḥ* – by those generated from the modes of nature; *api* – even; *guṇeṣu* – in those generated by the same modes; *ca* – also; *grhyamāṇeṣu* – as they are being accepted; *ahaṁ* – false ego; *kuryāt* – should create; *na* – not; *vidvān* – one who is enlightened; *yaḥ* – who; *tu* – indeed; *avikriyaḥ* – is not affected by material desire.

TRANSLATION

An enlightened person who is free from the contamination of material desire does not consider himself to be the performer of bodily activities; rather, he knows that in all such activities it is only the senses, born of the modes of nature, that are contacting sense objects born of the same modes of nature.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa makes a similar statement in *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.28):

*tattva-vit tu mahā-bāho
guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ
guṇā guṇeṣu vartanta
iti matvā na sajjate*

“One who is in knowledge of the Absolute Truth, O mighty-armed, does not engage himself in the senses and sense gratification, knowing well the difference between work in devotion and work for fruitive results.”

The material body always interacts with the sense objects, for in order to survive the body must eat, drink, speak, sleep, and so on, but an enlightened person who knows the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness never thinks, “I am accepting these sense objects as my property. They are meant for my pleasure.” Similarly, if the body performs a wonderful activity, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not become proud, nor is he depressed by the failure of the body to function in a particular way. In other words, Kṛṣṇa consciousness means giving up identification with the gross and subtle material bodies. One should see them as the external energy of the Lord, working under the direction of the Lord’s empowered representative *māyā*. One absorbed in fruitive activities works under the jurisdiction of *mahā-māyā*, or the external illusory potency, and experiences the miseries of material existence. On the other hand, a devotee works under the internal potency, called *yoga-māyā*, and remains satisfied by offering his loving service to the Lord. In either case, the Lord Himself, by His multifarious potencies, is the ultimate performer of action.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, one who claims to be transcendental to the bodily concept of life, but at the same time remains under the influence of material desire and mental transformation, is understood to be a cheater and the lowest type of conditioned soul.

TEXT 11.10

*daivādhīne śarīre’smin
guṇa-bhāvyena karmaṇā
vartamāno’budhas tatra
kartāsmīti nibadhyate*

daiva - of one’s previous fruitive activities; *adhīne* - which is under the influence; *śarīre* - in the material body; *asmin* - in this; *guṇa* - by the modes of nature; *bhāvyena* - which are produced; *karmaṇā* - by fruitive activities; *vartamānaḥ* - being situated; *abudhaḥ* - one who is foolish; *tatra* - within the bodily functions; *kartā* - the doer; *asmi* - I am; *iti* - thus; *nibadhyate* - is bound up.

TRANSLATION

An unintelligent person situated within the body created by his previous fruitive activities thinks, “I am the performer of action.” Bewildered by false ego, such a foolish person is therefore bound up by fruitive activities, which are in fact carried out by the modes of nature.

PURPORT

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.27):

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

The living entity is dependent on the supreme entity, Lord Kṛṣṇa, but because of false pride he ignores the Supreme Personality of Godhead and considers himself to be the performer of action and enjoyer of everything. Śrīla Madhvācārya states that just as a king punishes a rebellious subject, the Supreme Lord punishes the sinful living entity by forcing him to transmigrate from one body to another in the network of the illusory energy.

TEXT 11.11

*evam viraktaḥ śayana
āsanāṭana-majjane
darśana-sparśana-ghrāṇa-
bhojana-śravaṇādiṣu
na tathā badhyate vidvān
tatra tatrādayan guṇān*

evam – thus; *viraktaḥ* – detached from material enjoyment; *śayane* – in lying or sleeping; *āsana* – in sitting; *aṭana* – walking; *majjane* – or in bathing; *darśana* – in seeing; *sparśana* – touching; *ghrāṇa* – smelling; *bhojana* – eating; *śravaṇa* – hearing; *ādiṣu* – and so on; *na* – not; *tathā* – in that way; *badhyate* – is bound; *vidvān* – an intelligent person; *tatra tatra* – wherever he goes; *ādayan* – causing to experience; *guṇān* – the senses, born of the modes of nature.

TRANSLATION

An enlightened person fixed in detachment engages his body in lying down, sitting, walking, bathing, seeing, touching, smelling, eating, hearing and so on, but is never entangled by such activities. Indeed, remaining as a witness to all bodily functions, he merely engages his bodily senses with their objects and does not become entangled like an unintelligent person.

PURPORT

In the previous chapter, Uddhava asked Lord Kṛṣṇa why an enlightened person, just like a conditioned soul, engages in external bodily functions. Here is the Lord's answer. While engaged in bodily functions, an unintelligent person is attached to both the means and end of material life and therefore experiences intense lamentation and jubilation on the material platform. A self-realized soul, however, studies the inevitable defeat and suffering of ordinary persons and does not make the mistake of trying to enjoy the bodily functions even slightly. He instead remains a detached witness, merely engaging his senses in the normal functions of bodily maintenance. As

indicated here by the word *ādayan*, he engages something other than his actual self in material experience.

TEXTS 11.12-13

*prakṛti-stho'py asaṁsakto
yathā khaṁ savitānilaḥ
vaiśāradyekṣayāsaṅga-
śītayā chinna-saṁśayaḥ
pratibuddha iva svapnān
nānātvād vinivartate*

prakṛti - in the material world; *sthaḥ* - situated; *api* - even though; *asaṁsaktaḥ* - completely detached from sense gratification; *yathā* - just as; *khaṁ* - the sky; *savitā* - the sun; *anilaḥ* - the wind; *vaiśāradyā* - by most expert; *īkṣayā* - vision; *asaṅga* - through detachment; *śītayā* - sharpened; *chinna* - cut to pieces; *saṁśayaḥ* - doubts; *pratibuddhaḥ* - awakened; *iva* - like; *svapnāt* - from a dream; *nānātvāt* - from the duality of variety of the material world; *vinivartate* - one turns away or renounces.

TRANSLATION

Although the sky, or space, is the resting place of everything, the sky does not mix with anything, nor is it entangled. Similarly, the sun is not at all attached to the water in which it is reflected within innumerable reservoirs, and the mighty wind blowing everywhere is not affected by the innumerable aromas and atmospheres through which it passes. In the same way, a self-realized soul is completely detached from the material body and the material world around it. He is like a person who has awakened and arisen from a dream. With expert vision sharpened by detachment, the self-realized soul cuts all doubts to pieces through knowledge of the self and completely withdraws his consciousness from the expansion of material variety.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a self-realized soul cuts all doubts to pieces by direct experience of his true spiritual identity. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Lord Kṛṣṇa, and there is no possibility of any existence separate from Lord Kṛṣṇa. Such expert knowledge cuts all doubts to pieces. As stated here, *prakṛti-stho 'py asaṁsaktaḥ*: like the sky, the sun or the wind, one who is self-realized is not entangled, though situated within the material creation of the Lord. *Nānātvā*, or “material variety,” refers to one’s material body, the bodies of others and the unlimited paraphernalia for bodily sense gratification, both physical and mental. By awakening to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one completely retires from illusory sense gratification and becomes absorbed in the progressive realization of the soul situated within the body. As revealed in the example of the two birds in a tree, both the individual soul and the Personality of Godhead are completely separate from the gross and subtle material bodies.

If one turns one's face to the Lord, recognizing one's eternal dependence on Him, there will be no further suffering or anxiety, even though one is still situated within the material world. The unlimited experiences of material objects only increase one's anxiety, whereas perception of the Absolute Truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, immediately brings one to the platform of peace. Thus one who is intelligent retires from the world of matter and becomes a fully self-realized Kṛṣṇa conscious person.

TEXT 11.14

*yasya syur vīta-saṅkalpāḥ
prāṇendriya-mano-dhiyām
vṛttayaḥ sa vinirmukto
deha-stho 'pi hi tad-guṇaiḥ*

yasya – of whom; *syuḥ* – they are; *vīta* – freed from; *saṅkalpāḥ* – material desire; *prāṇa* – of the vital energy; *indriya* – the senses; *manaḥ* – the mind; *dhiyām* – and of intelligence; *vṛttayaḥ* – the functions; *saḥ* – such a person; *vinirmuktaḥ* – completely freed; *deha* – in the body; *sthaḥ* – situated; *api* – even though; *hi* – certainly; *tad* – of the body; *guṇaiḥ* – from all of the qualities.

TRANSLATION

A person is considered to be completely liberated from the gross and subtle material bodies when all the functions of his vital energy, senses, mind and intelligence are performed without material desire. Such a person, although situated within the body, is not entangled.

PURPORT

The material body and mind are subject to lamentation, illusion, hunger, lust, greed, insanity, frustration, etc., but one who remains active in this world without attachment is considered *vinirmukta*, or completely liberated. The vital energy, senses, mind and intelligence are purified when engaged in the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, as confirmed throughout *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 11.15

*yasyātmā himsyate himsrair
yena kiñcid yadṛcchayā
arcyate vā kvacit tatra
na vyatikriyate budhaḥ*

yasya – of whom; *ātmā* – the body; *himsyate* – is attacked; *himsraiḥ* – by sinful people or violent animals; *yena* – by someone; *kiñcit* – somewhat; *yadṛcchayā* – somehow or other; *arcyate* – is worshiped; *vā* – or; *kvacit* – somewhere; *tatra* – therein; *na* – not; *vyatikriyate* – is transformed or affected; *budhaḥ* – one who is intelligent.

TRANSLATION

Sometimes for no apparent reason one's body is attacked by cruel people or violent animals. At other times and in other places, one will suddenly be offered great respect or worship. One who becomes neither angry when attacked nor satisfied when worshiped is actually intelligent.

PURPORT

If one does not become angry when attacked for no apparent reason, and if one does not become enlivened when glorified or worshiped, then one has passed the test of self-realization and is considered fixed in spiritual intelligence. Uddhava asked Lord Kṛṣṇa, *kair vā jñāyeta lakṣaṇaiḥ*: by what symptoms can a self-realized person be recognized? Just as Lord Kṛṣṇa enlightened Arjuna, He now explains the same subject matter to Uddhava. In this verse the Lord describes symptoms by which it is very easy to recognize a saintly person, for a normal person becomes furious when criticized or attacked and overwhelmed with joy when glorified by others. There is a similar statement by Yājñavalkya to the effect that one who is actually intelligent does not become angry though pricked with thorns and does not become satisfied at heart merely by being worshiped with auspicious paraphernalia such as sandalwood.

TEXT 11.16

*na stuvīta na nindeta
kurvataḥ sādhu asādhu vā
vadato guṇa-doṣābhyām
varjitaḥ sama-dṛk muniḥ*

na stuvīta – does not praise; *na nindeta* – does not criticize; *kurvataḥ* – those who are working; *sādhu* – very nicely; *asādhu* – very badly; *vā* – or; *vadataḥ* – those who are speaking; *guṇa-doṣābhyām* – from good and bad qualities; *varjitaḥ* – freed; *sama-dṛk* – seeing things equally; *muniḥ* – a saintly sage.

TRANSLATION

A saintly sage sees with equal vision and therefore is not affected by that which is materially good or bad. Indeed, although he observes others performing good and bad work and speaking properly and improperly, the sage does not praise or criticize anyone.

TEXT 11.17

*na kuryān na vadet kiñcin
na dhyāyet sādhu asādhu vā
ātmārāmo'nayā vṛttyā
vicarej jaḍa-van muniḥ*

na kuryāt – should not do; *na vadet* – should not speak; *kiñcit* – anything; *na dhyāyet* – should not contemplate; *sādhu asādhu vā* – either good or bad things; *ātma-ārāmaḥ* – one who is taking pleasure in self-realization; *anayā* –

with this; *vṛttyā* – lifestyle; *vicaret* – he should wander; *jaḍa-vat* – just like a stunted person; *muniḥ* – a saintly sage.

TRANSLATION

For the purpose of maintaining his body, a liberated sage should not act, speak or contemplate in terms of material good or bad. Rather, he should be detached in all material circumstances, and taking pleasure in self-realization, he should wander about engaged in this liberated lifestyle, appearing like a retarded person to outsiders.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, this verse describes a type of discipline recommended for the *jñāna-yogīs*, who by intelligence try to understand that they are not their material bodies. One who is engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, however, accepts and rejects material things in terms of their usefulness in the loving service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who is trying to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness should be seen as very intelligent and not *jaḍa-vat*, or stunted, as described here. Although a devotee of the Lord does not act, speak or contemplate for his personal sense gratification, he remains very busy working, speaking and meditating in the devotional service of the Lord. The devotee makes elaborate plans to engage all the fallen souls in Lord Kṛṣṇa's service so they can be purified and go back home, back to Godhead. Merely rejecting material things is not perfect consciousness. One must see everything as the property of the Lord and meant for the Lord's pleasure. One busily engaged in spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has no time to make material distinctions and thus automatically comes to the liberated platform.

TEXT 11.18

*śabda-brahmaṇi niṣṇāto
na niṣṇāyāt pare yadi
śramas tasya śrama-phalo
hy adhenum iva rakṣataḥ*

śabda-brahmaṇi – in the Vedic literature; *niṣṇātaḥ* – expert through complete study; *na niṣṇāyāt* – does not absorb the mind; *pare* – in the Supreme; *yadi* – if; *śramaḥ* – labor; *tasya* – his; *śrama* – of great endeavor; *phalaḥ* – the fruit; *hi* – certainly; *adhenum* – a cow that gives no milk; *iva* – like; *rakṣataḥ* – of one who is taking care of.

TRANSLATION

If through meticulous study one becomes expert in reading Vedic literature but makes no endeavor to fix one's mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then one's endeavor is certainly like that of a man who works very hard to take care of a cow that gives no milk. In other words, the fruit of one's laborious study of Vedic knowledge will simply be the labor itself. There will be no other tangible result.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the word *pare* (“the Supreme”) in this verse indicates the Supreme Personality of Godhead rather than the impersonal Brahman, because Lord Kṛṣṇa, the speaker of these instructions, makes references in later verses to His personality as the Supreme. An impersonal interpretation in this case would be *eka-deśānvaya uttara-ślokārtha-tātparya-virodhaḥ*, or a contradictory interpretation that creates illogical conflict with other *ślokas* (verses) spoken in the same context.

It requires great endeavor to take care of a cow. One must either grow food grains to feed the cow or maintain suitable pastures. If the pasture is not properly maintained, poisonous weeds will grow, or snakes will multiply, and there will be danger. Cows are infected by many types of diseases and bugs and must be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Similarly, fences must be maintained around the cow pasture, and there is even more work to be done. If the cow gives no milk, however, then one certainly performs hard labor with no tangible result. Laborious effort is also required to learn the Sanskrit language well enough to discern the subtle and esoteric meaning of the Vedic *mantras*. If after such great labor one does not understand the spiritual body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which is the source of all happiness in life, and if one does not surrender to the Lord as the supreme shelter of all things, then one has certainly labored hard with no tangible result other than his own labor. Even a liberated soul who has given up the bodily concept of life will fall down if he does not take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The word *niṣṇāta*, or “expert,” indicates that one must ultimately achieve the goal of life; otherwise one is not expert. As stated by Caitanya Mahāprabhu, *premā pum-artho mahān*: the actual goal of human life is love of Godhead, and no one can be considered expert without achieving this goal.

TEXT 11.19

*gām dugdha-dohām asatīm ca bhāryām
deham parādhīnam asat-prajām ca
vittam tv atīrthī-kṛtam aṅga vācam
hīnām mayā rakṣati duḥkha-duḥkhī*

gām – a cow; *dugdha* – whose milk; *dohām* – already taken; *asatīm* – unchaste; *ca* – also; *bhāryām* – a wife; *deham* – a body; *para* – upon others; *adhīnam* – always dependent; *asat* – useless; *prajām* – children; *ca* – also; *vittam* – wealth; *tu* – but; *atīrthī-kṛtam* – not given to the proper recipient; *aṅga* – O Uddhava; *vācam* – Vedic knowledge; *hīnām* – devoid; *mayā* – of knowledge of Me; *rakṣati* – he takes care of; *duḥkha-duḥkhī* – he who suffers one misery after another.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, that man is certainly most miserable who takes care of a cow that gives no milk, an unchaste wife, a body totally

dependent on others, useless children or wealth not utilized for the right purpose. Similarly, one who studies Vedic knowledge devoid of My glories is also most miserable.

PURPORT

A human being is actually learned or expert when he understands that all material objects perceived through the various senses are expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that nothing exists without the support of the Supreme Lord. In this verse, through various examples, it is concluded that the power of speech is useless if not engaged for the Supreme Lord.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, this verse implies that all of the functions of the various senses are useless if they are not engaged in the glorification of God. Indeed, the *avadhūta brāhmaṇa* previously stated to King Yadu that if the tongue is not controlled, one's entire program of sense control is a failure. One cannot control the tongue unless he vibrates the glories of the Lord.

The example of the milkless cow is significant. A gentleman never kills a cow, and therefore when a cow becomes sterile and no longer gives milk, one must engage in the laborious task of protecting her, since no one will purchase a useless cow. For some time, the greedy owner of a sterile cow may continue thinking, "I have already invested so much money in taking care of this cow, and certainly in the near future she will again become pregnant and give milk." But when this hope is proven futile, he becomes neglectful and indifferent to the health and safety of the animal. Because of such sinful neglect, he must suffer in the next life, after having already suffered because of the sterile cow in the present life.

Similarly, although a man may discover that his wife is neither chaste nor affectionate, he may be so eager to get children that he goes on taking care of such a useless wife, thinking, "I will teach my wife the religious duties of a chaste woman. By hearing historical examples of great women surely her heart will change, and she will become a wonderful wife to me."

Unfortunately, the unchaste wife in many cases does not change and also gives a man many useless children who are just as foolish and irreligious as she. Such children never give any happiness to the father, yet the father tediously labors to take care of them.

Also, one who has accumulated wealth by the mercy of God must be vigilant to give in charity to the right person and for the right cause. If such a right person or cause appears and one hesitates and selfishly does not give in charity, one loses his reputation, and in the next life he will be poverty-stricken. One who fails to give properly in charity spends his life anxiously protecting his wealth, which ultimately brings him no fame or happiness.

The previous examples are given to illustrate the uselessness of laboriously studying Vedic knowledge that does not glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments that the spiritual vibration of the *Vedas* is meant to bring one to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa. Many processes for achieving the Supreme Truth are recommended in the

Upaniṣads and other Vedic literatures, but because of their innumerable and seemingly contradictory explanations, commentaries and injunctions, one cannot achieve the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, merely by reading such literature. If, however, one understands Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be the ultimate cause of all causes and reads the *Upaniṣads* and other Vedic literature as glorification of the Supreme Lord, then one can actually become fixed at the Lord's lotus feet. For example, His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda translated and commented upon *Śrī Īśopaniṣad* in such a way that it brings the reader closer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Undoubtedly, the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa are the only reliable boat by which to cross the turbulent ocean of material existence. Even Lord Brahmā has stated in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that if one gives up the auspicious path of *bhakti* and takes to the fruitless labor of Vedic speculation, one is just like a fool who beats empty husks in hopes of getting rice. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī recommends that one completely ignore dry Vedic speculation because it does not bring one to the point of devotional service to the Absolute Truth, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 11.20

*yasyām na me pāvanam aṅga karma
sthity-udbhava-prāṇa-nirodham asya
līlavatārepsita-janma vā syād
vandhyām giram tām bibhṛyān na dhīraḥ*

yasyām – in which (literature); *na* – not; *me* – My; *pāvanam* – purifying; *aṅga* – O Uddhava; *karma* – activities; *sthiti* – maintenance; *udbhava* – creation; *prāṇa-nirodham* – and annihilation; *asya* – of the material world; *līlavatāra* – among the pastime incarnations; *īpsita* – desired; *janma* – appearance; *vā* – or; *syāt* – is; *vandhyām* – barren; *giram* – vibration; *tām* – this; *bibhṛyāt* – should support; *na* – not; *dhīraḥ* – an intelligent person.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, an intelligent person should never take to literatures that do not contain descriptions of My activities, which purify the whole universe. Indeed, I create, maintain and annihilate the entire material manifestation. Among all My pastime incarnations, the most beloved are Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Any so-called knowledge that does not recognize these activities of Mine is simply barren and is not acceptable to those who are actually intelligent.

PURPORT

The words *līlavatārepsita-janma* are very significant here. The Lord's incarnation for executing wonderful pastimes is called *līlavatāra*, and such wonderful forms of Viṣṇu are glorified by the names Rāmacandra, Nṛsimhadeva, Kūrma, Varāha, and so on. Among all such *līlavatāras*, however, the most beloved, even to this day, is Lord Kṛṣṇa, the original source of the *viṣṇu-tattva*. The Lord appears in the prison house of Kaṁsa

and is immediately transferred to the rural setting of Vṛndāvana, where He exhibits unique childhood pastimes with His cowherd boyfriends, girlfriends, parents and well-wishers. After some time, the Lord's pastimes are transferred to Mathurā and Dvārakā, and the extraordinary love of the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana is exhibited in their anguished separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa. Such pastimes of the Lord are *īpsita*, or the reservoir of all loving exchanges with the Absolute Truth. The pure devotees of the Lord are most intelligent and expert and do not pay any attention to useless, fruitless literatures that neglect the highest truth, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Although such literatures are very popular among materialistic persons all over the world, they are completely neglected by the community of pure Vaiṣṇavas. In this verse the Lord explains that the literatures approved for the devotees are those that glorify the Lord's pastimes as the *puruṣa-avatāra* and the *līlāvatāras*, culminating in the personal appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, as confirmed in *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.39):

*rāmādi-mūrtiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan
nānāvatāram akarod bhuvaneṣu kintu
kṛṣṇaḥ svayaṁ samabhavat paramaḥ pumān yo
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

“I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who manifested Himself personally as Kṛṣṇa and the different *avatāras* in the world in the forms of Rāma, Nṛsiṁha, Vāmana, etc., as His subjective portions.”

Even Vedic literatures that neglect the Supreme Personality of Godhead should be ignored. This fact was also explained by Nārada Muni to Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the author of the *Vedas*, when the great Vedavyāsa felt dissatisfied with his work.

TEXT 11.21

*evam jijñāsayāpohya
nānātva-bhramam ātmani
upārameta virajaṁ
mano mayy arpya sarva-ge*

evam – thus (as I have now concluded); *jijñāsayā* – by analytic study; *apohya* – giving up; *nānātva* – of material variety; *bhramam* – the mistake of rotating; *ātmani* – in the self; *upārameta* – one should cease from material life; *virajam* – pure; *manaḥ* – the mind; *mayi* – in Me; *arpya* – fixing; *sarva-ge* – who am all-pervading.

TRANSLATION

Coming to this conclusion of all knowledge, one should give up the false conception of material variety that one imposes upon the soul and thus cease one's material existence. The mind should be fixed on Me, since I am all-pervading.

PURPORT

Although in previous verses Lord Kṛṣṇa has described the lifestyle and approach of the impersonal philosophers who meditate on the distinction

between matter and spirit, the Lord here rejects the path of *jñāna*, or speculation, and comes to the final conclusion, *bhakti-yoga*. The path of *jñāna* is interesting only to one who does not know that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.19):

*bahūnām janmanām ante
jñānavān mām prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti
sa mahātmā su-durlabhaḥ*

The words *vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti*, or “Vāsudeva is everything,” are similar to the words *sarva-ge* found in this verse. One should know why the Personality of Godhead is all-pervading. The first verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states, *janmādy asya yataḥ*: the Supreme Lord is the source of everything. And as stated in the previous verse of this chapter, He creates, maintains and annihilates everything. Thus the Lord is not all-pervading in the manner of air or sunlight; rather, the Lord is all-pervading as the absolute controller who holds in His hands the destiny of every living entity.

Everything is ultimately an expansion of Kṛṣṇa, and therefore there is really no other object of meditation besides Kṛṣṇa. Meditation upon any other object is also meditation on Kṛṣṇa but is imperfectly performed, as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* by the word *avidhi-pūrvakam*. The Lord also states in the *Gītā* that all living entities are on the path back home, back to Godhead. Because of ignorance, however, some of them go backward or stop along the way, foolishly thinking that their journey is finished, when in fact they are suspended in one of the minor potencies of the Supreme Lord. If one wants to intimately understand the nature of the Absolute Truth, one must take to the path of love of Godhead. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.55):

*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti
yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ
tato mām tattvato jñātvā
viśate tad-anantaram*

“One can understand the Supreme Personality as He is only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of the Supreme Lord by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God.”

The words *nānātvā-bhramam* in this verse indicate false identification with the gross and subtle material bodies. The word *bhramam* indicates a mistake; it can also mean “wandering” or “rotating.” The conditioned living entity, because of his mistake of falling into illusion, is wandering through a succession of material bodies, sometimes appearing as a demigod and sometimes as a worm in stool. The word *upārameta* means that one should stop such fruitless wandering and fix one’s mind on the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Lord, who is the true object of everyone’s love. Such a conclusion is not sentimental but is the result of keen analytic intelligence (*jijñāsayā*).

Thus after elaborately explaining to Uddhava many aspects of analytic knowledge, the Lord now comes to the ultimate conclusion, Kṛṣṇa

consciousness, pure love of Godhead. Without such love there is no question of eternally fixing one's mind on the Lord.

Quoting from the *Viveka*, Śrīla Madhvācārya states that *nānātva-bhramam* indicates the following illusions: considering the living entity to be the Supreme; considering all living entities to be ultimately one entity without separate individuality; considering that there are many Gods; thinking that Kṛṣṇa is not God; and considering that the material universe is the ultimate reality. All of these illusions are called *bhrama*, or mistakes, but such ignorance can be eliminated at once by the chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

TEXT 11.22

*yady anīśo dhārayitum
mano brahmaṇi niścalam
mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi
nirapekṣaḥ samācara*

yadi – if; *anīśaḥ* – incapable; *dhārayitum* – to fix; *manaḥ* – the mind; *brahmaṇi* – on the spiritual platform; *niścalam* – free from sense gratification; *mayi* – in Me; *sarvāṇi* – all; *karmāṇi* – activities; *nirapekṣaḥ* – without trying to enjoy the fruits; *samācara* – execute.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, if you are not able to free your mind from all material disturbance and thus absorb it completely on the spiritual platform, then perform all your activities as an offering to Me, without trying to enjoy the fruits.

PURPORT

If one offers one's activities to Lord Kṛṣṇa without trying to enjoy the results, one's mind becomes purified. When the mind is purified, transcendental knowledge automatically manifests, since such knowledge is a by-product of pure consciousness. When the mind is absorbed in perfect knowledge, it can be raised to the spiritual platform, as described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.54):

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā
na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*

“One who is thus transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman. He never laments nor desires to have anything; he is equally disposed to every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me.” By absorbing the mind in the transcendental form of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one can surpass the stage of ordinary transcendental knowledge, by which one simply distinguishes oneself from the gross and subtle material bodies. Spiritually enriched by loving devotional service to the Lord, the mind is completely purified of all tinges of illusion. Through intense concentration on one's relationship with the Personality of Godhead one comes to the

highest standard of knowledge and becomes an intimate associate of the Personality of Godhead.

By offering one's activities to the Personality of Godhead, one purifies one's mind to some extent and thus comes to the preliminary stage of spiritual awareness. Yet even then one may not be able to fix one's mind completely on the spiritual platform. At that point one should realistically assess one's position, noting the lingering material contamination within the mind. Then, as stated in this verse, one should intensify one's practical devotional work in the service of the Lord. If one artificially considers oneself to be supremely liberated or if one becomes casual on the path of spiritual advancement, there is serious danger of a falldown.

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the Lord previously explained to Uddhava *jñāna-miśrā bhakti*, or devotional service mixed with the impure desire to enjoy transcendental knowledge. In this verse the Lord clearly reveals that transcendental knowledge is an automatic by-product of loving service to the Lord, and in the next verse the Lord begins His explanation of pure devotional service, which is completely sufficient for self-realization. The desire to enjoy spiritual knowledge is certainly a material desire, since the goal is one's personal satisfaction and not the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa here warns Uddhava that if one is not able to fix one's mind in trance on the spiritual platform, then one should not go on simply theoretically discussing what is Brahman and what is not Brahman. Rather, one should engage in practical devotional service to the Supreme Lord, and then spiritual knowledge will automatically awaken in one's heart. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10):

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ
bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ
yena mām upayānti te*

“To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.”

Similarly, in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Lord Brahmā warns that one should not neglect the auspicious path of *bhakti* and instead take up the useless labor of mental speculation. By mere philosophical speculation one cannot fix one's mind on the spiritual platform. Many great philosophers throughout history had abominable personal habits, which proves that they could not fix themselves on the spiritual platform by mere speculation on philosophical categories. If one is not fortunate enough to have executed devotional service to the Lord in one's past life, and if one is therefore addicted to mere speculation on the differences between matter and spirit, one will not be able to fix one's mind on the spiritual platform. Such a person should give up useless speculation and engage in the practical work of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, absorbing himself twenty-four hours a day in the mission of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In such missionary work for the Lord's sake, one should never try to enjoy the fruits of one's work. Even though the

mind is not completely pure, if one offers the fruits of one's work to the Lord, the mind will quickly come to the standard of pure desirelessness, in which one's only desire is the Lord's satisfaction.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī states that if one does not have faith in the personal form and activities of the Personality of Godhead, one will not have the spiritual strength to remain perpetually on the transcendental platform. In this verse the Lord is definitely bringing Uddhava, and all living entities, to the conclusion of all philosophy – pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa.

In this regard, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura points out that one who is bewildered by false ego may not want to offer his activities to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, even though this is the actual way of rising above the influence of the modes of material nature. Because of ignorance one does not know that he is the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa and instead is attracted by the duality of material illusion. One cannot become free from such illusion by theoretical speculation, but if one offers one's work to the Personality of Godhead, one will clearly understand his eternal, transcendental position as a servant of the Lord.

TEXTS 11.23-24

*śraddhālur mat-kathāḥ śṛṇvan
su-bhadrā loka-pāvanīḥ
gāyann anusmaran karma
janma cābhinayan muhuḥ
mad-arthe dharma-kāmārthān
ācaran mad-apāśrayaḥ
labhate niścalām bhaktim
mayy uddhava sanātane*

śraddhāluḥ – a faithful person; *mat-kathāḥ* – narrations about Me; *śṛṇvan* – hearing; *su-bhadrāḥ* – which are all-auspicious; *loka* – the entire world; *pāvanīḥ* – purifying; *gāyan* – singing; *anusmaran* – remembering constantly; *karma* – My activities; *janma* – My birth; *ca* – also; *abhinayan* – reliving through dramatical performances, etc.; *muhuḥ* – again and again; *mat-arthe* – for My pleasure; *dharma* – religious activities; *kāma* – sense activities; *arthān* – and commercial activities; *ācaran* – performing; *mat* – in Me; *apāśrayaḥ* – having one's shelter; *labhate* – one obtains; *niścalām* – without deviation; *bhaktim* – devotional service; *mayi* – to Me; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *sanātane* – dedicated to My eternal form.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, narrations of My pastimes and qualities are all-auspicious and purify the entire universe. A faithful person who constantly hears, glorifies and remembers such transcendental activities, who through dramatic performances relives My pastimes, beginning with My appearance, and who takes full shelter of Me, dedicating his religious, sensual and occupational activities for My

satisfaction, certainly obtains unflinching devotional service to Me, the eternal Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

Those who have faith only in the impersonal effulgent aspect of the Supreme Lord and those who have faith only in the localized Supersoul, the perfect object of mystic meditation located in the heart of every living entity, are considered to be limited and imperfect in their transcendental realization. The process of mystic meditation and impersonal philosophical speculation are both devoid of actual love of God and therefore cannot be considered to be the perfection of human life. Only one who places full faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes qualified to go back home, back to Godhead.

Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of stealing butter from the elderly *gopīs*, enjoying life with His cowherd boyfriends and the young *gopīs*, playing His flute and engaging in the *rāsa* dance, etc., are all-auspicious spiritual activities, and they are fully described in the Tenth Canto of this work. There are many authorized songs and prayers glorifying these pastimes of the Lord, and by constantly chanting them one will automatically be fixed in *smaraṇam*, or remembrance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord exhibited His opulences upon His birth in Kaṁsa's prison and at the birth ceremony subsequently performed by Nanda Mahārāja in Gokula. The Lord further performed many adventurous activities, such as chastising the serpent Kāliya and killing many other demons. One should regularly take part in the ceremonies commemorating Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, such as the Janmāṣṭamī celebration glorifying the Lord's birth. On such days one should worship the Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master and thus remember the Lord's pastimes.

The word *dharma* in this verse indicates that one's religious activities should always be in connection with Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, one should give charity in the form of food grains, clothing, etc., to the Vaiṣṇavas and *brāhmaṇas*, and whenever possible one should arrange for the protection of cows, who are very dear to the Lord. The word *kāma* indicates that one should satisfy one's desires with the transcendental paraphernalia of the Lord. One should eat *mahā-prasādam*, food offered to the Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and one should also decorate oneself with the Lord's flower garlands and sandalwood pulp and should place the remnants of the Deity's clothing on one's body. One who lives in a luxurious mansion or apartment should convert his residence into a temple of Lord Kṛṣṇa and invite others to come, chant before the Deity, hear *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and taste the remnants of the Lord's food, or one may live in a beautiful temple building in the community of Vaiṣṇavas and engage in the same activities. The word *artha* in this verse indicates that one who is inclined toward business should accumulate money to promote the missionary work of the Lord's devotees and not for one's personal sense gratification. Thus one's business activities are also considered to be devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The word *niścalām*

indicates that since Lord Kṛṣṇa is eternally fixed in perfect knowledge and bliss, there is no possibility of disturbance for one who worships the Lord. If we worship anything except the Lord, our worship may be disturbed when our worshipable deity is placed in an awkward position. But because the Lord is supreme, our worship of Him is eternally free of disturbance.

One who engages in hearing, glorifying, remembering and dramatically recreating the pastimes of the Lord will soon be freed from all material desire. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mentions in this connection that one who is advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness may specifically be attracted to the pastimes of a devotee in the spiritual world who serves the Lord in a particular way. An advanced devotee in this world may desire to serve the Lord in the same way and thus may take pleasure in dramatically reliving the service of his worshipable devotee-master in the spiritual world. Also, one may take pleasure in spiritual festivals, performances of particular pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, or activities of other devotees of the Lord. In this way, one can continually increase one's faith in the Personality of Godhead. Those who have no desire to hear, glorify or remember the transcendental activities of the Lord are certainly materially polluted and never achieve the highest perfection. Such persons spoil the opportunity of human life by devoting themselves to fleeting mundane topics that produce no eternal benefit. The real meaning of religion is to constantly serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose form is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge. One who has taken full shelter of the Lord is completely uninterested in impersonal speculations about the nature of God and uses his time to advance more and more in the unlimited bliss of pure devotional service.

TEXT 11.25

*sat-saṅga-labdhayā bhaktyā
mayi mām sa upāsītā
sa vai me darśitam sadbhir
añjasā vindate padam*

sat - of the devotees of the Lord; *saṅga* - by the association; *labdhayā* - obtained; *bhaktyā* - by devotion; *mayi* - to Me; *mām* - of Me; *saḥ* - he; *upāsītā* - worshiper; *saḥ* - that very person; *vai* - undoubtedly; *me* - My; *darśitam* - revealed; *sadbhiḥ* - by My pure devotees; *añjasā* - very easily; *vindate* - achieves; *padam* - My lotus feet or My eternal abode.

TRANSLATION

One who has obtained pure devotional service by association with My devotees always engages in worshipping Me. Thus he very easily goes to My abode, which is revealed by My pure devotees.

PURPORT

In the previous verses Lord Kṛṣṇa has emphasized the value of surrendering to Him in loving service. One may ask how such surrender or devotion is actually achieved. The Lord gives the answer in this verse. One must live in a society of devotees, and thus automatically one will be engaged twenty-four

hours a day in the various processes of devotional service, beginning with *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* and *smaraṇam* (hearing, glorifying and remembering the Lord). The pure devotees of the Lord can reveal the spiritual world by their transcendental sound vibration, making it possible for even a neophyte devotee to experience the Lord's abode. Being thus enlivened, the neophyte makes further progress and gradually becomes qualified to personally serve the Personality of Godhead in the spiritual world. By constantly associating with devotees and learning from them about devotional science, one quickly achieves a deep attachment for the Lord and the Lord's service, and such attachment gradually matures into pure love of Godhead.

Foolish persons say that the various *mantras* composed of names of God, as well as all other *mantras*, are merely material creations with no special value, and therefore any so-called *mantra* or mystical process will ultimately produce the same result. To refute such superficial thinking, the Lord here describes the science of going back home, back to Godhead. One should not accept the bad association of impersonalists, who state that the holy name, form, qualities and pastimes of the Lord are *māyā*, or illusion. *Māyā* is actually an insignificant potency of the almighty Personality of Godhead, and if one ignorantly tries to elevate illusion above the Absolute Truth, one will never experience love of Godhead and will be cast into deep forgetfulness of the Lord. One should not associate with those who are envious of the fortunate devotees who are going back to Godhead. Such envious persons deride the abode of the Lord, which is revealed by the pure devotees to those who have faith in the Lord's message. Envious persons create disturbances among the people in general, who should take shelter of the faithful devotees of the Lord. Unless people hear from pure devotees, it is impossible for them to understand that there is a Supreme Personality of Godhead eternally existing in His own abode, which is self-luminous, full of bliss and knowledge. In this verse, the importance of *saṅga*, association, is clearly explained.

TEXTS 11.26-27

śrī-uddhava uvāca
sādhus tavottama-śloka
mataḥ kīṛḡk-vidhaḥ prabho
bhaktis tvayy upayujyeta
kīṛḡsī sadbhir āḍṛtā
etan me puruṣādhyakṣa
lokādhyakṣa jagat-prabho
praṇatāyānuraktāya
prapannāya ca kathyatām

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *sādhuḥ* – a saintly person; *tava* – in Your; *uttama-śloka* – my dear Lord; *mataḥ* – opinion; *kīṛḡk-vidhaḥ* – what kind would he be; *prabho* – my dear Personality of Godhead; *bhaktiḥ* – devotional service; *tvayi* – unto Your Lordship; *upayujyeta* – deserves to be executed;

kīdrśī – what type is it; *sadbhiḥ* – by Your pure devotees such as Nārada; *ādr̥tā* – honored; *etat* – this; *me* – to me; *puruṣa-adhyakṣa* – O ruler of the universal controllers; *loka-adhyakṣa* – O Supreme Lord of Vaikuṅṭha; *jagat-prabho* – O God of the universe; *praṇatāya* – unto Your surrendered devotee; *anuraktāya* – who loves You; *prapannāya* – who has no other shelter than You; *ca* – also; *kathyatām* – let this be spoken.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, what type of person do You consider to be a true devotee, and what type of devotional service is approved by great devotees as worthy of being offered to Your Lordship? My dear ruler of the universal controllers, O Lord of Vaikuṅṭha and almighty God of the universe, I am Your devotee, and because I love You I have no other shelter than You. Therefore please explain this to me.

PURPORT

In the previous verse it was stated that one can achieve the Lord’s supreme abode by associating with devotees. Therefore, Uddhava naturally inquires about the symptoms of a distinguished devotee whose association can promote one to the kingdom of God. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī notes that the Personality of Godhead knows who is actually a sincere devotee because the Lord is always attached to His loving servitors. Similarly, pure devotees can expertly explain the proper methods of devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa because they are already absorbed in love of Kṛṣṇa. Uddhava herein requests Lord Kṛṣṇa to describe the qualities of a devotee and asks the Lord to explain the devotional service that the devotees themselves approve as worthy to be offered to the Lord.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura remarks that the word *puruṣādhyakṣa* indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme ruler of the universal controllers headed by Mahā-Viṣṇu, and thus the Lord possesses infinite sovereignty. The term *lokādhyakṣa* indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate supervising authority of all of the Vaikuṅṭha planets, and therefore the Lord is unlimitedly glorious and perfect. Uddhava further addresses Lord Kṛṣṇa as *jagat-prabhu*, because even in the illusory material world the Lord exhibits His unlimited mercy by personally incarnating to uplift the conditioned souls. The word *praṇatāya* (“Your surrendered devotee”) indicates that Uddhava is not proud like ordinary fools who do not enjoy bowing down to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Uddhava mentions that he is *anuraktāya*, or completely bound in love to Lord Kṛṣṇa, because unlike other great devotees such as Arjuna, who sometimes worshiped demigods in order to comply with social customs or to show respect for their positions in the scheme of planetary management, Uddhava never worshiped any demigods. Therefore, Uddhava is *prapannāya*, or completely surrendered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having no other shelter.

TEXT 11.28

*tvam brahma paramam vyoma
puruṣaḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ
avatīrno'si bhagavan
svecchopātta-prthag-vapuḥ*

tvam – You; *brahma paramam* – the Absolute Truth; *vyoma* – like the sky (You are detached from everything); *puruṣaḥ* – the Personality of Godhead; *prakṛteḥ* – to material nature; *paraḥ* – transcendental; *avatīrṇaḥ* – incarnated; *asi* – You are; *bhagavan* – the Lord; *sva* – of Your own (devotees); *icchā* – according to the desire; *upātta* – accepted; *prthag* – different; *vapuḥ* – bodies.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, as the Absolute Truth You are transcendental to material nature, and like the sky You are never entangled in any way. Still, being controlled by Your devotees' love, You accept many different forms, incarnating according to Your devotees' desires.

PURPORT

The pure devotees of the Lord propagate devotional service all over the world, and therefore, although separate from the personal form of the Lord, they are considered to be manifestations of God's mercy and potency. As stated in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 7.11): *kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*.

The Lord is like the sky (*vyoma*) because although expanded everywhere, He is not entangled in anything. He is *prakṛteḥ paraḥ*, or completely transcendental to material nature. The Lord is fully self-satisfied and is therefore indifferent to the affairs of the material world. Still, because of His causeless mercy, the Lord desires to expand pure devotional service, and for this reason He incarnates within the material world to uplift the fallen conditioned souls.

The Lord descends in selected spiritual bodies to please His loving devotees. Sometimes He appears in His original form as Kṛṣṇa. And even Kṛṣṇa Himself appears in different forms to special devotees so that they may fully develop their loving sentiments for Him. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī gives several examples of the Lord's special mercy upon His devotees. Lord Kṛṣṇa personally went to the home of Jāmbavān and there displayed a form with slightly angry glances. In that form, the Lord enjoyed a fight with His devotee. The Lord displayed His form as Dattātreya to Atri Muni and similarly bestowed special mercy upon Lord Brahmā, the demigods, Akrūra and innumerable other devotees. And in Vṛndāvana the Lord displayed His most beautiful form as Govinda to the fortunate inhabitants.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted from the *Prakāśa-saṁhitā* as follows. "The Lord accepts different spiritual bodies according to the desire of His devotees. For example, the Lord agreed to become the son of Vasudeva and Devakī. Thus, although Lord Kṛṣṇa has an eternal, blissful spiritual form, He appears to enter within the body of His devotee who becomes His mother. Although we speak of the Lord's 'taking on a body,' the Lord does not change

His form, as do the conditioned souls, who must change their material bodies. The Lord appears in His own eternally unchangeable forms. Lord Hari always appears in the forms that are especially desired by His loving devotees, and never in other forms. However, if one thinks that the Lord, in the manner of an ordinary person taking birth, becomes the physical son of Vasudeva or other devotees, then one is victimized by illusion. The Lord merely expands His spiritual potency, causing His pure devotees to think, 'Kṛṣṇa is now my son.' One should understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead never accepts or rejects a material body, nor does He ever give up His eternal spiritual forms; rather, the Lord eternally manifests His blissful bodies according to the loving sentiments of His eternal pure devotees." Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mentions that the word *vyoma* also indicates the Lord's name of Paravyoma, or the Lord of the spiritual sky. One should not misinterpret this verse to mean that Lord Kṛṣṇa is impersonal, like the material sky, or that the form of Kṛṣṇa is merely another selected incarnation equal to any other. Such casual and whimsical speculations cannot be accepted as actual spiritual knowledge. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead (*kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*), and the Lord has explained elaborately in *Bhagavad-gītā* that He is the original source of everything. Therefore, the pure devotees of the Lord are eternally engaged, in full knowledge and bliss, in loving service to the Lord's original form as Kṛṣṇa. The whole purpose of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is to arouse our love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, and one should not foolishly misunderstand this great purpose.

TEXTS 11.29-32

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
 kṛpālur akṛta-drohas
 titikṣuḥ sarva-dehinām
 satya-sāro'navadyātmā
 samaḥ sarvopakāraḥ
 kāmair ahata-dhīr dānto
 mṛduḥ śucir akiñcanaḥ
 anīho mita-bhuk śāntaḥ
 sthiro mac-charaṇo muniḥ
 apramatto gabhīrātmā
 dhṛtimāñ jita-śaḍ-guṇaḥ
 amānī māna-daḥ kalyo
 maitraḥ kāruṇikaḥ kaviḥ
 ājñāyaivaṁ guṇān doṣān
 mayādiṣṭān api svakān
 dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān
 mām bhajeta sa tu sattamaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *kṛpāluḥ* – unable to tolerate the suffering of others; *akṛta-drohaḥ* – never injuring others; *titikṣuḥ* – forgiving; *sarva-dehinām* – toward all living entities; *satya-*

sārah – one who lives by truth and whose strength and firmness come from truthfulness; *anavadya-ātmā* – a soul free from envy, jealousy, etc.; *samaḥ* – whose consciousness is equal both in happiness and in distress; *sarva-upakārakaḥ* – always endeavoring as far as possible for the welfare of all others; *kāmaiḥ* – by material desires; *ahata* – undisturbed; *dhīḥ* – whose intelligence; *dāntaḥ* – controlling the external senses; *mṛduḥ* – without a harsh mentality; *śuciḥ* – always well-behaved; *akiñcanaḥ* – without possessiveness; *anīhaḥ* – free from worldly activities; *mita-bhuk* – eating austerely; *śāntaḥ* – controlling the mind; *sthiraḥ* – remaining steady in one’s prescribed duty; *mat-śaraṇaḥ* – accepting Me as the only shelter; *muniḥ* – thoughtful; *apramattaḥ* – cautious and sober; *gabhīra-ātmā* – not superficial, and thus unchanging; *dhṛti-mān* – not weak or miserable even in distressing circumstances; *jīta* – having conquered; *ṣaṭ-guṇaḥ* – the six material qualities, namely hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age and death; *amānī* – without desire for prestige; *māna-daḥ* – offering all respects to others; *kalyaḥ* – expert in reviving the Kṛṣṇa consciousness of others; *maitraḥ* – never cheating anyone, and thus a true friend; *kāruṇikaḥ* – acting always due to compassion, not personal ambition; *kaviḥ* – completely learned; *ājñāya* – knowing; *evam* – thus; *guṇān* – good qualities; *doṣān* – bad qualities; *mayā* – by Me; *ādiṣṭān* – taught; *apī* – even; *svakān* – one’s own; *dharmān* – religious principles; *santyaḥ* – giving up; *yaḥ* – one who; *sarvān* – all; *mām* – Me; *bhajeta* – worships; *saḥ* – he; *tu* – indeed; *sat-tamaḥ* – the best among saintly persons.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O Uddhava, a saintly person is merciful and never injures others. Even if others are aggressive he is tolerant and forgiving toward all living entities. His strength and meaning in life come from the truth itself, he is free from all envy and jealousy, and his mind is equal in material happiness and distress. Thus, he dedicates his time to work for the welfare of all others. His intelligence is never bewildered by material desires, and he has controlled his senses. His behavior is always pleasing, never harsh and always exemplary, and he is free from possessiveness. He never endeavors in ordinary, worldly activities, and he strictly controls his eating. He therefore always remains peaceful and steady. A saintly person is thoughtful and accepts Me as his only shelter. Such a person is very cautious in the execution of his duties and is never subject to superficial transformations, because he is steady and noble, even in a distressing situation. He has conquered over the six material qualities - namely hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age and death. He is free from all desire for prestige and offers honor to others. He is expert in reviving the Kṛṣṇa consciousness of others and therefore never cheats anyone. Rather, he is a well-wishing friend to all, being most merciful. Such a saintly person must be

considered the most learned of men. He perfectly understands that the ordinary religious duties prescribed by Me in various Vedic scriptures possess favorable qualities that purify the performer, and he knows that neglect of such duties constitutes a discrepancy in one's life. Having taken complete shelter at My lotus feet, however, a saintly person ultimately renounces such ordinary religious duties and worships Me alone. He is thus considered to be the best among all living entities.

PURPORT

Verses 29–31 describe twenty-eight qualities of a saintly person, and verse 32 explains the highest perfection of life. According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the seventeenth quality (*mat-śaraṇa*, or taking complete shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa) is the most important, and the other twenty-seven qualities automatically appear in one who has become a pure devotee of the Lord. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.18.12), *yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ*. The twenty-eight saintly qualities may be described as follows.

(1) *Kṛpālu*. A devotee cannot tolerate seeing the world merged in ignorance and suffering the whiplashes of *māyā*. Therefore he busily engages in distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness and is called *kṛpālu*, or merciful.

(2) *Akṛta-droha*. Even if someone is offensive toward a devotee, a devotee does not become offensive in return. Indeed, he never acts against the interest of any living entity. One may argue that great Vaiṣṇava kings, such as Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira and Parīkṣit Mahārāja, executed many criminals. However, when justice is properly administered by the state, sinful, destructive persons actually benefit from their punishment because they become freed from the severe karmic reactions to their illicit activities. A Vaiṣṇava ruler gives punishment not out of envy or malice, but in faithful obedience to the laws of God. The Māyāvādī philosophers who want to kill God by imagining that He does not exist are certainly *kṛta-droha*, or most injurious to themselves and others. The impersonalist imagines that he himself is supreme and thus creates a most dangerous situation for himself and his followers. Similarly, the *karmīs*, who are dedicated to material sense gratification, are also killers of the self, because by their absorption in material consciousness they lose all chance of experiencing the Absolute Truth and the truth of their own self. Therefore, all living entities who come under the control of materialistic regulations and duties are unnecessarily harassing themselves and others, and a pure Vaiṣṇava feels great compassion and concern for them. A devotee never uses his mind, body or words to perform any act harmful to the welfare of any living entity.

(3) *Titikṣu*. A devotee forgives and forgets any offense against himself. A Vaiṣṇava is personally detached from his material body, which is made of pus, stool, blood, and so on. Therefore the devotee is able to overlook the obnoxious behavior he sometimes meets with in the course of preaching work and always deals with people as a perfect gentleman. A Vaiṣṇava

loudly chants the holy name of the Lord and tolerates and forgives those fallen conditioned souls who are unable to reciprocate properly with a pure devotee.

(4) *Satya-sāra*. A devotee always remembers that he is the eternal servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is omniscient, the reservoir of all pleasure and the ultimate enjoyer of all activities. By avoiding activities outside devotional service, a devotee remains fixed in the truth, does not uselessly waste time and thus becomes bold, powerful and steady.

(5) *Anavadyātmā*. A devotee knows that the material world is a temporary phantasmagoria and therefore does not envy anyone in any material situation. He never tries to agitate others or criticize them unnecessarily.

(6) *Sama*. A devotee remains steady and equal in material happiness or distress, fame or infamy. His actual wealth is his consciousness of Kṛṣṇa, and he understands that his real self-interest lies outside the scope of material nature. He does not become excited or depressed by external events, but remains fixed in consciousness of the omnipotency of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

(7) *Sarvopakāra*. Neglecting one's selfish desires and working for the satisfaction of others is called *paropakāra*, whereas causing trouble to others for one's personal gratification is called *parāpakāra*. A devotee always works for the pleasure of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the resting place of all living entities, and thus a devotee's activities are ultimately pleasing to everyone.

Devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is the perfectional stage of welfare work, since Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller of everyone's happiness and distress. Foolish persons under the influence of false egotism, considering themselves to be the ultimate well-wishers of others, execute superficial materialistic activities rather than attending to the eternal happiness of others. Because a devotee remains pure and engages in missionary activities, he is everyone's best friend.

(8) *Kāmair ahata-dhī*. Ordinary persons see all material things as objects for their personal gratification and thus try to acquire or control them. Ultimately a man wants to possess a woman and enjoy sex gratification with her. The Supreme Lord supplies the desired fuel that causes the fire of lust to burn painfully in one's heart, but the Lord does not give self-realization to such a misguided person. Lord Kṛṣṇa is transcendental and neutral, but if one is eager to exploit the Lord's creation, the Lord gives one facility through *māyā*, and one becomes cheated of real happiness by entangling himself in the false role of a great and lusty enjoyer of the world. On the other hand, one who has taken full shelter of Kṛṣṇa is enriched with perfect knowledge and bliss and is not cheated by the seductive appearances of the material world. A pure devotee does not follow the path of the foolish deer, which is seduced by the hunter's horn and killed. A devotee is never attracted by the sensuous entreaties of a beautiful woman, and he avoids hearing from bewildered *karmīs* about the so-called glories of material acquisition. Similarly, a pure devotee is not bewildered by aroma or taste. He does not become attached to sumptuous eating, nor does he spend the whole day

making arrangements for bodily comfort. The only actual enjoyer of God's creation is the Lord Himself, and the living entities are secondary enjoyers who experience unlimited pleasure through the Lord's pleasure. This perfect process of experiencing pleasure is called *bhakti-yoga*, or pure devotional service, and a devotee never sacrifices his auspicious position of steady intelligence, even in the face of so-called material opportunity.

(9) *Dānta*. A devotee is naturally repelled by sinful activities and controls his senses by dedicating all his acts to Kṛṣṇa. This requires steady concentration and a cautious mentality.

(10) *Mṛdu*. A materialistic person will always see people as friends or enemies and thus will sometimes justify cruel or small-minded behavior in order to subdue his opponents. Since a devotee has taken shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he does not consider anyone his enemy and is never disturbed by the tendency to desire or enjoy the suffering of others. Thus he is *mṛdu*, or gentle and sublime.

(11) *Śuci*. A devotee never touches that which is impure or improper, and simply by remembering such a pure devotee, one is freed from the tendency to sin. Because of his perfect behavior, a devotee is called *śuci*, or pure.

(12) *Akiñcana*. A devotee is free from possessiveness and is not eager to enjoy or renounce anything, since he considers everything to be Lord Kṛṣṇa's property.

(13) *Anīha*. A devotee never acts on his own behalf, but rather for the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He is therefore aloof from ordinary, worldly affairs.

(14) *Mita-bhuk*. A devotee accepts material sense objects only as far as necessary, to keep himself healthy and fit in Lord Kṛṣṇa's service. He is therefore not entangled by his sense activities and never injures his self-realization. When necessary, a devotee can give up anything for Lord Kṛṣṇa's service, but he does not accept or reject anything for his personal prestige.

(15) *Śānta*. Those trying to exploit the Lord's creation are always disturbed. A devotee, however, is detached from such pointless activities and understands sense gratification to be diametrically opposed to his self-interest. Being always engaged according to the Lord's desire, he remains peaceful.

(16) *Sthira*. Remembering that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the basis of everything, a devotee does not become fearful or impatient.

(17) *Mat-śaraṇa*. A devotee does not take pleasure in anything except serving Lord Kṛṣṇa and is constantly attentive in the execution of his duties. A devotee knows that only Lord Kṛṣṇa can protect him and engage him in useful work.

(18) *Muni*. A devotee is thoughtful and through intelligent contemplation avoids becoming distracted from his spiritual advancement. By intelligence he is freed from doubts about Lord Kṛṣṇa and confronts all problems in life with steady Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(19) *Apramatta*. One who forgets the Supreme Lord is more or less crazy, but a devotee remains sane by offering his activities to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

(20) *Gabhīrātmā*. As a devotee merges into the ocean of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, his own consciousness becomes deeper and deeper; ordinary, superficial persons hovering on the material platform cannot fathom the extent of a devotee's awareness.

(21) *Dhṛtimān*. By controlling the urges of the tongue and genitals the devotee remains steady and patient and does not impulsively change his position.

(22) *Jita-śaḍ-guṇa*. By spiritual knowledge, a devotee is able to conquer the pushings of hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age and death.

(23) *Amānī*. A devotee is not puffed up, and even if he is famous, he does not take such fame very seriously.

(24) *Māna-da*. A devotee offers all respects to others, since everyone is part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

(25) *Kalya*. A devotee is expert in making people understand the truth of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(26) *Maitra*. A devotee does not cheat anyone by encouraging them in the bodily concept of life; rather, by his missionary work a devotee is the true friend of everyone.

(27) *Kāruṇika*. A devotee tries to make people sane and thus is most merciful. He is *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*, or one who is unhappy to see the unhappiness of others.

(28) *Kavi*. A devotee is expert in studying the transcendental qualities of Lord Kṛṣṇa and is able to show the harmony and compatibility of the Lord's apparently contradictory qualities. This is possible through expert knowledge of the absolute nature of the Lord. Lord Caitanya is softer than a rose and harder than a thunderbolt, but these opposing qualities can easily be understood in terms of the Lord's transcendental nature and purpose. One who is always able to understand the truth of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, without opposition or confusion, is called *kavi*, or most learned.

The position of those on the spiritual path can be understood in terms of their development of the qualities mentioned above. Ultimately, the most important quality is to take shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa, since the Lord can award all good qualities to His sincere devotee. In the lowest stage of devotional service one acts with a desire to enjoy sense gratification but at the same time tries to offer the fruits to the Lord. This stage is called *karma-miśrā bhakti*. As one gradually purifies himself in devotional service, he becomes detached through knowledge and gains relief from anxiety. In this stage he becomes attached to transcendental knowledge, and therefore this stage is called *jñāna-miśrā bhakti*, or devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa with a desire to enjoy the fruits of transcendental knowledge. But because pure love for Kṛṣṇa is actually the greatest happiness and the natural position of the living entity, a sincere devotee gradually overcomes his desire to enjoy sense gratification and knowledge and comes to the stage of pure devotional service, which is devoid of personal desire. *Na karmāṇi tyajed yogī karmabhis tyajyate hi saḥ*: "The *yogī* should not give up his work, but rather

should cultivate detachment by which his material activities will automatically vanish.” In other words, one should continue to perform one’s prescribed duties, even imperfectly. If one is sincere about advancing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then by the strength of *bhakti-yoga* his activities will gradually be transformed into pure loving service.

There are innumerable examples of fruitive workers, mental speculators and materialistic devotees who became perfect by the strength of devotional service. By rendering loving service to Kṛṣṇa, one automatically experiences the greatest pleasure of life and is endowed with perfect knowledge. There is nothing lacking in the process of pure devotional service, and there is no need for any extraneous endeavor to acquire sense pleasure or philosophical satisfaction. One must be completely convinced that simply by serving Kṛṣṇa one will get all perfection in life. Even if one lacks some or all of the above-mentioned qualities, one should sincerely engage in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s service, and gradually one’s character will become perfect. One who is a sincere devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa will develop all godly qualities by the mercy of the Lord, and one who is already serving the Lord with the above-mentioned qualities is to be understood as the greatest devotee. As indicated in verse 32, a pure devotee of the Lord is fully aware of the pious advantages of executing duties within the *varṇāśrama* system, and he is similarly aware of the harmful mistake of neglecting such duties. Still, having full faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a devotee gives up all ordinary social and religious activities and engages fully in devotional service. He knows that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate source of everything and that all perfection comes from Lord Kṛṣṇa alone. Because of his extraordinary faith, the devotee is called *sattama*, or the best among all living beings.

As explained by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Upadeśāmṛta*, a devotee who has not yet developed the good qualities mentioned above but is nevertheless sincerely endeavoring for Kṛṣṇa consciousness should receive the mercy of superior Vaiṣṇavas. One should not necessarily accept intimate association with such an aspirant to pure devotional service, but one should be confident that by chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa such a person will eventually attain all perfection. One can imagine the beauty of a society filled with saintly persons, as described in these verses. The wonderful Kṛṣṇa conscious qualities mentioned above are the basis of a peaceful and prosperous society, and if everyone takes to the loving service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, then certainly the present atmosphere of fear, violence, lust, greed and insanity can be replaced by a celestial situation in which all leaders and citizens will be happy. The essential points here are *mat-śaraṇa* (“one should take full shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa”) and *mām bhajeta* (“one should worship the Lord through the authorized process”). In this way the entire world can become *sattama*, or most perfect.

TEXT 11.33

*jñātvājñātvātha ye vai mām
yāvān yaś cāsmi yādṛśaḥ
bhajanty ananya-bhāvena
te me bhaktatamā matāḥ*

jñātvā – knowing; *ajñātvā* – not knowing; *atha* – thus; *ye* – those who; *vai* – certainly; *mām* – Me; *yāvān* – as; *yaḥ* – who; *ca* – also; *asmi* – I am; *yādṛśaḥ* – how I am; *bhajanti* – worship; *ananya-bhāvena* – with exclusive devotion; *te* – they; *me* – by Me; *bhakta-tamāḥ* – the best devotees; *matāḥ* – are considered.

TRANSLATION

My devotees may or may not know exactly what I am, who I am and how I exist, but if they worship Me with unalloyed love, then I consider them to be the best of devotees.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, although *yāvān* indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa cannot be limited by time or space, He becomes limited by the love of His pure devotees. For example, Lord Kṛṣṇa never steps one foot out of Vṛndāvana, because of the intense love of its inhabitants for Him. In this way, the Lord comes under the control of His devotees' love. The word *yaḥ* indicates that Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth who appears as the son of Vasudeva, or as Śyāmasundara. *Yādṛśa* indicates that the Lord is *ātmārāma*, or completely self-satisfied, and also *āpta-kāma*, or "one who automatically fulfills all of His desires." Still, being affected by the love of His devotees, the Lord sometimes appears to be *anātmārāma*, or dependent on the love of His devotees, and *anāptakāma*, unable to achieve His desire without the cooperation of His devotees. Actually, the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, is always independent, but He reciprocates the intense love of His devotees and thus appears to be dependent on them, just as He apparently became dependent on Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā during His childhood pastimes in Vṛndāvana. The word *ajñātvā* ("inexperienced, lacking knowledge") indicates that sometimes a devotee may not have a proper philosophical understanding of the Personality of Godhead or due to love may temporarily forget the Lord's position. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (11.41) Arjuna says:

*sakheti matvā prasabham yad uktaṁ
he kṛṣṇa he yādava he sakheti
ajānatā mahimānaṁ tavedaṁ
mayā pramādāt praṇayena vāpi*

"I have in the past addressed You as 'O Kṛṣṇa,' 'O Yādava,' 'O my friend,' without knowing Your glories. Please forgive whatever I may have done in madness or in love." Arjuna's words *ajānatā mahimānam* have the same meaning as Kṛṣṇa's words *ajñātvā mām* in this verse of the *Bhāgavatam*. Both indicate incomplete understanding of Kṛṣṇa's glories. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Arjuna says, *praṇayena*: his forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa's supreme position was caused by his love for Him. In this verse, Kṛṣṇa excuses such lapses on the part of His devotees with the words *ajñātvā mām*, which indicate that even

though devotees may not fully appreciate His exalted position, Kṛṣṇa accepts their loving service. Thus this verse clearly reveals the supreme position of *bhakti*. Lord Kṛṣṇa also states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (11.54):

*bhaktyā tv ananyayā śakya
aham evaṁ-vidho'rjuna
jñātuṁ draṣṭuṁ ca tattvena
praveṣṭuṁ ca parantapa*

“My dear Arjuna, only by undivided devotional service can I be understood as I am, standing before you, and can thus be seen directly. Only in this way can you enter into the mysteries of My understanding.”

Although one may develop innumerable saintly qualities, without love of Kṛṣṇa one will not achieve complete success. One must understand the Personality of Godhead as He is and love Him. Even if one is not capable of analytically understanding the position of God, if one simply loves Kṛṣṇa, then one is certainly perfect. Many of the residents of Vṛndāvana had no idea that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, nor did they know of Kṛṣṇa's potencies or incarnations. They simply loved Kṛṣṇa with their hearts and souls, and therefore they are considered most perfect.

TEXTS 11.34-41

*mal-liṅga-mad-bhakta-jana-
darśana-sparśanārcanam
paricaryā stutiḥ prahva-
guṇa-karmānukīrtanam
mat-kathā-śravaṇe śraddhā
mad-anudhyānam uddhava
sarva-lābhopaharaṇaṁ
dāsyenātma-nivedanam
maj-janma-karma-kathanam
mama parvānumodanam
gīta-tāṇḍava-vāditra-
goṣṭhībhir mad-gṛhotsavaḥ
yātrā bali-vidhānaṁ ca
sarva-vārṣika-parvasu
vaidikī tāntrikī dīkṣā
madīya-vrata-dhāraṇam
mamārcā-sthāpane śraddhā
svataḥ saṁhatya codyamaḥ
udyānopavanākṛīḍa-
pura-mandira-karmaṇi
sammārjanopalepābhyāṁ
seka-maṇḍala-vartanaḥ
gṛha-śuśrūṣaṇaṁ mahyaṁ
dāsa-vad yad amāyayā*

*amānitvam adambhitvaṁ
kṛtasyāparikīrtanam
api dīpāvalokaṁ me
nopayuñjyān niveditam
yad yad iṣṭatamaṁ loke
yac cāti-priyam ātmanaḥ
tat tan nivedayet mahyaṁ
tad ānantyāya kalpate*

mat-liṅga – My appearance in this world as the Deity, etc.; *mat-bhakta-jana* – My devotees; *darśana* – seeing; *sparśana* – touching; *arcanam* – and worshiping; *paricaryā* – rendering personal service; *stutiḥ* – offering prayers of glorification; *prahva* – obeisances; *guṇa* – My qualities; *karma* – and activities; *anukīrtanam* – constantly glorifying; *mat-kathā* – topics about Me; *śravaṇe* – in hearing; *śraddhā* – faith due to love; *mat-anudhyānam* – always meditating on Me; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *sarva-lābha* – all that one acquires; *upaharaṇam* – offering; *dāsyena* – by accepting oneself as My servant; *ātma-nivedanam* – self-surrender; *mat-janma-karma-kathanam* – glorifying My birth and activities; *mama* – My; *parva* – in festivals such as Janmāṣṭamī; *anumodanam* – taking great pleasure; *gīta* – by songs; *tāṇḍava* – dancing; *vāditra* – musical instruments; *goṣṭhībhiḥ* – and discussions among devotees; *mat-gr̥ha* – in My temple; *utsavaḥ* – festivals; *yātrā* – celebrations; *bali-vidhānam* – making offerings; *ca* – also; *sarva* – in all; *vārṣika* – annual; *parvasu* – in the celebrations; *vaidikī* – mentioned in the Vedas; *tāntrikī* – mentioned in literatures such as the *Pañcarātra*; *dīkṣā* – initiation; *madīya* – in relation to Me; *vrata* – vows; *dhāraṇam* – observing; *mama* – My; *arcā* – of the Deity form; *sthāpane* – in the installation; *śraddhā* – being faithfully attached; *svataḥ* – by oneself; *samhatya* – with others; *ca* – also; *udyamaḥ* – endeavor; *udyāna* – of flower gardens; *upavana* – orchards; *ākṛṣṭa* – places of pastimes; *pura* – devotional cities; *mandira* – and temples; *karmaṇi* – in the construction; *sammārjana* – by thoroughly sweeping and dusting; *upalepābhyām* – then by smearing water and cow dung; *seka* – by sprinkling scented water; *maṇḍala-vartanaḥ* – by construction of *maṇḍalas*; *gr̥ha* – of the temple, which is My home; *śuśrūṣaṇam* – service; *mahyam* – for My sake; *dāsa-vat* – being like a servant; *yat* – which; *amāyayā* – without duplicity; *amānitvam* – being without false prestige; *adambhitvam* – being prideless; *kṛtasya* – one’s devotional activities; *aparikīrtanam* – not advertising; *api* – moreover; *dīpa* – of lamps; *avalokam* – the light; *me* – which belong to Me; *na* – not; *upayuñjyāt* – one should engage; *niveditam* – things already offered to others; *yat yat* – anything; *iṣṭa-tamam* – most desired; *loke* – in the material world; *yat ca* – and anything; *ati-priyam* – most dear; *ātmanaḥ* – of oneself; *tat tat* – that very thing; *nivedayet* – one should offer; *mahyam* – unto Me; *tat* – that offering; *ānantyāya* – for immortality; *kalpate* – qualifies one.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, one can give up false pride and prestige by engaging in the following devotional activities. One may purify oneself by seeing, touching, worshipping, serving, and offering prayers of glorification and obeisances to My form as the Deity and to My pure devotees. One should also glorify My transcendental qualities and activities, hear with love and faith the narrations of My glories and constantly meditate on Me. One should offer to Me whatever one acquires, and accepting oneself as My eternal servant, one should give oneself completely to Me. One should always discuss My birth and activities and enjoy life by participating in festivals, such as Janmāṣṭamī, which glorify My pastimes. In My temple, one should also participate in festivals and ceremonies by singing, dancing, playing musical instruments and discussing Me with other Vaiṣṇavas. One should observe all the regularly celebrated annual festivals by attending ceremonies, pilgrimages and making offerings. One should also observe religious vows such as Ekādaśī and take initiation by the procedures mentioned in the Vedas, Pañcarātra and other, similar literatures. One should faithfully and lovingly support the installation of My Deity, and individually or in cooperation with others one should work for the construction of Kṛṣṇa conscious temples and cities as well as flower gardens, fruit gardens and special areas to celebrate My pastimes. One should consider oneself to be My humble servant, without duplicity, and thus should help to clean the temple, which is My home. First one should sweep and dust thoroughly, and then one should further cleanse with water and cow dung. Having dried the temple, one should sprinkle scented water and decorate the temple with maṇḍalas. One should thus act just like My servant. A devotee should never advertise his devotional activities; therefore his service will not be the cause of false pride. One should never use lamps that are offered to Me for other purposes simply because there is need of illumination, and similarly, one should never offer to Me anything that has been offered to or used by others. Whatever is most desired by one within this material world, and whatever is most dear to oneself - one should offer that very thing to Me. Such an offering qualifies one for eternal life.

PURPORT

In these eight verses Lord Kṛṣṇa ends His discussion of saintly qualities in general and describes the specific characteristics of the devotees of the Lord. Lord Kṛṣṇa has clearly described both here and in *Bhagavad-gītā* that the ultimate goal of life is to surrender fully to Him and become His pure devotee. Herein the Lord elaborately describes the process of devotional service. One should offer everything that one acquires to the Lord, thinking, "Lord Kṛṣṇa has sent these things so that I may serve Him nicely." One

ultimately should understand that the minute spirit soul is part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and thus one should surrender one's very self to the Lord. Just as an ordinary servant is meek and submissive to his master, similarly, a devotee should always be submissive to his spiritual master, who is a representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He should realize how his body and mind are purified simply by his seeing the spiritual master or by accepting on his head the water offered to the spiritual master. It is emphasized in these verses that one should attend Vaiṣṇava festivals. As far as possible, large festivals should be held all over the world so that people can gradually learn how to perfect human life. The words *mamārcā-sthāpane śraddhā* are significant. Here Lord Kṛṣṇa states that one should have faith in His Deity worship, since the Lord is personally present as the Deity. The words *udyānopavanākrīḍa-pura-mandira-karmaṇi* indicate that there should be a serious endeavor to construct beautiful temples and Vaiṣṇava cities with ample parks, orchards and flower gardens. An outstanding example of such endeavors can be presently seen in India at the Māyāpur Candrodaya Mandira. The words *dīpāvalokaṁ me nopayunījyān niveditam* indicate that one may never use the Deity's paraphernalia for sense gratification. If there is a shortage of electricity or lights, one may not use the Deity's lamps, nor should one ever offer to Lord Kṛṣṇa paraphernalia previously offered to or used by others. In these verses, the importance of Deity worship and Vaiṣṇava festivals is emphasized in many ways. Lord Kṛṣṇa promises that whoever sincerely performs these activities will certainly go back home, back to Godhead (*tad ānantyāya kalpate*). One should offer his most dear possession to Lord Kṛṣṇa, not that which is superfluous or unwanted. If one is most attached to his family, one should see that his family is engaged in Lord Kṛṣṇa's service. If one is most attached to money, that should be given for propagating Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And if one considers one's intelligence to be most valuable, he should preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness with great logic and reason. If we offer our most valuable possessions to Lord Kṛṣṇa, we will automatically become dear to the Lord and go back to Godhead.

TEXT 11.42

*sūryo'gnir brāhmaṇā gāvo
vaiṣṇavaḥ khaṁ maruj jalam
bhūr ātmā sarva-bhūtāni
bhadra pūjā-padāni me*

sūryaḥ - the sun; *agniḥ* - fire; *brāhmaṇāḥ* - the *brāhmaṇas*; *gāvaḥ* - the cows; *vaiṣṇavaḥ* - the devotee of the Lord; *khaṁ* - the sky; *marut* - the wind; *jalam* - water; *bhūḥ* - the earth; *ātmā* - the individual soul; *sarva-bhūtāni* - all living entities; *bhadra* - O saintly Uddhava; *pūjā* - of worship; *padāni* - the places; *me* - of Me.

TRANSLATION

O saintly Uddhava, please know that you may worship Me in the sun, fire, brāhmaṇas, cows, Vaiṣṇavas, sky, wind, water, earth, individual soul and all living entities.

PURPORT

Unless one understands that Lord Kṛṣṇa is all-pervading and that everything is resting within the Lord, one's Kṛṣṇa consciousness is third class and materialistic. It is clearly stated in all Vedic literatures that the Supreme Absolute Truth is the source of everything. Everything is within Him, and He is within everything. To avoid a materialistic conception of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one should not think that the Lord exists only in a particular time and place. Rather, one should understand that He exists at all times and in all places and that one may search for and find Lord Kṛṣṇa within all things. The word *pūjā-padāni* indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa is all-pervading, but this does not mean that all things are Lord Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks this verse to clarify His supremacy as the all-pervading Personality of Godhead and to show the path of complete self-realization.

TEXTS 11.43-45

*sūrye tu vidyayā trayyā
haviṣāgnau yajeta mām
ātithyena tu viprāgrye
goṣv aṅga yavasādinā
vaiṣṇave bandhu-sat-kṛtyā
hṛdi khe dhyāna-niṣṭhayā
vāyau mukhya-dhiyā toyē
dravyais toya-puraḥsaraiḥ
sthaṇḍile mantra-hṛdayair
bhogair ātmānam ātmani
kṣetra-jñam sarva-bhūteṣu
samatvena yajeta mām*

sūrye - in the sun; *tu* - indeed; *vidyayā trayyā* - by offering selected Vedic hymns of praise, worship and obeisances; *haviṣā* - with offerings of clarified butter; *agnau* - in the fire; *yajeta* - one should worship; *mām* - Me; *ātithyena* - by respectfully receiving them as guests even when uninvited; *tu* - indeed; *vipra* - of *brāhmaṇas*; *agrye* - in the best; *goṣu* - in the cows; *aṅga* - O Uddhava; *yavasa-ādinā* - by offering grass and other paraphernalia for their maintenance; *vaiṣṇave* - in the Vaiṣṇava; *bandhu* - with loving friendship; *sat-kṛtyā* - by honoring; *hṛdi* - within the heart; *khe* - within the inner space; *dhyāna* - in meditation; *niṣṭhayā* - by being fixed; *vāyau* - in the air; *mukhya* - the most important; *dhiyā* - considering by intelligence; *toyē* - in water; *dravyaiḥ* - by material elements; *toya-puraḥ-saraiḥ* - by water, etc.; *sthaṇḍile* - in the earth; *mantra-hṛdayaiḥ* - by application of confidential *mantras*; *bhogaiḥ* - by offering of materially enjoyable objects; *ātmānam* - the *jīva* soul; *ātmani* - within the body; *kṣetra-jñam* - the Supersoul; *sarva-*

bhūteṣu – within all living beings; *samatvena* – seeing Him equally everywhere; *yajeta* – one should worship; *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, one should worship Me within the sun by chanting selected Vedic mantras and by performing worship and offering obeisances. One may worship Me within fire by offering oblations of ghee, and one may worship Me among the brāhmaṇas by respectfully receiving them as guests, even when uninvited. I can be worshiped within the cows by offerings of grass and other suitable grains and paraphernalia for the pleasure and health of the cows, and one may worship Me within the Vaiṣṇavas by offering loving friendship to them and honoring them in all respects. Through steady meditation I am worshiped within the inner space of the heart, and within the air I can be worshiped by knowledge that prāṇa, the life air, is the chief among elements. I am worshiped within water by offerings of water itself, along with other elements such as flowers and tulasī leaves, and one may worship Me within the earth by proper application of confidential seed mantras. One may worship Me within the individual living entity by offering food and other enjoyable substances, and one may worship Me within all living entities by seeing the Supersoul within all of them, thus maintaining equal vision.

PURPORT

Significantly, the Lord emphasizes in these three verses that one should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is expanded within all living beings. It is not recommended that one accept any material or spiritual object other than the Lord as supreme. By maintaining steady consciousness of the Lord in His all-pervading feature, one can remain in a worshipful mood twenty-four hours a day. Thus, one will naturally try to engage all material and spiritual elements in the loving service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. If because of ignorance one forgets the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one may become inclined to worship powerful material phenomena independent of the Supreme Lord, or one may foolishly consider oneself to be supreme. One should remain sane and accept the worshipable presence of the Supreme Lord within everything.

TEXT 11.46

*dhiṣṇyeṣv ity eṣu mad-rūpaṁ
śaṅkha-cakra-gadāmbujaiḥ
yuktaṁ catur-bhujam śāntaṁ
dhyāyann arcet samāhitaḥ*

dhiṣṇyeṣu – in the previously mentioned places of worship; *iti* – thus (by the previously mentioned processes); *eṣu* – in them; *mat-rūpaṁ* – My transcendental form; *śaṅkha* – with the conchshell; *cakra* – Sudarśana disc; *gadā* – club; *ambujaiḥ* – and lotus flower; *yuktaṁ* – equipped; *catur-bhujam* –

with four arms; *śāntam* – peaceful; *dhyāyan* – meditating; *arcet* – one should worship; *samāhitaḥ* – with complete attention.

TRANSLATION

Thus, in the previously mentioned places of worship and according to the processes I have described, one should meditate on My peaceful, transcendental form with four arms holding a conchshell, Sudarśana disc, club and lotus flower. In this way, one should worship Me with fixed attention.

PURPORT

The Lord has previously explained that He appears in different transcendental forms to His pure devotees so that they may unlimitedly increase their love of Godhead. Here is given a general description of the four-armed Nārāyaṇa form, which pervades the material world as Supersoul, or Paramātmā. The pure devotees, however, do not meditate upon the Lord within the heart but rather render active service to a specific form of the Lord, such as Rāma or Kṛṣṇa, and thus perfect their realization of Bhagavān, or the Supreme Lord, who engages in transcendental pastimes with His devotees in the spiritual world. Yet even within the material world one can spiritualize one's existence by seeing the Supreme Lord within everything and worshiping Him by constant meditation. As mentioned in the previous verses, one should also go to the temple and specifically worship the Deity and participate in spiritual festivals. One should not be puffed up and claim that because one is meditating on the Lord within nature there is no need to go to the temple. Temple worship has been repeatedly emphasized by the Lord Himself. The word *samāhita* in this verse indicates *samādhi*. If one very carefully worships the Deity or hears and chants about the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one is certainly in *samādhi*. By worshiping and glorifying the Lord twenty-four hours a day one becomes a liberated soul and gradually rises completely beyond the influence of the material creation. The living entity is called *ātmā*, or eternal soul, because of his relationship with the Paramātmā, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By worshiping the Lord, our eternal nature revives, and as we increase our enthusiasm and steadiness in devotional service, material existence fades away.

TEXT 11.47

*iṣṭā-pūrtena mām evaṁ
yo yajeta samāhitaḥ
labhate mayi sad-bhaktim
mat-smṛtiḥ sādhu-sevayā*

iṣṭā – by sacrificial performances for one's own benefit; *pūrtena* – and pious works for the benefit of others, such as digging wells; *mām* – Me; *evaṁ* – thus; *yajeta* – one who; *yajeta* – worships; *samāhitaḥ* – with mind fixed in Me; *labhate* – such a person obtains; *mayi* – in Me; *sat-bhaktim* – unflinching devotional service; *mat-smṛtiḥ* – realized knowledge of Me; *sādhu* – with all superior qualities; *sevayā* – by service.

TRANSLATION

One who has executed sacrificial performances and pious works for My satisfaction, and who thus worships Me with fixed attention, obtains unflinching devotional service unto Me. By the excellent quality of his service such a worshiper obtains realized knowledge of Me.

PURPORT

The word *iṣṭā-pūrtena*, which means “sacrificial performances and pious works,” does not indicate deviation from the pure devotional service of the Lord. Lord Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu, is called Yajña, or the Lord of sacrifice, and in *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.29) Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasām*: “I am the actual enjoyer of all sacrifice.” The highest sacrifice is to chant the holy names of the Lord, and by taking shelter of the Lord’s names, one will acquire unflinching devotion and realized knowledge of the Absolute Truth. A realized devotee is very attentive in his devotional service, taking it as his life and soul. He keeps himself fit for devotional service by constantly worshiping and glorifying the lotus feet of the spiritual master and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such *hari-nāma-kīrtana* and *guru-pūjā* are the only practical methods by which one can achieve pure devotional service. When *hari-kīrtana* is expanded, it is called *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*. One should not dry up by performing unauthorized austerities or sacrifices; rather, one should engage with all enthusiasm in the great sacrifice of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, which enables one to easily achieve the highest perfection of human life.

TEXT 11.48

*prāyeṇa bhakti-yogena
sat-saṅgena vinoddhava
nopāyo vidyate samyak
prāyaṇaṁ hi satām aham*

prāyeṇa – for all practical purposes; *bhakti-yogena* – devotional service unto Me; *sat-saṅgena* – which is made possible by association with My devotees; *vinā* – without; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *na* – not; *upāyaḥ* – any means; *vidyate* – there is; *samyak* – that actually works; *prāyaṇam* – the true path of life or actual shelter; *hi* – because; *satām* – of liberated souls; *aham* – I.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, I am personally the ultimate shelter and way of life for saintly liberated persons, and thus if one does not engage in My loving devotional service, which is made possible by associating with My devotees, then for all practical purposes, one possesses no effective means for escaping from material existence.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa has described to Uddhava the characteristics of *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*, both of which are considered to be spiritual processes. Now, however, Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly indicates that *bhakti-yoga* is the only real means

to totally free oneself from material existence, and that *bhakti-yoga* is not possible without *sat-saṅga*, or association with other Vaiṣṇavas. On the path of *bhakti-miśra jñāna*, or speculation on the Absolute Truth mixed with devotion, one is still affected by the three modes of material nature. The pure soul, liberated from all material qualities, has no tendency or desire to engage in philosophical speculation, severe austerities or impersonal meditation. The pure soul simply loves Kṛṣṇa and wants to serve Him constantly. *Jīvera 'svarūpa' haya - kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa.'* Pure devotional service to the Lord is called *kevala-bhakti*, whereas devotional service mixed with speculative propensities is called *guṇa-bhūta-bhakti*, or devotional service polluted by the material modes of nature. One who is actually intelligent does not make a show of philosophical wizardry but rather discerns the superiority of pure love of Godhead and takes to the path of *kevala-bhakti*. One who emphasizes so-called intellectual achievements is actually less intelligent, because such a person is more attracted to intelligence than to the pure soul, which is superior. It should be understood, however, that pure devotional service is not nonphilosophical or anti-intellectual. The Absolute Truth is far more extensive than partial truth. Therefore, one who is in full knowledge of Lord Kṛṣṇa has the greatest facility to engage in philosophical analysis, since a pure devotee is working with the entire range of conceptual categories. Those who do not know Lord Kṛṣṇa are attracted to the impersonal Brahman or the localized Paramātmā, but they are not aware of the ultimate category of understanding called Bhagavān, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lacking knowledge of Bhagavān, such imperfect philosophers certainly do not understand the expansion, interaction and withdrawal of the Lord's innumerable potencies and thus cannot fully analyze them. By faithfully accepting everything Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks as the absolute truth, one comes to the mature platform of philosophy and achieves perfect knowledge.

In addition to philosophical or intellectual understanding, pure devotional service also awards all other benefits in life, both material and spiritual; therefore one who for any purpose whatsoever accepts a process other than devotional service has unfortunately misunderstood the nature of pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. It is emphasized here that one must cultivate devotional service in the association of other devotees. On the other hand, the *jñāna-yoga* process is cultivated alone, because it is difficult for even two mental speculators to be in the same place without their association degenerating into constant quarrel. Other processes of self-realization are compared to the nipples on a goat's neck. They look just like breast nipples, but they will not give any milk whatsoever. In this regard Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has quoted the following verses, spoken by Śrī Uddhava, Śukadeva Gosvāmī and Nārada Muni respectively.

*tāpa-trayeṇābhīhitasya ghore
santapyamānasya bhavādhvaniha*

*paśyāmi nānyac charaṇaṁ tavāṅghri-
dvandvātapatrād amṛtābhivarṣāt*

“My dear Lord, for one who is being cruelly burned in the blazing fire of material miseries, having fallen into the network of material existence, I do not see any other possible shelter besides Your two lotus feet, which are a shower of nectar extinguishing the fire of suffering.” (Bhāg. 11.19.9)

*saṁsāra-sindhūm ati-dustaram uttītīṣor
nānyaḥ plavo bhagavataḥ puruṣottamasya
līlā-kathā-rasa-niṣevaṇam antareṇa
puṁso bhaved vividha-duḥkha-davārditasya*

“Material existence is like an ocean that is extremely difficult to cross. The conditioned souls have fallen into this ocean, which is not cool but rather burns them with the fire of misery. For one who has fallen into this sea and desires to get out, there is no other rescue boat except the constant relishing within oneself of the pastime narrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (Bhāg. 12.4.40)

*kiṁ vā yogena sāṅkhyena
nyāsa-svādhyāyayor api
kiṁ vā śreyobhir anyaiś ca
na yatrātma-prado hariḥ*

“What is the use of the *yoga* system, philosophical speculation, mere renunciation of the world, or Vedic studies? In fact, what is the use of any so-called auspicious process without Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the source of our very existence?” (Bhāg. 4.31.12)

If, as stated in this verse, it is generally (*prāyeṇa*) impossible to escape material bondage without devotional service in the association of devotees, one can simply imagine the probabilities of liberation in Kali-yuga without the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. The chances are certainly zero. One may concoct a type of liberation on the mental platform, or one may live in a so-called spiritual society of mutual flattery, but if one actually wants to go back home, back to Godhead, and see with spiritual eyes the beautiful kingdom of God called Kṛṣṇaloka, one must take to Lord Caitanya’s movement and worship Lord Kṛṣṇa in the association of the *bhakta-gaṇa*, the devotees of the Lord.

TEXT 11.49

*athaitat paramaṁ guhyam
śṛṇvato yadu-nandana
su-gopyam api vakṣyāmi
tvam me bhṛtyaḥ suhṛt sakhā*

atha – thus; *etat* – this; *paramam* – supreme; *guhyam* – secret; *śṛṇvataḥ* – to you who are listening; *yadu-nandana* – O beloved of the Yadu dynasty; *su-gopyam* – most confidential; *api* – even; *vakṣyāmi* – I will speak; *tvam* – you; *me* – of Me; *bhṛtyaḥ* – are the servant; *suhṛt* – well-wisher; *sakhā* – and friend.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, O beloved of the Yadu dynasty, because you are My servant, well-wisher and friend, I shall now speak to you the most confidential knowledge. Please hear as I explain these great mysteries to you.

PURPORT

It is stated in the First Chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.8), *brūyuh snigdhasya śiṣyasya guravo guhyam apy uta*: a bona fide spiritual master naturally reveals all transcendental secrets to a sincere disciple. Śrī Uddhava had completely surrendered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and then only could the Lord explain such mysteries to him, because without complete faith the transmission of spiritual knowledge is impossible. Other processes of self realization, such as philosophical speculation, are imperfect and unsteady because the performer has personal desires, and there is no definite procedure by which to obtain the full mercy of the Supreme Lord. On the other hand, association with the pure devotees of the Lord is a self-sufficient process that is guaranteed to award the desired result. One must only learn how to associate with the pure devotees and one's life will be perfect. That is the sum and substance of this chapter.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Eleventh Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "The Symptoms of Conditioned and Liberated Living Entities."

CHAPTER TWELVE

Beyond Renunciation and Knowledge

In this chapter the glories of holy association and the superexcellence of the pure love of the residents of Vṛndāvana are described.

The association of saintly devotees destroys the soul's attachment to material life and is capable of bringing even the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, under one's control. Neither *yoga*, Sāṅkhya philosophy, ordinary religious duties, study of scriptures, austerities, renunciation, works of *iṣṭā* and *pūrtam*, charity, vows of fasting, worship of the Deity, secret *mantras*, visiting of holy places, nor adherence to any major or minor regulative principles can effect the same result. In every age there are demons, monsters, birds and animals who are in the modes of passion and ignorance, and there are also human beings in the categories of businessmen, women, workers, outcastes, and so on, who cannot study the Vedic scriptures. Nevertheless, by the purifying effect of the association of devotees they may all achieve the supreme abode of the Personality of Godhead, whereas without such saintly association, even those very seriously endeavoring in *yoga*, Sāṅkhya study, charity, vows and practice of the renounced order of life may remain incapable of attaining the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The young damsels of Vraja, ignorant of the true identity of Lord Kṛṣṇacandra, considered Him to be their paramour who would give them pleasure. Yet by the power of their constant association with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they attained to the supreme Absolute Truth, which even great demigods like Brahmā cannot achieve. The young women of Vṛndāvana displayed such deep attachment to Lord Kṛṣṇa that their minds, which were overflowing with the ecstasy of being with Him, perceived an entire night spent in His company as just a fraction of a second. However, when Akrūra took Śrī Kṛṣṇa along with Baladeva to Mathurā, the *gopīs* then thought each night without Him to be equal in duration to a millennium of the demigods. Being tormented by separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa, they could not imagine anything that could give them satisfaction other than His return. This is the incomparable excellence of the *gopīs'* pure love of God.

The Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, after imparting these instructions to Uddhava, advised that for the sake of attaining the Absolute Truth, Uddhava should give up all consideration of religion and irreligion as promulgated in the *śrutis* and *smṛtis* and instead take shelter of the example of the women of Vṛndāvana.

TEXTS 12.1-2

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
na rodhayati māṁ yogo
na sāṅkhyam dharma eva ca
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo
neṣṭā-pūrtam na dakṣiṇā
vratāni yajñaś chandāṁsi
tīrthāni niyamā yamāḥ

*yathāvarundhe sat-saṅgaḥ
sarva-saṅgāpaho hi mām*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *na rodhayati* – does not control; *mām* – Me; *yogaḥ* – the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system; *na* – neither; *sāṅkhyam* – the analytic study of the material elements; *dharmāḥ* – ordinary piety such as nonviolence; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *na* – neither; *svādhyāyaḥ* – chanting the *Vedas*; *tapāḥ* – penances; *tyāgaḥ* – the renounced order of life; *na* – nor; *iṣṭā-pūrtam* – the performance of sacrifice and public welfare activities such as digging wells or planting trees; *na* – neither; *dakṣiṇā* – charity; *vratāni* – taking vows such as fasting completely on Ekādaśī; *yajñāḥ* – worship of the demigods; *chandāmsi* – chanting confidential *mantras*; *tīrthāni* – going to holy places of pilgrimage; *niyamāḥ* – following major instructions for spiritual discipline; *yamāḥ* – and also minor regulations; *yathā* – as; *avarundhe* – brings under control; *sat-saṅgaḥ* – association with My devotees; *sarva* – all; *saṅga* – material association; *apahaḥ* – removing; *hi* – certainly; *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, by associating with My pure devotees one can destroy one’s attachment for all objects of material sense gratification. Such purifying association brings Me under the control of My devotee. One may perform the aṣṭāṅga-yoga system, engage in philosophical analysis of the elements of material nature, practice nonviolence and other ordinary principles of piety, chant the Vedas, perform penances, take to the renounced order of life, execute sacrificial performances and dig wells, plant trees and perform other public welfare activities, give in charity, carry out severe vows, worship the demigods, chant confidential mantras, visit holy places or accept major and minor disciplinary injunctions, but even by performing such activities one does not bring Me under his control.

PURPORT

The commentary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī on these two verses can be summarized as follows. One may serve the devotees of the Lord by assisting them or by having their personal association. Association with pure devotees is sufficient for self-realization because one can learn everything about spiritual advancement from such devotees. With perfect knowledge one can achieve all that one desires, for the process of devotional service immediately brings the blessings of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Pure devotional service is transcendental to the modes of nature, and therefore it appears mysterious to the souls conditioned by those modes. In the previous chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa stated, *haviṣāgnau yajeta mām*: “One may worship Me in fire by offering oblations of ghee.” (*Bhāg.* 11.11.43) Also, in verse 38 of the previous chapter it was mentioned that one should construct parks, recreational places, orchards, vegetable gardens, and so on. These serve to attract people to the temples of Kṛṣṇa, where they may

directly engage in chanting the holy name of the Lord. Such construction projects may be understood as *pūrtam*, or public welfare activities. Although Lord Kṛṣṇa mentions in these two verses that association with His pure devotees is far more powerful than processes such as *yoga*, philosophical speculation, sacrifices and public welfare activities, these secondary activities also please Lord Kṛṣṇa, but to a lesser extent. Specifically, they please the Lord when performed by devotees rather than by ordinary materialistic persons. Therefore the comparative term *yathā* (“according to proportion”) is used. In other words, such practices as sacrifice, austerity and philosophical study may help one become fit for rendering devotional service, and when such activities are performed by devotees aspiring for spiritual advancement, they become somewhat pleasing to the Lord. One may study the example of *vratāni*, or vows. The injunction that one should fast on Ekādaśī is a permanent vow for all Vaiṣṇavas, and one should not conclude from these verses that one may neglect the Ekādaśī vow. The superiority of *sat-saṅga*, or association with pure devotees, in awarding the fruit of love of Godhead does not mean that one should give up other processes or that these secondary processes are not permanent factors in *bhakti-yoga*. There are many Vedic injunctions instructing one to execute the *agnihotra* sacrifice, and the modern-day followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu also occasionally execute fire sacrifices. Such sacrifice is recommended by the Lord Himself in the previous chapter, and therefore it should not be given up by the devotees of the Lord. By performing Vedic ritualistic and purificatory processes, one is gradually elevated to the platform of devotional service, whereupon one is able to directly worship the Absolute Truth. One Vedic injunction states, “The result awarded for fasting continuously for one month on six different occasions can easily be achieved simply by accepting a handful of rice offered to Lord Viṣṇu. This facility is especially offered in the Kali-yuga.” Nevertheless, regulated fasting on Ekādaśī is not an impediment to spiritual advancement. Rather, it is a perpetual aspect of devotional service and can be considered an auxiliary principle supporting the main principle of worshiping Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. Because such secondary principles help one become fit for executing the primary processes of devotional service, they are also greatly beneficial. Therefore, such secondary principles are widely mentioned throughout Vedic literature. It may be concluded that such secondary principles are essential for advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and therefore one should never give up the principle of *vrata*, the execution of prescribed vows.

In the previous chapter Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī mentioned that the words *ājñāyaivaṁ guṇān doṣān* (*Bhāg.* 11.11.32) indicate that a devotee should select Vedic principles that do not conflict with his service to the Lord. Many of the elaborate Vedic ceremonies and complicated procedures for fasting, demigod worship and *yoga* practice cause great disturbance to the supreme process of *śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ*, hearing and chanting about the Lord;

therefore they are rejected by the Vaiṣṇavas. However, the processes helpful to devotional service should be accepted. The example can be given of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, who was instructed by the dying Bhīṣmadeva. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.9.27) Bhīṣma instructs King Yudhiṣṭhira in *dāna-dharma*, or public acts of charity, *rāja-dharma*, or the duties of a king, *mokṣa-dharma*, or duties for salvation, *strī-dharma*, or duties for women, and ultimately *bhāgavata-dharma*, or pure devotional service to the Lord. Bhīṣma did not limit his discussion to *bhāgavata-dharma*, because Lord Kṛṣṇa gave Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira the devotional service of acting as a king, and to execute his service Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja required extensive knowledge of civic affairs. However, one who is not rendering such prescribed devotional service in society should not unnecessarily involve himself in the material world, even by practice of Vedic rituals. Nothing should distract him from the ultimate goal of satisfying Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The principle of not giving up prescribed vows may be further illustrated by the example of Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. In the Ninth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find that although Mahārāja Ambarīṣa performed elaborate Vedic sacrifices, his goal was always the satisfaction of the Lord. The citizens in his kingdom did not desire to go to heaven, because they were always hearing about the glories of Vaiṣṇava. Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, along with his queen, observed the vow of Ekādaśī and Dvādaśī for one year. Since Ambarīṣa Mahārāja is considered to be a great jewel among Vaiṣṇavas, and since his behavior was always exemplary, it is definitely concluded that such vows as fasting on Ekādaśī are imperative for Vaiṣṇavas. It is further stated in Vedic literature, "If due to negligence a Vaiṣṇava does not fast on Ekādaśī, then his worship of Lord Viṣṇu is useless, and he will go to hell." The members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness fast from grains and beans on Ekādaśī, and this vow should always be observed by all of its members.

If one falsely thinks that one may obtain the association of Lord Kṛṣṇa merely by great austerities, brilliant studies in Sanskrit literature, magnanimous acts of charity, etc., one's Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be distorted and weakened. One should remember the example of Lord Caitanya, who practiced Kṛṣṇa consciousness by constantly hearing and chanting about Lord Kṛṣṇa. If by fasting, study, austerity or sacrifice one becomes more fit to participate in the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya, then such activities are also pleasing to Lord Kṛṣṇa. But the Lord clearly explains here that such activities can never become central in the practice of *bhakti-yoga*. They must remain in an auxiliary relationship to the supreme process of *sat-saṅga*, or association with pure devotees who hear and chant the glories of the Lord. Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted from Vedic literature that if one offends the Lord's devotees and does not learn to associate with them, Lord Viṣṇu personally places barriers in the path of such a person so that he may not enter into the Lord's company.

TEXTS 12.3-6

*sat-saṅgena hi daiteyā
yātudhānā mṛgāḥ khagāḥ
gandharvāpsaraso nāgāḥ
siddhāś cāraṇa-guhyakāḥ
vidyādharā manuṣyeṣu
vaiśyāḥ śūdrāḥ striyo'ntya-jāḥ
rajas-tamaḥ-prakṛtayas
tasmiṁs tasmin yuge yuge
bahavo mat-padam prāptās
tvāṣṭra-kāyādhavādayaḥ
vṛṣaparvā balir bāṇo
mayaś cātha vibhīṣaṇaḥ
sugrīvo hanumān ṛkṣo
gajo gṛdhro vaṇikpathaḥ
vyādhaḥ kubjā vraje gopyo
yajña-patnyas tathāpare*

sat-saṅgena – by association with My devotees; *hi* – certainly; *daiteyāḥ* – the sons of Diti; *yātudhānāḥ* – demons; *mṛgāḥ* – animals; *khagāḥ* – birds; *gandharva* – Gandharvas; *apsarasaḥ* – the society girls of heaven; *nāgāḥ* – snakes; *siddhāḥ* – residents of Siddhaloka; *cāraṇa* – the Cāraṇas; *guhyakāḥ* – the Guhyakas; *vidyādharāḥ* – the residents of Vidyādharaloka; *manuṣyeṣu* – among the human beings; *vaiśyāḥ* – mercantile men; *śūdrāḥ* – laborers; *striyaḥ* – women; *antya-jāḥ* – uncivilized men; *rajaḥ-tamaḥ-prakṛtayaḥ* – those bound in the modes of passion and ignorance; *tasmin tasmin* – in each and every; *yuge yuge* – age; *bahavaḥ* – many living entities; *mat* – My; *padam* – abode; *prāptāḥ* – achieved; *tvāṣṭra* – Vṛtrāsura; *kāyādhava* – Prahlāda Mahārāja; *ādayaḥ* – and others like them; *vṛṣaparvā* – named Vṛṣaparvā; *balir* – Bali Mahārāja; *bāṇaḥ* – Bāṇāsura; *mayaḥ* – the demon Maya; *ca* – also; *atha* – thus; *vibhīṣaṇaḥ* – Vibhīṣaṇa, the brother of Rāvaṇa; *sugrīvaḥ* – the monkey king Sugrīva; *hanumān* – the great devotee Hanumān; *ṛkṣaḥ* – Jāmbavān; *gajaḥ* – the devotee-elephant Gajendra; *gṛdhraḥ* – Jaṭāyu the vulture; *vaṇikpathaḥ* – the merchant Tulādhāra; *vyādhaḥ* – Dharma-vyādha; *kubjā* – the former prostitute Kubjā, saved by Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vraje* – in Vṛndāvana; *gopyaḥ* – the *gopīs*; *yajña-patnyaḥ* – the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* performing sacrifice; *tathā* – similarly; *apare* – others.

TRANSLATION

In every yuga many living entities entangled in the modes of passion and ignorance gained the association of My devotees. Thus, such living entities as the Daityas, Rākṣasas, birds, beasts, Gandharvas, Apsarās, Nāgas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Guhyakas and

Vidyādharas, as well as such lower-class human beings as the vaiśyas, śūdras, women and others, were able to achieve My supreme abode. Vṛtrāsura, Prahlāda Mahārāja and others like them also achieved My abode by association with My devotees, as did personalities such as Vṛṣaparvā, Bali Mahārāja, Bāṇāsura, Maya, Vibhīṣaṇa, Sugrīva, Hanumān, Jāmbavān, Gajendra, Jaṭāyu, Tulādhāra, Dharma-vyādha, Kubjā, the gopīs in Vṛndāvana and the wives of the brāhmaṇas who were performing sacrifice.

PURPORT

The Lord has mentioned devotees such as the *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana and also demons like Bāṇāsura to illustrate how He comes under the control of those who surrender to Him. It is understood that devotees like the *gopīs* and others mentioned here obtained pure love of Kṛṣṇa, whereas the demons generally obtained only salvation. Many demons were purified by association with devotees and came to accept devotional service to the Lord as the most important among the various activities in their lives, but the exalted devotees like Prahlāda and Bali Mahārāja know nothing except devotional service, which they accept as their very life. Still, the reformed demons are also mentioned so that readers of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will understand the enormous benefits one may achieve by associating with devotees of the Lord.

The demon Vṛtrāsura was the pious King Citraketu in his previous life, during which he associated with Śrī Nārada Muni, Śrī Aṅgirā Muni and Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. Prahlāda Mahārāja, being the son of Hiraṇyakaśipu, is considered a Daitya, or demon. Yet while still in the womb of his mother, Kayādhū, he associated with Nārada Muni by sound vibration. The demon Vṛṣaparvā was abandoned by his mother at birth, but he was raised by a *muni* and became a devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. Bali Mahārāja associated with his grandfather Prahlāda and also with Lord Vāmanadeva. Bali Mahārāja's son, Bāṇāsura, was saved by association with his father and Lord Śiva. He also associated with Lord Kṛṣṇa personally when the Lord cut off all but two of his one thousand arms, which had been awarded as a benediction by Lord Śiva. Understanding the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Bāṇāsura also became a great devotee. The demon Maya Dānava constructed an assembly house for the Pāṇḍavas and also associated with Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, eventually achieving the shelter of the Lord. Vibhīṣaṇa was a pious-natured demon, the brother of Rāvaṇa, and he associated with Hanumān and Rāmacandra.

Sugrīva, Hanumān, Jāmbavān and Gajendra are examples of animals who achieved the mercy of the Lord. Jāmbavān, or Ṛkṣarāja, was a member of a race of bears. He personally associated with Lord Kṛṣṇa, fighting with Him over the Syamantaka jewel. The elephant Gajendra in a previous life had association with devotees, and at the end of his life as Gajendra he was personally saved by the Lord. Jaṭāyu, the bird who at the cost of his own life assisted Lord Rāmacandra, associated with Śrī Garuḍa and Mahārāja Daśaratha as well as other devotees in *rāma-līlā*. He also personally met with

Sītā and Lord Rāma. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the association that the Gandharvas, Apsarās, Nāgas, Siddhas, Cāraṇas, Guhyakas and Vidyādharas had with the devotees is not very prominent and does not need to be mentioned. Vaṅkpatha is a *vaiśya*, and his story is mentioned in the *Mahābhārata* in connection with the pride of Jājali Muni.

The importance of association with devotees is illustrated in the story of Dharma-vyādha, the nonviolent hunter, as described in the *Varāha Purāṇa*. In a previous life he somehow became a *brahma-rākṣasa*, or *brāhmaṇa* ghost, but was eventually saved. In a previous Kali-yuga he had the association of a Vaiṣṇava king named Vāsu. The lady Kubjā associated directly with Lord Kṛṣṇa, and in her previous birth she had associated with Śrī Nārada Muni. The *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana rendered service to saintly persons in their previous births. Having had ample association with devotees, they became *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana in their next lives and associated with the eternally liberated *gopīs* who had descended there. They also had association with Tulasī-devī, or Vṛndādevī. The wives of the *brāhmaṇas* performing sacrifice had association with women sent by Lord Kṛṣṇa to sell flower garlands and betel nuts and heard about the Lord from them.

TEXT 12.7

*te nādhīta-śruti-gaṇā
nopāsita-mahattamāḥ
avratātapta-tapaśaḥ
mat-saṅgān mām upāgatāḥ*

te – they; *na* – not; *adhīta* – having studied; *śruti-gaṇāḥ* – the Vedic literatures; *na* – not; *upāsita* – having worshiped; *mahat-tamaḥ* – great saints; *avrata* – without vows; *atapta* – not having undergone; *tapaśaḥ* – austerities; *mat-saṅgāt* – simply by association with Me and My devotees; *mām* – Me; *upāgatāḥ* – they achieved.

TRANSLATION

The persons I have mentioned did not undergo serious studies of the Vedic literature, nor did they worship great saintly persons, nor did they execute severe vows or austerities. Simply by association with Me and My devotees, they achieved Me.

PURPORT

Study of the Vedic literature, worship of those who teach the *śruti-mantras*, acceptance of vows and austerities, etc., as mentioned previously, are helpful processes that please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this verse, however, the Lord again explains that all such processes are secondary to the essential process of associating with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His pure devotees. By other processes one may gain the association of the Lord and His devotees, which will actually give the perfection of life. The word *mat-saṅgāt* can also be read as *sat-saṅgāt*, with the same meaning. In the reading *mat-saṅgāt* (“from association with Me”), *mat* is also understood to indicate “those who are Mine,” or the devotees.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī mentions that a pure devotee can advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by his own association, since simply by associating with his own activities and consciousness, he associates with the Lord.

TEXT 12.8

*kevalena hi bhāvena
gopyo gāvo nagā mṛgāḥ
ye'nye mūḍha-dhiyo nāgāḥ
siddhā mām īyur añjasā*

kevalena – by unalloyed; *hi* – indeed; *bhāvena* – by love; *gopyaḥ* – the *gopīs*; *gāvaḥ* – the Vṛndāvana cows; *nagāḥ* – the unmoving creatures of Vṛndāvana such as the twin *arjuna* trees; *mṛgāḥ* – other animals; *ye* – those; *anye* – others; *mūḍha-dhiyaḥ* – with stunted intelligence; *nāgāḥ* – Vṛndāvana snakes such as Kāliya; *siddhāḥ* – achieving the perfection of life; *mām* – to Me; *īyur* – they went; *añjasā* – quite easily.

TRANSLATION

The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, including the gopīs, cows, unmoving creatures such as the twin arjuna trees, animals, living entities with stunted consciousness such as bushes and thickets, and snakes such as Kāliya, all achieved the perfection of life by unalloyed love for Me and thus very easily achieved Me.

PURPORT

Although innumerable living entities achieved liberation by association with the Lord and His devotees, many such personalities also executed other processes such as austerity, charity, philosophical speculation, and so on. As we have already explained, such procedures are secondary. But the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana such as the *gopīs* did not know anything except Lord Kṛṣṇa, and their whole purpose in life was simply to love Lord Kṛṣṇa, as indicated here by the words *kevalena hi bhāvena*. Even the trees, bushes and hills such as Govardhana loved Lord Kṛṣṇa. As the Lord explains to His brother, Śrī Baladeva, in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.15.5):

*aho amī deva-varāmarārcitaṁ
pādāmbujaṁ te sumanaḥ-phalārhaṇam
namanty upādāya śikhābhir ātmanas
tamo-'pahatyai taru-janma yat-kṛtam*

“My dear brother Baladeva, just see how these trees are bowing down with their branches and offering obeisances to Your lotus feet, which are worshipable even by the demigods. Indeed, My dear brother, You are the Supreme God, and thus these trees have produced fruits and flowers as an offering to You. Although a living entity takes birth as a tree due to the mode of ignorance, certainly by such a birth in Vṛndāvana these trees are destroying all darkness in their lives by serving Your lotus feet.”

Although many living entities achieved the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa by associating with the Lord and His devotees in various ways, those who take Lord Kṛṣṇa as everything are situated in the highest process of spiritual

realization. Therefore the Lord has not bothered to mention in this verse those who achieved perfection through mixed processes, but rather glorifies the unalloyed devotees of Vṛndāvana, headed by the *gopīs*, who knew nothing but Lord Kṛṣṇa. The residents of Vṛndāvana were so satisfied in their relationships with Lord Kṛṣṇa that they did not pollute their loving service with mental speculation or fruitive desires. The *gopīs* served Lord Kṛṣṇa in the conjugal *rasa*, or relationship, whereas according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura the cows loved Lord Kṛṣṇa in *vātsalya-rasa*, or the love of parents for a child, because the cows were always supplying milk to child Kṛṣṇa. Unmoving objects like Govardhana Hill and other hills and mountains loved Lord Kṛṣṇa as a friend, and the ordinary animals, trees and bushes of Vṛndāvana loved Lord Kṛṣṇa in *dāsya-rasa*, or with love of a servant for his master. Snakes like Kāliya also developed this love in servitude, and after relishing their loving service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, all of them went back home, back to Godhead. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, all those inhabitants of Vṛndāvana should be considered eternally liberated souls, as expressed by the word *siddhāḥ*, which means “having achieved the perfection of life.”

TEXT 12.9

*yam na yogena sāṅkhyena
dāna-vrata-tapo-'dhvaraiḥ
vyākhyā-svādhyāya-sannyāsaiḥ
prāpnuyād yatnavān api*

yam – whom; *na* – not; *yogena* – by the mystic *yoga* systems; *sāṅkhyena* – by philosophical speculation; *dāna* – by charity; *vrata* – vows; *tapaḥ* – austerities; *adhvaraiḥ* – or Vedic ritualistic sacrifices; *vyākhyā* – by explaining Vedic knowledge to others; *svādhyāya* – personal study of the *Veda*; *sannyāsaiḥ* – or by taking the renounced order of life; *prāpnuyāt* – can one obtain; *yatna-vān* – with great endeavor; *api* – even.

TRANSLATION

Even though one engages with great endeavor in the mystic yoga system, philosophical speculation, charity, vows, penances, ritualistic sacrifices, teaching of Vedic mantras to others, personal study of the Vedas, or the renounced order of life, still one cannot achieve Me.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa here explains that it is very difficult to achieve His personal association, even for one who seriously endeavors to reach the Absolute Truth. The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, such as the *gopīs* and cows, were always living with Lord Kṛṣṇa, and thus their association is called *sat-saṅga*. Anyone who is favorably living with the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes *sat*, or eternal, and thus the association of such a person can immediately award others pure devotional service to the Lord. There is an austerity called *cāndrāyaṇa*, a fast in which one’s intake of food is

diminished by one mouthful each day as the moon wanes and increased in the same way as the moon waxes. Similarly, there are painstaking ritualistic sacrifices and grueling studies of the Sanskrit Vedic *mantras*, which one may also teach to others. All these tedious activities cannot award the highest perfection of life unless one gets the causeless mercy of the pure devotees of the Lord. As stated in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.8):

*dharmāḥ sv-anuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsām
viśvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratim
śrama eva hi kevalam*

“The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.”

TEXT 12.10

*rāmeṇa sārdham mathurām praṇīte
śvāphalkinā mayy anurakta-cittāḥ
vigāḍha-bhāvena na me viyoga-
tīvrādhayo'nyam dadṛśuḥ sukhāya*

rāmeṇa – with Balarāma; *sārdham* – with; *mathurām* – to the city of Mathurā; *praṇīte* – when brought; *śvāphalkinā* – by Akrūra; *mayi* – Myself; *anurakta* – constantly attached; *cittāḥ* – those whose consciousness was; *vigāḍha* – extremely deep; *bhāvena* – by love; *na* – not; *me* – than Me; *viyoga* – of separation; *tīvra* – intense; *ādhayaḥ* – who were experiencing mental distress, anxiety; *anyam* – other; *dadṛśuḥ* – they saw; *sukhāya* – that could make them happy.

TRANSLATION

The residents of Vṛndāvana, headed by the gopīs, were always completely attached to Me with deepest love. Therefore, when My uncle Akrūra brought My brother Balarāma and Me to the city of Mathurā, the residents of Vṛndāvana suffered extreme mental distress because of separation from Me and could not find any other source of happiness.

PURPORT

This verse especially describes the sentiments of the cowherd girls of Vṛndāvana, the *gopīs*, and Lord Kṛṣṇa here reveals the incomparable love they felt for Him. As explained in the Tenth Canto, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s uncle Akrūra, sent by Kaṁsa, came to Vṛndāvana and took Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma back to Mathurā for a wrestling event. The *gopīs* loved Lord Kṛṣṇa so much that in His absence their consciousness was completely absorbed in spiritual love. Thus their Kṛṣṇa consciousness is considered the highest perfectional stage of life. They were always expecting that Lord Kṛṣṇa would finish His business of killing demons and return to them, and therefore their anxiety was an extremely moving, heartrending display of love. Anyone desiring true

happiness must take to the devotional service of the Lord in the spirit of the *gopīs*, giving up everything for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 12.11

*tās tāḥ kṣapāḥ preṣṭhatamena nītā
mayaiva vṛndāvana-gocareṇa
kṣaṇārdha-vat tāḥ punar aṅga tāsām
hīnā mayā kalpa-samā babhūvuḥ*

tāḥ tāḥ – all those; *kṣapāḥ* – nights; *preṣṭha-tamena* – with the most dearly beloved; *nītāḥ* – spent; *mayā* – with Me; *eva* – indeed; *vṛndāvana* – in Vṛndāvana; *go-careṇa* – who can be known; *kṣaṇa* – a moment; *ardha-vat* – like half; *tāḥ* – those very nights; *punaḥ* – again; *aṅga* – dear Uddhava; *tāsām* – for the *gopīs*; *hīnāḥ* – bereft; *mayā* – of Me; *kalpa* – a day of Brahmā (4,320,000,000 years); *samāḥ* – equal to; *babhūvuḥ* – became.

TRANSLATION

Dear Uddhava, all of those nights that the *gopīs* spent with Me, their most dearly beloved, in the land of Vṛndāvana seemed to them to pass in less than a moment. Bereft of My association, however, the *gopīs* felt that those same nights dragged on forever, as if each night were equal to a day of Brahmā.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī comments as follows. “The *gopīs* suffered extreme anxiety in the absence of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and though outwardly appearing bewildered, they actually achieved the highest perfectional stage of *samādhi*. Their consciousness was intensely and intimately attached to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and by such Kṛṣṇa consciousness their own bodies seemed very far away from them, even though people normally consider their body to be their closest possession. In fact, the *gopīs* did not think about their own existence. Although a young woman normally considers her husband and children to be her dearest possessions, the *gopīs* did not even consider the existence of their so-called families. Nor could they think of this world or life after death. Indeed, they were not at all aware of these things. Just like great sages who become detached from the names and forms of the material world, the *gopīs* could not think of anything, because they were rapt in loving remembrance of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Just as rivers enter the ocean, similarly, the *gopīs* completely merged into consciousness of Lord Kṛṣṇa through intense love.”

Thus a day of Brahmā seemed like a single moment for the *gopīs* when Lord Kṛṣṇa was present with them, and a single moment seemed like a day of Brahmā when Lord Kṛṣṇa was absent. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness of the *gopīs* is the perfection of spiritual life, and the symptoms of such perfection are described here.

TEXT 12.12

*tā nāvidan mayy anuṣaṅga-baddha-
dhiyaḥ svam ātmānam adas tathedam
yathā samādhau munayo'bdhi-toye
nadyaḥ praviṣṭā iva nāma-rūpe*

tāḥ – they (the *gopīs*); *na* – not; *avidan* – were aware of; *mayi* – in Me; *anuṣaṅga* – by intimate contact; *baddha* – bound up; *dhiyaḥ* – their consciousness; *svam* – their own; *ātmānam* – body or self; *adaḥ* – something remote; *tathā* – thus considering; *idam* – this which is most near; *yathā* – just as; *samādhau* – in *yoga-samādhi*; *munayaḥ* – great sages; *abdhi* – of the ocean; *toye* – in the water; *nadyaḥ* – rivers; *praviṣṭāḥ* – having entered; *iva* – like; *nāma* – names; *rūpe* – and forms.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, just as great sages in yoga trance merge into self-realization, like rivers merging into the ocean, and are thus not aware of material names and forms, similarly, the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana were so completely attached to Me within their minds that they could not think of their own bodies, or of this world, or of their future lives. Their entire consciousness was simply bound up in Me.

PURPORT

The words *svam ātmānam adas tathedam* indicate that while for ordinary persons one's personal body is the most near and dear thing, the *gopīs* considered their own bodies to be distant and remote, just as a *yogī* in *samādhi* trance considers ordinary things around his physical body or his physical body itself to be most remote. When Kṛṣṇa played on His flute late at night, the *gopīs* immediately forgot everything about their so-called husbands and children and went to dance with Lord Kṛṣṇa in the forest. These controversial points have been clearly explained in the book *Kṛṣṇa*, by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda. The basic explanation is that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the source of everything, and the *gopīs* are the Lord's own potency. Thus there is no discrepancy or immorality in the almighty Personality of Godhead's loving affairs with His own manifest potency, the *gopīs*, who happen to be the most beautiful young girls in the creation of God.

There is no illusion on the part of the *gopīs*, for they are so attracted to Lord Kṛṣṇa that they do not care to think of anything else. Since all existence is situated within the body of Lord Kṛṣṇa, there is no loss for the *gopīs* when they concentrate on the Lord. It is the nature of very deep love to exclude all objects except the beloved. However, in the material world, where we try to love a limited temporary object such as our nation, family or personal body, our exclusion of other objects constitutes ignorance. But when our love is intensely concentrated on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the origin of everything, such concentration cannot be considered ignorance or small-mindedness.

The example of the sages in *samādhi* is given here only to illustrate exclusive concentration on a single object. Otherwise, there is no comparison between the ecstatic love of the *gopīs* and the dry meditation of the *yogīs*, who merely try to understand that they are not their material bodies. Since the *gopīs* had no material bodies to become detached from and were personally dancing with and embracing the Absolute Truth, one can never compare the exalted position of the *gopīs* to that of mere *yogīs*. It is stated that the bliss of impersonal Brahman realization cannot be compared to even an atomic fragment of the blissful ocean of love of Kṛṣṇa. Intimate attachment is like a strong rope that binds the mind and heart. In material life we are bound to that which is temporary and illusory, and therefore such binding of the heart causes great pain. However, if we bind our minds and hearts to the eternal Lord Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of all pleasure and beauty, then our hearts will expand unlimitedly in the ocean of transcendental bliss. One should understand that the *gopīs* were not in any way inclined toward impersonal meditation, in which one denies the reality of variegated creation. The *gopīs* did not deny anything; they simply loved Kṛṣṇa and could not think of anything else. They only rejected whatever impeded their concentration on Lord Kṛṣṇa, cursing even their own eyelids, which blinked and thus removed Kṛṣṇa from their sight for a split second. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has stated that all sincere devotees of the Lord should have the courage to remove from their lives anything that impedes their progressive march back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 12.13

*mat-kāmā ramaṇaṁ jāram
asvarūpa-vido'balāḥ
brahma mām paramaṁ prāpuḥ
saṅgāt chata-sahasraśaḥ*

mat – Me; *kāmāḥ* – those who desired; *ramaṇam* – a charming lover; *jāram* – the lover of another’s wife; *asvarūpa-vidaḥ* – not knowing My actual situation; *abalāḥ* – women; *brahma* – the Absolute; *mām* – Me; *paramam* – supreme; *prāpuḥ* – they achieved; *saṅgāt* – by association; *śata-sahasraśaḥ* – by hundreds of thousands.

TRANSLATION

All those hundreds of thousands of *gopīs*, understanding Me to be their most charming lover and ardently desiring Me in that way, were unaware of My actual position. Yet by intimately associating with Me, the *gopīs* attained Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth.

PURPORT

The words *asvarūpa-vidaḥ* (“not understanding My actual position or form”) indicate that the lovely *gopīs* were so completely absorbed in conjugal love for Lord Kṛṣṇa that they were not aware of the Lord’s unlimited potencies as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains this and other meanings of the word *asvarūpa-vidaḥ*. In Sanskrit the

word *vid* also means “to acquire.” Thus, *asvarūpa-vidaḥ* indicates that the *gopīs*, like other pure devotees of the Lord, were not interested in achieving *sārūpya-mukti*, the liberation of acquiring a bodily form similar to the Lord’s. Were the *gopīs* to obtain a bodily form like the Lord’s, how could the Lord execute His conjugal pastimes of dancing with the *gopīs* and embracing them? Since the *gopīs* had realized their eternal spiritual forms as servitors of the Lord, the word *svarūpa* also may indicate their own spiritual bodies, and thus *asvarūpa-vidaḥ* means that the *gopīs* never thought, as materialists do, of their own bodily beauty. Although the *gopīs* are the most beautiful girls in the Lord’s creation, they never thought of their own bodies but rather were always meditating on the transcendental body of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Although we cannot imitate the *gopī’s* exalted conjugal feelings, we can follow their superb example of practical Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They naturally took shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa and achieved the highest perfection of life.

TEXTS 12.14-15

*tasmāt tvam uddhavotsrjya
codanām praticodanām
pravṛttim ca nivṛttim ca
śrotavyam śrutam eva ca
mām ekam eva śaraṇam
ātmānam sarva-dehinām
yāhi sarvātma-bhāvena
mayā syā hy akuto-bhayaḥ*

tasmāt – therefore; *tvam* – you; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *utsrjya* – giving up; *codanām* – the regulations of the *Vedas*; *praticodanām* – the injunctions of supplementary Vedic literatures; *pravṛttim* – injunctions; *ca* – and; *nivṛttim* – prohibitions; *ca* – also; *śrotavyam* – that which is to be heard; *śrutam* – that which has been heard; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *mām* – to Me; *ekam* – alone; *eva* – actually; *śaraṇam* – shelter; *ātmānam* – the Supersoul within the heart; *sarva-dehinām* – of all conditioned souls; *yāhi* – you must go; *sarva-ātma-bhāvena* – with exclusive devotion; *mayā* – by My mercy; *syāḥ* – you should be; *hi* – certainly; *akutaḥ-bhayaḥ* – free from fear in all circumstances.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, My dear Uddhava, abandon the Vedic mantras as well as the procedures of supplementary Vedic literatures and their positive and negative injunctions. Disregard that which has been heard and that which is to be heard. Simply take shelter of Me alone, for I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead, situated within the heart of all conditioned souls. Take shelter of Me wholeheartedly, and by My grace be free from fear in all circumstances.

PURPORT

Śrī Uddhava inquired from Lord Kṛṣṇa about the symptoms of saintly persons and liberated souls, and the Lord has replied in terms of different levels of spiritual advancement, distinguishing between those who are able to

understand Lord Kṛṣṇa to be the principal goal of life and those loving devotees who accept Lord Kṛṣṇa and devotional service to Him as the only goal of life. Lord Kṛṣṇa also mentioned that He is captured by His loving devotees and even by those who sincerely associate with His loving devotees. Among all the devotees, the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana were described by the Lord as having achieved such a rare state of pure devotional service that Lord Kṛṣṇa personally feels constantly indebted to them. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Lord Kṛṣṇa previously kept the *gopīs'* love for Him concealed in His heart because of its confidential nature and the Lord's own gravity. Finally, however, even Lord Kṛṣṇa could not remain silent about the intense love of the *gopīs*, and thus in these verses the Lord reveals to Uddhava how the *gopīs* loved Him in Vṛndāvana and brought Him fully under their control. The Lord would relax in secret places with the loving *gopīs*, and by conjugal spontaneous affection the greatest love was exchanged between them.

As explained by the Lord in *Bhagavad-gītā*, one cannot achieve the perfection of life merely by renouncing the material world or by executing ordinary, sectarian religious principles. One must actually understand the identity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and by associating with His pure devotees one must learn to love the Lord in His personal, original form. This love may be expressed in either the conjugal, parental, fraternal or serving *rasa*, or relationship. The Lord has elaborately explained to Uddhava the system of philosophical analysis of the material world, and now He clearly concludes that it is useless for Uddhava to waste time in fruitive activities or mental speculation. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa is hinting that Uddhava should assimilate the example of the *gopīs* and try to advance further in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by following in the footsteps of the cowherd damsels of Vraja. Any conditioned soul who is unsatisfied with the cruel laws of nature, which impose disease, old age and death, should understand that Lord Kṛṣṇa can deliver all living beings from the problems of material existence. There is no need to entangle oneself in unauthorized, sectarian rituals, injunctions or prohibitions. One should simply surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa, following the example of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. By the authorized regulated process of *bhakti-yoga*, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one easily achieves spiritual perfection.

TEXT 12.16

śrī-uddhava uvāca
saṁśayaḥ śṛṇvato vācam
tava yogeśvareśvara
na nivartata ātma-stho
yena bhrāmyati me manaḥ

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *saṁśayaḥ* – doubt; *śṛṇvataḥ* – of the one who is hearing; *vācam* – the words; *tava* – Your; *yoga-īśvara* – of the lords of mystic power; *īśvara* – You who are the Lord; *na nivartate* – will not

go away; *ātma* – in the heart; *sthaḥ* – situated; *yena* – by which; *bhrāmyati* – is bewildered; *me* – my; *manaḥ* – mind.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: O Lord of all masters of mystic power, I have heard Your words, but the doubt in my heart does not go away; thus my mind is bewildered.

PURPORT

In the first verse of the Tenth Chapter of this canto, the Lord stated that one should take shelter of Him and execute one's duties within the *varṇāśrama* system without material desire. Uddhava interpreted this statement as recommending *karma-miśrā bhakti*, or devotional service mixed with a tendency toward fruitive activities. It is a fact that until one understands Lord Kṛṣṇa to be everything, it is not possible to retire from ordinary, worldly duties. Rather, one is encouraged to offer the fruits of such work to the Lord. In verse 4 of the Tenth Chapter, the Lord recommended that one retire from worldly duties and systematically cultivate knowledge, accepting Him as the Supreme. Uddhava understood this instruction to indicate *jñāna-miśrā bhakti*, or devotional service to the Lord mixed with the secondary desire to accumulate knowledge. Beginning with verse 35 of the Tenth Chapter, Uddhava inquired about the process of material conditioning and liberation from material life. The Lord replied elaborately, stating that without devotional service the process of philosophical speculation can never be perfected. In Chapter Eleven, verse 18, the Lord emphasized the importance of faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and in verse 23 Kṛṣṇa extensively widened His discussion of devotional service, emphasizing that one should be faithful and hear and chant the glories of the Lord. The Lord concluded that both the development and perfection of devotional service depend on association with the devotees. In verse 26 of the Eleventh Chapter, Uddhava inquired about the actual ways and means of devotional service and about the symptoms of devotional perfection. And in verse 48 Lord Kṛṣṇa stated that unless one takes to the process of devotional service, one's attempt for liberation will be useless. One must associate with the devotees of the Lord and follow in their footsteps. Finally, in verse 14 of this chapter the Lord categorically rejected the paths of fruitive activities and mental speculation and in verse 15 recommended that one exclusively surrender unto Him with all one's heart.

Having received such elaborate and technical instructions on the perfection of life, Uddhava is bewildered, and his mind is afflicted with doubt about what he should actually do. Lord Kṛṣṇa has described many procedures and the results of such procedures, all of which ultimately lead to the single goal of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. Uddhava therefore desires that Lord Kṛṣṇa state in simple terms what should be done. Arjuna makes a similar request of the Lord at the beginning of the Third Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Uddhava is stating here, "My dear friend Kṛṣṇa, first You recommended that I perform worldly activities within

the *varṇāśrama* system, and then You advised that I reject such activities and take to the path of philosophical research. Now rejecting the path of *jñāna*, You recommend that I simply surrender unto You in *bhakti-yoga*. If I accept Your decision, in the future You may again go back to Your original point and recommend worldly activities.” By his boldness in disclosing his mind, Uddhava reveals his intimate friendship with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 12.17

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
sa eṣa jīvo vivara-prasūtiḥ
prāṇena ghoṣeṇa guhām praviṣṭaḥ
mano-mayaṁ sūkṣmam upetya rūpaṁ
mātrā svarō varṇa iti sthaviṣṭhaḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *saḥ eṣaḥ* – He Himself; *jīvaḥ* – the Supreme Lord, who gives life to all; *vivara* – within the heart; *prasūtiḥ* – manifest; *prāṇena* – along with the life air; *ghoṣeṇa* – with the subtle manifestation of sound; *guhām* – the heart; *praviṣṭaḥ* – who has entered; *manaḥ-mayaṁ* – perceived by the mind, or controlling the mind even of great demigods like Lord Śiva; *sūkṣmam* – subtle; *upetya* – being situated in; *rūpaṁ* – the form; *mātrā* – the different vocalic lengths; *svaraḥ* – the different intonations; *varṇaḥ* – the different sounds of the alphabet; *iti* – thus; *sthaviṣṭhaḥ* – the gross form.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, the Supreme Lord gives life to every living being and is situated within the heart along with the life air and primal sound vibration. The Lord can be perceived in His subtle form within the heart by one’s mind, since the Lord controls the minds of everyone, even great demigods like Lord Śiva. The Supreme Lord also assumes a gross form as the various sounds of the Vedas, composed of short and long vowels and consonants of different intonations.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments as follows on the dialogue between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Uddhava. Uddhava was bewildered and doubtful because Lord Kṛṣṇa explained many different processes such as devotional service, speculative knowledge, renunciation, mystic *yoga*, austerities, pious duties, and so on. However, all of these processes are meant to help the living entities obtain the shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and ultimately no Vedic process should be understood in any other way. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa explained the entire Vedic system, placing everything in proper order. In fact, Lord Kṛṣṇa was surprised that Uddhava foolishly thought that he was meant to practice every process, as if each method were meant simply for him. Lord Kṛṣṇa therefore wants to inform His devotee, “My dear Uddhava, when I told you that analytic knowledge is to be practiced, pious duties are to be performed, devotional service is obligatory, *yoga* procedures must be

observed, austerities are to be executed, etc., I was instructing all living entities, using you as My immediate audience. That which I have spoken, am speaking now and will speak in the future should be understood as guidance for all living entities in different situations. How could you possibly think that you were meant to practice all of the different Vedic processes? I accept you as you are now, My pure devotee. You are not supposed to execute all of these processes.” Thus according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the Lord, with lighthearted and encouraging words, reveals to Uddhava the deep purpose behind the variety of Vedic procedures.

Lord Kṛṣṇa became manifest from the mouth of Lord Brahmā in the form of the *Vedas*. The word *vivara-prasūti* in this verse also indicates that the Lord is manifest within the *ādhārādi-cakras* situated within the body of Lord Brahmā. The word *ghoṣeṇa* means “subtle sound,” and *guhām praviṣṭaḥ* also indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa enters within the *ādhāra-cakra*. The Lord can further be perceived within other *cakras* such as the *maṇipūṛaka-cakra*, located around the navel, and the *viśuddhi-cakra*. The Sanskrit alphabet is composed of short and long vowels, and consonants pronounced with high and low tones, and utilizing these vibrations the different branches of Vedic literatures are manifested as a gross form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, such literatures deal mostly with the three modes of material nature: *traiguṇya-viṣayā vedā nistrai-guṇyo bhavārjuna*. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī explains that due to the control of the illusory energy, *māyā*, the Personality of Godhead appears to the conditioned souls as part of the material universe. The imagined imposition of gross and subtle material qualities on the Personality of Godhead is called *avidyā*, or ignorance, and through such ignorance the living entity considers himself to be the doer of his own activities and becomes bound up in the network of *karma*. The *Vedas* therefore order an entangled soul to observe positive and negative injunctions to purify his existence. These procedures are called *pravṛtti-mārga*, or the path of regulated fruitive activities. When one has purified one’s existence, one gives up this gross stage of fruitive activities because it is detrimental to the practice of pure devotional service. By firm faith one may then worship the Personality of Godhead. One who has developed perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness no longer has to perform ritualistic duties. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *tasya kāryam na vidyate*.

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, this verse may be understood in another way. The word *jīva* indicates Lord Kṛṣṇa, who gives life to the residents of Vṛndāvana, and *vivara-prasūti* indicates that although Lord Kṛṣṇa eternally performs His pastimes in the spiritual world, beyond the vision of the conditioned souls, He also enters within the material universe to display these same pastimes. The words *guhām praviṣṭaḥ* indicates that after displaying such pastimes, the Lord withdraws them and enters into His unmanifest pastimes, or those pastimes not manifest to the conditioned souls. In this case, *mātrā* indicates the transcendental senses of the Lord, *svara* indicates the Lord’s transcendental sound vibration and singing, and

the word *varṇa* indicates the transcendental form of the Lord. The word *sthaviṣṭha*, or “gross manifestation,” means that the Lord becomes manifest in the material world even to those devotees who are not completely advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and whose vision is not completely purified. *Mano-maya* indicates that somehow or other Lord Kṛṣṇa is to be kept within one’s mind; and for the nondevotees Lord Kṛṣṇa is *sūkṣma*, or most subtle, because He cannot be known. Thus different *ācāryas* have glorified Lord Kṛṣṇa in different ways through the transcendental sound vibration of this verse.

TEXT 12.18

*yathānalaḥ khe’nila-bandhur uṣmā
balena dāruṇy adhimathyamānaḥ
aṇuḥ prajāto haviṣā samedhate
tathaiva me vyaktir iyaṁ hi vāṇī*

yathā – just as; *analaḥ* – fire; *khe* – in the space within wood; *anila* – air; *bandhuḥ* – whose help; *uṣmā* – heat; *balena* – strongly; *dāruṇi* – within the wood; *adhimathyamānaḥ* – being kindled by friction; *aṇuḥ* – very tiny; *prajātaḥ* – is born; *haviṣā* – with ghee (clarified butter); *samedhate* – it increases; *tathā* – similarly; *eva* – indeed; *me* – My; *vyaktiḥ* – manifestation; *iyam* – this; *hi* – certainly; *vāṇī* – the Vedic sounds.

TRANSLATION

When sticks of kindling wood are vigorously rubbed together, heat is produced by contact with air, and a spark of fire appears. Once the fire is kindled, ghee is added and the fire blazes. Similarly, I become manifest in the sound vibration of the Vedas.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa here explains the most confidential meaning of Vedic knowledge. The *Vedās* first regulate ordinary material work and channel the fruits into ritualistic sacrifices, which ostensibly reward the performer with future benefits. The real purpose of these sacrifices, however, is to accustom a materialistic worker to offering the fruits of his work to a superior Vedic authority. An expert fruitive worker gradually exhausts the possibilities of material enjoyment and naturally gravitates toward the superior stage of philosophical speculation on his existential situation. By increased knowledge, one becomes aware of the unlimited glories of the Supreme and gradually takes to the process of loving devotional service to the transcendental Absolute Truth. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the goal of Vedic knowledge, as the Lord states in *Bhagavad-gītā*: *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*. The Lord gradually becomes manifest in the progression of Vedic rituals, just as fire is gradually manifest by the rubbing of firewood. The words *haviṣā samedhate* (“the fire increases by addition of ghee”) indicate that by the progressive advancement of Vedic sacrifice, the fire of spiritual knowledge gradually blazes, illuminating everything and destroying the chain of fruitive work.

Lord Kṛṣṇa considered Uddhava to be the most qualified person to hear this elaborate transcendental knowledge; therefore the Lord mercifully instructs Uddhava so that he may enlighten the sages at Badarikāśrama, thus fulfilling the purpose of the sages' lives.

TEXT 12.19

*evam gadiḥ karma gatiḥ visarga
ghrāṇo raso dr̥k sparśaḥ śrutiś ca
saṅkalpa-vijñānam athābhimānaḥ
sūtram rajaḥ-sattva-tamo-vikāraḥ*

evam – thus; *gadiḥ* – speech; *karma* – the function of the hands; *gatiḥ* – the function of the legs; *visargaḥ* – the functions of the genitals and anus; *ghrāṇaḥ* – smell; *rasaḥ* – taste; *dr̥k* – sight; *sparśaḥ* – touch; *śrutiḥ* – hearing; *ca* – also; *saṅkalpa* – the mind's function; *vijñānam* – the function of intelligence and consciousness; *atha* – moreover; *abhimānaḥ* – the function of false ego; *sūtram* – the function of *pradhāna*, or the subtle cause of material nature; *rajaḥ* – of the mode of passion; *sattva* – goodness; *tamaḥ* – and of ignorance; *vikāraḥ* – the transformation.

TRANSLATION

The functions of the working senses - the organ of speech, the hands, the legs, the genitals and the anus - and the functions of the knowledge-acquiring senses - the nose, tongue, eyes, skin and ears - along with the functions of the subtle senses of mind, intelligence, consciousness and false ego, as well as the function of the subtle *pradhāna* and the interaction of the three modes of material nature - all these should be understood as My materially manifest form.

PURPORT

By the word *gadi*, or “speech,” the Lord concludes His discussion about His manifestation as Vedic vibrations and describes the functions of the other working senses, along with the knowledge-acquiring senses, the subtle functions of consciousness, *pradhāna* and the interaction of the three modes of material nature. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person sees the entire material world as a manifestation of the Lord's potencies. There is therefore no legitimate scope for material sense gratification, because everything is an expansion from the Supreme Personality of Godhead and belongs to Him. One who can understand the expansion of the Lord within subtle and gross material manifestations gives up his desire to live in this world. In the spiritual world everything is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge. The exclusive feature of the material world is that here the living entity dreams that he is lord. A sane person, giving up this hallucination, finds no attractive features in the kingdom of *māyā* and therefore returns home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 12.20

*ayam hi jīvas tri-ṽṛd abja-yonir
avyakta eko vayasā sa ādyaḥ*

*viśliṣṭa-śaktir bahudheva bhāti
bījāni yonim pratipadya yadvat*

ayam - this; *hi* - certainly; *jīvaḥ* - the supreme living entity who gives life to others; *tri-vṛt* - containing the three modes of material nature; *abja* - of the universal lotus flower; *yonih* - the source; *avyaktaḥ* - unmanifest (materially); *ekaḥ* - alone; *vayasā* - in course of time; *saḥ* - He; *ādyah* - eternal; *viśliṣṭa* - divided; *śaktih* - potencies; *bahudhā* - in many divisions; *iva* - like; *bhāti* - He appears; *bījāni* - seeds; *yonim* - in an agricultural field; *pratipadya* - falling; *yat-vat* - just like.

TRANSLATION

When many seeds are placed in an agricultural field, innumerable manifestations of trees, bushes, vegetables and so on will arise from a single source, the soil. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who gives life to all and is eternal, originally exists beyond the scope of the cosmic manifestation. In the course of time, however, the Lord, who is the resting place of the three modes of nature and the source of the universal lotus flower, in which the cosmic manifestation takes place, divides His material potencies and thus appears to be manifest in innumerable forms, although He is one.

PURPORT

Śrīla Vīrarāghavācārya comments that one may question as to whom the cosmic manifestation, consisting of demigods, men, animals, plants, planets, space, etc., actually belongs. Lord Kṛṣṇa now eradicates any doubt about the source of the cosmic manifestation. The word *tri-vṛt* indicates that the three modes of nature are not independent but are under superior control. The suffix *vṛt* means the *vartanam*, or “existence,” of the three modes of material nature within the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Analyzing the term *abja-yoni*, *ap* indicates “water,” and *ja* indicates “birth.” Thus *abja* means the complex material universe, which sprouts from Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who lies in the Garbhodaka Ocean. *Yoni*, or “source,” indicates the Personality of Godhead, and thus *abja-yoni* means that the Lord is the source of all cosmic manifestations; indeed, all creation takes place within the Lord. Since the three modes of material nature are under the superior control of the Lord, material objects helplessly undergo creation and annihilation within the universal shell by the will of the Lord. The term *avyakta* indicates the Lord’s subtle spiritual form, which exists alone before the material creation. The Lord’s original form, being spiritual, does not undergo birth, transformation or death. It is eternal. In the course of time, the Lord’s material potencies are divided and manifest as bodies, bodily paraphernalia, sense objects, bodily expansions, false ego and false proprietorship. Thus the Lord expands His conscious living potency called *jīva-śakti*, which is manifest in innumerable material forms such as those of men, demigods, animals, and so on. From the example of the seeds sown in an agricultural field, we can understand that innumerable manifestations may arise from a single source.

Similarly, although the Lord is one, He becomes manifest in innumerable forms through the expansion of His different potencies.

TEXT 12.21

*yasminn idam protam aśeṣam otam
paṭo yathā tantu-vitāna-saṁsthaḥ
ya eṣa saṁsāra-taruḥ purāṇaḥ
karmātmakaḥ puṣpa-phale prasūte*

yasmin – in whom; *idam* – this universe; *protam* – woven crosswise; *aśeṣam* – the whole; *otam* – and lengthwise; *paṭaḥ* – a cloth; *yathā* – just like; *tantu* – of the threads; *vitāna* – in the expansion; *saṁsthaḥ* – situated; *yaḥ* – that which; *eṣaḥ* – this; *saṁsāra* – of material existence; *taruḥ* – the tree; *purāṇaḥ* – existing since time immemorial; *karma* – toward fruitive activities; *ātmakaḥ* – naturally inclined; *puṣpa* – the first result, blossoming; *phale* – and the fruit; *prasūte* – being produced.

TRANSLATION

Just as woven cloth rests on the expansion of lengthwise and crosswise threads, similarly the entire universe is expanded on the lengthwise and crosswise potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is situated within Him. The conditioned soul has been accepting material bodies since time immemorial, and these bodies are like great trees sustaining one’s material existence. Just as a tree first blossoms and then produces fruit, similarly the tree of material existence, one’s material body, produces the various results of material existence.

PURPORT

Before a tree produces fruit, blossoms appear. Similarly, the word *puṣpa-phale*, according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, indicates the happiness and distress of material existence. One’s material life may appear to be blossoming, but ultimately there will appear the bitter fruits of old age, death and other catastrophes. Attachment to the material body, which is always inclined toward sense gratification, is the root cause of material existence, and it is therefore called *saṁsāra-taru*. The tendency to exploit the external energy of the Supreme Lord has existed since time immemorial, as expressed by the words *purāṇaḥ karmātmakaḥ*. The material universe is an expansion of the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord and is always dependent on Him and nondifferent from Him. This simple understanding can relieve the conditioned souls from endless wandering in the unhappy kingdom of *māyā*.

The word *puṣpa-phale* may also be understood as meaning sense gratification and liberation. The tree of material existence will be further explained in the following verses.

TEXTS 12.22-23

*dve asya bīje śata-mūlas tri-nālah
pañca-skandhaḥ pañca-rasa-prasūtiḥ
daśaika-śākho dvi-suparṇa-nīḍas
tri-valkalo dvi-phalo'rkaṁ praviṣṭaḥ
adanti caikaṁ phalam asya ḡḍhrā
grāme-carā ekam araṇya-vāsāḥ
haṁsā ya ekaṁ bahu-rūpam ijyair
māyā-mayaṁ veda sa veda vedam*

dve – two; *asya* – of this tree; *bīje* – seeds; *śata* – hundreds; *mūlah* – of roots; *tri* – three; *nālah* – lower trunks; *pañca* – five; *skandhaḥ* – upper trunks; *pañca* – five; *rasa* – saps; *prasūtiḥ* – producing; *daśa* – ten; *eka* – plus one; *śākhaḥ* – branches; *dvi* – two; *suparṇa* – of birds; *nīḍaḥ* – a nest; *tri* – three; *valkalaḥ* – types of bark; *dvi* – two; *phalaḥ* – fruits; *arkaṁ* – the sun; *praviṣṭaḥ* – extending into; *adanti* – they eat or enjoy; *ca* – also; *ekam* – one; *phalam* – fruit; *asya* – of this tree; *ḡḍhrāḥ* – those who are lusty for material enjoyment; *grāme* – in householder life; *carāḥ* – living; *ekam* – another; *araṇya* – in the forest; *vāsāḥ* – those who live; *haṁsāḥ* – swanlike men, saintly persons; *yaḥ* – one who; *ekam* – one only, the Supersoul; *bahu-rūpam* – appearing in many forms; *ijyair* – by the help of those who are worshipable, the spiritual masters; *māyā-mayaṁ* – produced by the potency of the Supreme Lord; *veda* – knows; *saḥ* – such a person; *veda* – knows; *vedam* – the actual meaning of the Vedic literature.

TRANSLATION

This tree of material existence has two seeds, hundreds of roots, three lower trunks and five upper trunks. It produces five flavors and has eleven branches and a nest made by two birds. The tree is covered by three types of bark, gives two fruits and extends up to the sun. Those lusty after material enjoyment and dedicated to family life enjoy one of the tree's fruits, and swanlike men in the renounced order of life enjoy the other fruit. One who with the help of the bona fide spiritual masters can understand this tree to be a manifestation of the potency of the one Supreme Truth appearing in many forms actually knows the meaning of the Vedic literature.

PURPORT

The two seeds of this tree are sinful and pious activities, and the hundreds of roots are the living entities' innumerable material desires, which chain them to material existence. The three lower trunks represent the three modes of material nature, and the five upper trunks represent the five gross material elements. The tree produces five flavors – sound, form, touch, taste and aroma – and has eleven branches – the five working senses, the five knowledge-acquiring senses and the mind. Two birds, namely the individual soul and the Supersoul, have made their nest in this tree, and the three types of bark are air, bile and mucus, the constituent elements of the body. The two fruits of this tree are happiness and distress.

Those who are busy trying to enjoy the company of beautiful women, money and other luxurious aspects of illusion enjoy the fruit of unhappiness. One should remember that even in the heavenly planets there is anxiety and death. Those who have renounced material goals and taken to the path of spiritual enlightenment enjoy the fruit of happiness. One who takes the assistance of bona fide spiritual masters can understand that this elaborate tree is simply the manifestation of the external potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is ultimately one without a second. If one can see the Supreme Lord as the ultimate cause of everything, then his knowledge is perfect. Otherwise, if one is entangled in Vedic rituals or Vedic speculation without knowledge of the Supreme Lord, he has not achieved the perfection of life.

TEXT 12.24

*evam gurūpāsanayaika-bhaktyā
vidyā-kuṭhāreṇa śitena dhīraḥ
vivṛścyā jīvāśayam apramattaḥ
sampadya cātmānam atha tyajāstram*

evam – thus (with the knowledge I have given you); *guru* – of the spiritual master; *upāsanayā* – developed by worship; *eka* – unalloyed; *bhaktyā* – by loving devotional service; *vidyā* – of knowledge; *kuṭhāreṇa* – by the ax; *śitena* – sharp; *dhīraḥ* – one who is steady by knowledge; *vivṛścyā* – cutting down; *jīva* – of the living entity; *āśayam* – the subtle body (filled with designations created by the three modes of material nature); *apramattaḥ* – being very careful in spiritual life; *sampadya* – achieving; *ca* – and; *ātmānam* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *atha* – then; *tyaja* – you should give up; *astram* – the means by which you achieved perfection.

TRANSLATION

With steady intelligence you should develop unalloyed devotional service by careful worship of the spiritual master, and with the sharpened ax of transcendental knowledge you should cut off the subtle material covering of the soul. Upon realizing the Supreme Personality of Godhead, you should then give up that ax of analytic knowledge.

PURPORT

Because Uddhava had achieved the perfection of personal association with Lord Kṛṣṇa, there was no need for him to maintain the mentality of a conditioned soul, and thus, as described here by the words *sampadya cātmānam*, Uddhava could personally serve the lotus feet of the Lord in the spiritual world. Indeed, Uddhava requested this opportunity at the beginning of this great conversation. As stated here, *gurūpāsanayaika-bhaktyā*: one can achieve pure devotional service by worshipping a bona fide spiritual master. It is not recommended here that one give up pure devotional service or one's spiritual master. Rather, it is clearly stated by the words *vidyā-kuṭhāreṇa* that one should cultivate knowledge of the material world as

described by Lord Kṛṣṇa in this chapter. One should fully understand that each and every aspect of the material creation is the expansion of the illusory potency of the Lord. Such knowledge works as a sharpened ax to cut down the roots of material existence. In this way, even the stubborn subtle body, created by the three modes of nature, is cut to pieces, and one becomes *apramatta*, or sane and cautious in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Lord Kṛṣṇa has clearly explained in this chapter that the cowherd damsels of Vṛndāvana were not interested in an analytical approach to life. They simply loved Lord Kṛṣṇa and could not think of anything else. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught that all His devotees should follow in the footsteps of the cowherd damsels of Vraja in order to develop the highest intensity of selfless love of Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa has elaborately analyzed the nature of the material world so that the conditioned souls, who are trying to enjoy it, can cut down the tree of material existence with this knowledge. The words *sampadya cātmānam* indicate that a person with such knowledge has no further material existence, because he has already achieved the Personality of Godhead. Such a person should not loiter in the kingdom of *māyā*, perpetually refining his understanding of the illusory creation. One who has accepted Lord Kṛṣṇa as everything may enjoy eternal bliss in the Lord's service. Yet even though he remains in this world, he has no more business with it and gives up the analytical procedures for negating it. Lord Kṛṣṇa therefore tells Uddhava, *tyajāstram*: "Give up the ax of analytic knowledge by which you have cut down your sense of proprietorship and residence in the material world."

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twelfth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Beyond Renunciation and Knowledge."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

The Haṁsa-avatāra Answers the Questions of the Sons of Brahmā

In this chapter, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains to Uddhava how human beings, overwhelmed by sense gratification, become bound by the three modes of nature, and how to renounce these modes. The Lord then describes how He appeared in His form of Haṁsa before Brahmā and the four sages headed by Sanaka and revealed to them various confidential truths.

The three modes – goodness, passion and ignorance – are related to material intelligence, not to the soul. One should conquer the lower modes of passion and ignorance by the mode of goodness, and then one must surpass the mode of goodness by acting in the transcendental mode of pure goodness. By associating with things in the mode of goodness, one becomes more fully situated in that mode. The three modes increase their different influences through various types of scripture, water, place, time, beneficiaries of activity, natures of activity, birth, meditation, *mantras*, purificatory rituals, and so on.

Lacking discrimination, one identifies with the material body, and consequently the mode of passion, which produces misery, takes over the mind, which is normally in the mode of goodness. As the mind evolves its function of decision and doubt, it creates intolerable hankerings for sense gratification. Unfortunate persons who are bewildered by the urges of the mode of passion become the slaves of their senses. Even though they know that the eventual result of their work will be suffering, they cannot avoid engaging in such fruitive work. A discriminating person, on the other hand, keeps himself detached from the objects of the senses and, by utilizing appropriate renunciation, takes shelter of unalloyed devotional service. Lord Brahmā himself has no material cause. He is the cause of the creation of all living beings and is the greatest among all the demigods. Yet even Brahmā is always suffering agitation of the mind on account of the duties he has to perform; therefore, when he was questioned by his sons headed by Sanaka, who were born from his mind, about the means for driving away desires for sense gratification, he was incapable of giving them an answer. In order to receive some insight into this matter, he took shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whereupon the Supreme Lord appeared before him in the form of the swan incarnation, Lord Haṁsa. Lord Haṁsa proceeded to give instructions about the categorical identity of the self, the different states of consciousness (wakeful awareness, sleep and deep sleep) and the means for conquering over material existence. The sages headed by Sanaka became freed from all their doubts by hearing the words of the Lord and worshiped Him with pure devotion in mature love of God.

TEXT 13.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
sattvaṁ rajas tama iti
guṇā buddher na cātmanaḥ
sattvenānyatamau hanyāt
sattvaṁ sattvena caiva hi*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *sattvam* – goodness; *rajaḥ* – passion; *tamaḥ* – ignorance; *iti* – thus known; *guṇāḥ* – the modes of material nature; *buddheḥ* – pertain to material intelligence; *na* – not; *ca* – also; *ātmanaḥ* – to the soul; *sattvena* – by the material mode of goodness; *anyatamau* – the other two (passion and ignorance); *hanyāt* – may be destroyed; *sattvam* – the material mode of goodness; *sattvena* – by purified goodness; *ca* – also (may be destroyed); *eva* – certainly; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The three modes of material nature, namely goodness, passion and ignorance, pertain to material intelligence and not to the spirit soul. By development of material goodness one can conquer the modes of passion and ignorance, and by cultivation of transcendental goodness one may free oneself even from material goodness.

PURPORT

Goodness in the material world never exists in a pure form. Therefore, it is common knowledge that on the material platform no one is working without personal motivation. In the material world goodness is always mixed with some amount of passion and ignorance, whereas spiritual, or purified, goodness (*viśuddha-sattva*) represents the liberated platform of perfection. Materially, one is proud to be an honest, compassionate man, but unless one is fully Kṛṣṇa conscious one will speak truths that are not ultimately significant, and one will give mercy that is ultimately useless. Because the onward march of material time removes all situations and persons from the material stage, our so-called mercy and truth apply to situations that shortly will not exist. Real truth is eternal, and real mercy means to situate people in eternal truth. Still, for an ordinary person, cultivation of material goodness may be a preliminary stage on the road to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For example, it is stated in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that one who is addicted to meat-eating cannot understand the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. By cultivation of the material mode of goodness, however, one may become a vegetarian and perhaps come to appreciate the sublime process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Since it is clearly stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* that the material modes of nature constantly rotate, one must take advantage of an elevated position in material goodness to step onto the transcendental platform. Otherwise, as the wheel of time turns one will again go into the darkness of material ignorance.

TEXT 13.2

*sattvād dharmo bhaved vṛddhāt
puṁso mad-bhakti-lakṣaṇaḥ
sāttvikopāsayā sattvaṁ
tato dharmaḥ pravartate*

sattvāt – from the mode of goodness; *dharmaḥ* – religious principles; *bhavet* – arise; *vṛddhāt* – which are strengthened; *puṁsaḥ* – of a person; *mat-bhakti*

- by devotional service to Me; *lakṣaṇaḥ* - characterized; *sāttvika* - of things in the mode of goodness; *upāsayā* - by serious cultivation; *sattvam* - the mode of goodness; *tataḥ* - from that mode; *dharmaḥ* - religious principles; *pravartate* - arise.

TRANSLATION

When the living entity becomes strongly situated in the mode of goodness, then religious principles, characterized by devotional service to Me, become prominent. One can strengthen the mode of goodness by cultivation of those things that are already situated in goodness, and thus religious principles arise.

PURPORT

Since the three modes of material nature are constantly in conflict, vying for supremacy, how is it possible that the mode of goodness can subdue the modes of passion and ignorance? Lord Kṛṣṇa here explains how one can be strongly fixed in the mode of goodness, which automatically gives rise to religious principles. In the Fourteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa elaborately explains the things that are in goodness, passion and ignorance. Thus, by choosing food, attitudes, work, recreation, etc., strictly in the mode of goodness, one will become situated in that mode. The usefulness of *sattva-guṇa*, or the mode of goodness, is that it produces religious principles aimed at and characterized by devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Without such devotional service to the Lord, the mode of goodness is considered useless and merely another aspect of material illusion. The word *vṛddhāt*, or “strengthened, increased,” indicates clearly that one should come to the platform of *viśuddha-sattva*, or purified goodness. The word *vṛddhāt* indicates growth, and growth should not be stopped until full maturity is reached. The full maturity of goodness is called *viśuddha-sattva*, or the transcendental platform on which there is no trace of any other quality. In pure goodness all knowledge automatically manifests, and one can easily understand one’s eternal loving relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa. That is the actual meaning and purpose of *dharma*, or religious principles. Śrīla Madhvācārya points out in this regard that an increase in the mode of goodness strengthens religious principles and the invigorated execution of religious principles strengthens the mode of goodness. In that way, one can advance higher and higher in the mode of spiritual happiness.

TEXT 13.3

*dharmo rajas tamo hanyāt
sattva-vṛddhir anuttamaḥ
āśu naśyati tan-mūlo
hy adharma ubhaye hate*

dharmaḥ - religious principles based on devotional service; *rajaḥ* - the mode of passion; *tamaḥ* - the mode of ignorance; *hanyāt* - destroy; *sattva* - of goodness; *vṛddhiḥ* - by the increase; *anuttamaḥ* - the greatest; *āśu* - quickly; *naśyati* - is destroyed; *tat* - of passion and ignorance; *mūlaḥ* - the

root; *hi* – certainly; *adharmah* – irreligion; *ubhaye hate* – when both are destroyed.

TRANSLATION

Religious principles, strengthened by the mode of goodness, destroy the influence of passion and ignorance. When passion and ignorance are overcome, their original cause, irreligion, is quickly vanquished.

TEXT 13.4

*āgamo'paḥ prajā deśaḥ
kālaḥ karma ca janma ca
dhyānam mantra'tha saṁskāro
daśaite guṇa-hetavaḥ*

āgamaḥ – religious scriptures; *apaḥ* – water; *prajāḥ* – association with people in general or one's children; *deśaḥ* – place; *kālaḥ* – time; *karma* – activities; *ca* – also; *janma* – birth; *ca* – also; *dhyānam* – meditation; *mantraḥ* – chanting of mantras; *atha* – and; *saṁskāraḥ* – rituals for purification; *daśa* – ten; *ete* – these; *guṇa* – of the modes of nature; *hetavaḥ* – causes.

TRANSLATION

According to the quality of religious scriptures, water, one's association with one's children or with people in general, the particular place, the time, activities, birth, meditation, chanting of mantras, and purificatory rituals, the modes of nature become differently prominent.

PURPORT

The ten items mentioned above possess superior and inferior qualities and are thus identified as being in goodness, passion or ignorance. One can increase the mode of goodness by selecting religious scriptures in goodness, pure water, friendship with other persons in goodness, and so on. One should scrupulously avoid any of these ten items that may be polluted by an inferior mode of nature.

TEXT 13.5

*tat tat sātṭvikam evaiṣāṁ
yad yad vṛddhāḥ pracakṣate
nindanti tāmasaṁ tat tad
rājasam tad-upekṣitam*

tat tat – those things; *sātṭvikam* – in the mode of goodness; *eva* – indeed; *eṣāṁ* – among the ten items; *yad yad* – whatever; *vṛddhāḥ* – the sages of the past, such as Vyāsadeva, who are expert in Vedic knowledge; *pracakṣate* – they praise; *nindanti* – they scorn; *tāmasam* – in the mode of ignorance; *tat tat* – those things; *rājasam* – in the mode of passion; *tat* – by the sages; *upekṣitam* – left alone, neither praised nor criticized.

TRANSLATION

Among the ten items I have just mentioned, the great sages who understand Vedic knowledge have praised and recommended those that are in the mode of goodness, criticized and rejected those in the mode of ignorance, and shown indifference to those in the mode of passion.

TEXT 13.6

*sāttvikāny eva seveta
pumān sattva-vivṛddhaye
tato dharmas tato jñānaṁ
yāvat smṛtir apohanam*

sāttvikāni - things in the mode of goodness; *eva* - indeed; *seveta* - he should cultivate; *pumān* - a person; *sattva* - the mode of goodness; *vivṛddhaye* - in order to increase; *tataḥ* - from that (increase in goodness); *dharmas* - one is fixed in religious principles; *tataḥ* - from that (religion); *jñānam* - knowledge is manifest; *yāvat* - until; *smṛtiḥ* - self-realization, remembering one's eternal identity; *apohanam* - driving away (the illusory identification with the material body and mind).

TRANSLATION

Until one revives one's direct knowledge of the spirit soul and drives away the illusory identification with the material body and mind caused by the three modes of nature, one must cultivate those things in the mode of goodness. By increasing the mode of goodness, one automatically can understand and practice religious principles, and by such practice transcendental knowledge is awakened.

PURPORT

One who desires to cultivate the mode of goodness must consider the following points. One should study religious scriptures that teach detachment from mental speculation and material sense gratification, not scriptures that provide rituals and *mantras* to increase material ignorance. Such materialistic scriptures do not give attention to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus are basically atheistic. One should accept pure water for quenching thirst and cleaning the body. There is no need for a devotee to use colognes, perfume, whiskey, beer, etc., which are all polluted manifestations of water. One should associate with persons who are cultivating detachment from the material world and not with those who are materially attached or sinful in their behavior. One should live in a solitary place where devotional service is practiced and discussed among Vaiṣṇavas. One should not be spontaneously attracted to busy highways, shopping centers, sports stadiums, and so on. Concerning time, one should rise by four o'clock in the morning and utilize the auspicious *brāhma-muhūrta* to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Similarly, one should avoid the sinful influence of hours such as midnight, when ghosts and demons are encouraged to

become active. Concerning work, one should execute one's prescribed duties, follow the regulative principles of spiritual life and utilize all of one's energy for pious purposes. Time should not be wasted in frivolous or materialistic activities, of which there are now literally millions in modern society. One can cultivate birth in the mode of goodness by accepting the second birth of initiation from a bona fide spiritual master and learning to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. One should not accept initiation or so-called spiritual birth in unauthorized mystical or religious cults in the modes of passion and ignorance. One should meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the enjoyer of all sacrifices, and similarly, one should meditate on the lives of great devotees and saintly persons. One should not meditate on lusty women and envious men. Concerning *mantras*, one should follow the example of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and not other songs, verses, poetry or *mantras* that glorify the kingdom of illusion. Purificatory rituals should be performed to purify the spirit soul and not to bring down material blessings on one's material household.

One who increases the mode of goodness will certainly become fixed in religious principles, and automatically knowledge will arise. As knowledge increases one is able to understand the eternal spirit soul and the Supreme Soul, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus the soul becomes free from the artificial imposition of the gross and subtle material bodies caused by the modes of material nature. Spiritual knowledge burns to ashes the material designations that cover the living entity, and one's real, eternal life begins.

TEXT 13.7

*veṇu-saṅgharṣa-jo vahnir
dagdhvā śāmyati tad-vanam
evam guṇa-vyatyaya-jo
dehaḥ śāmyati tat-kriyaḥ*

veṇu – of bamboo; *saṅgharṣa-jaḥ* – generated by the friction; *vahnir* – fire; *dagdhvā* – having burned; *śāmyati* – is pacified; *tad* – of bamboo; *vanam* – the forest; *evam* – thus; *guṇa* – of the modes of nature; *vyatyaya-jaḥ* – generated by interaction; *dehaḥ* – the material body; *śāmyati* – is pacified; *tat* – as the fire; *kriyaḥ* – performing the same action.

TRANSLATION

In a bamboo forest the wind sometimes rubs the bamboo stalks together, and such friction generates a blazing fire that consumes the very source of its birth, the bamboo forest. Thus, the fire is automatically calmed by its own action. Similarly, by the competition and interaction of the material modes of nature, the subtle and gross material bodies are generated. If one uses his mind and body to cultivate knowledge, then such enlightenment destroys the influence of the modes of nature that generated one's body.

Thus, like the fire, the body and mind are pacified by their own actions in destroying the source of their birth.

PURPORT

The word *guṇa-vyatyaya-jah* is significant in this verse. *Vyatyaya* indicates change or inversion in the normal order of things. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has described the concept of *vyatyaya* by giving the Sanskrit synonym *vaiṣamya*, which indicates inequality or disproportionate diversity. Thus, it is understood by the term *guṇa-vyatyaya-jah* that the body is generated by the unstable relationships of the three modes of material nature, which exist everywhere in constantly changing proportions. There is constant strife among the modes of nature. A good person is sometimes torn by passion, and a passionate person sometimes wants to give up everything and rest. An ignorant person may sometimes become disgusted with his depraved life, and a passionate person may sometimes indulge in bad habits in the mode of ignorance. Due to the interactive conflict of the modes of nature, one wanders throughout material nature creating one body after another by one's own work, *karma*. As it is said, variety is the mother of enjoyment, and the variety of material modes gives hope to the conditioned souls that by changing their material situation their unhappiness and frustration can be turned into happiness and satisfaction. But even if one acquires relative material happiness, that will soon be disturbed by the inevitable flux of the material modes.

TEXT 13.8

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
vidanti martyāḥ prāyeṇa
viṣayān padam āpadām
tathāpi bhuñjate kṛṣṇa
tat katham śva-kharāja-vat*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *vidanti* – they know; *martyāḥ* – human beings; *prāyeṇa* – generally; *viṣayān* – sense gratification; *padam* – a situation; *āpadām* – of many miserable conditions; *tathā api* – even so; *bhuñjate* – they enjoy; *kṛṣṇa* – O Kṛṣṇa; *tat* – such sense gratification; *katham* – how is it possible; *śva* – dogs; *kharā* – asses; *aja* – and goats; *vat* – just like.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Kṛṣṇa, generally human beings know that material life brings great future unhappiness, and still they try to enjoy material life. My dear Lord, how can one in knowledge act just like a dog, an ass or a goat?

PURPORT

The standard methods of enjoyment in the material world are sex, money and false prestige, all of which are obtained with great suffering and eventually lost. One engaged in material life suffers in the present and has only a very bleak future to look forward to in the continuing cycle of birth and death. Thus, how can human beings who have seen these things and

know them very well continue to enjoy life like dogs, asses and goats? Often a dog will approach a bitch for sex, but the lady dog may not be attracted and will show her teeth, snarl and threaten the poor dog with serious injury. Still he goes about his business trying to get a little sex pleasure. Similarly, many times a dog risks being beaten or shot while stealing some food in a place where he knows he should not go. The ass is very attracted to the she-ass, but the lady ass often kicks him in the legs. Similarly, the ass's master gives the ass a handful of grass, which the poor ass could get anywhere, and then burdens him with great loads. The goat is generally raised for slaughter, and even when the goat is brought into the slaughterhouse he shamelessly goes after the lady goat to get sex pleasure. In this way, even at the risk of being shot, bitten, beaten and slaughtered, animals persist in their foolish sense gratification. How can an educated human being commit himself to such a condemned way of life, wherein the result is practically the same as that of the animals? If by cultivating the mode of goodness one's life is filled with happiness, enlightenment and future rewards, why would anyone cultivate the modes of passion and ignorance? This is Uddhava's question.

TEXTS 13.9-10

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
 aham ity anyathā-buddhiḥ
 pramattasya yathā hṛdi
 utsarpati rajo ghoram
 tato vaikārikam manaḥ
 rajo-yuktasya manasaḥ
 saṅkalpaḥ sa-vikalpakaḥ
 tataḥ kāmo guṇa-dhyānād
 duḥsahaḥ syād dhi durmateḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *aham* - false identification with the material body and mind; *iti* - thus; *anyathā-buddhiḥ* - illusory knowledge; *pramattasya* - of one who is bereft of actual intelligence; *yathā* - accordingly; *hṛdi* - within the mind; *utsarpati* - arises; *rajaḥ* - passion; *ghoram* - which brings terrible suffering; *tataḥ* - then; *vaikārikam* - (originally) in the mode of goodness; *manaḥ* - the mind; *rajaḥ* - in passion; *yuktasya* - of that which is engaged; *manasaḥ* - of the mind; *saṅkalpaḥ* - material determination; *sa-vikalpakaḥ* - along with variation and alternation; *tataḥ* - from that; *kāmaḥ* - full-fledged material desire; *guṇa* - in the modes of nature; *dhyānāt* - from concentration; *duḥsahaḥ* - unbearable; *syāt* - it must so be; *hi* - certainly; *durmateḥ* - of a foolish person.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, a person bereft of intelligence first falsely identifies himself with the material body and mind, and when such false knowledge arises within one's consciousness, material passion, the cause of great suffering, pervades the mind, which by nature is situated in

goodness. Then the mind, contaminated by passion, becomes absorbed in making and changing many plans for material advancement. Thus, by constantly thinking of the modes of material nature, a foolish person is afflicted with unbearable material desires.

PURPORT

Those who are trying to enjoy material sense gratification are not actually intelligent, although they consider themselves most intelligent. Although such foolish persons themselves criticize the miseries of material life in innumerable books, songs, newspapers, television programs, civic committees, etc., they cannot desist from material life for a single moment. The process by which one is helplessly bound in illusion is clearly described here.

A materialistic person is always thinking, “Oh, what a beautiful house. I wish we could buy it” or “What a beautiful woman. I wish I could touch her” or “What a powerful position. I wish I could occupy it” and so on. The words *saṅkalpaḥ sa-vikalpakaḥ* indicate that a materialist is always making new plans or modifying his old plans to increase his material enjoyment, although in his saner moments he admits that material life is full of suffering. The mind is created from the mode of goodness, as described in Sāṅkhya philosophy, and the natural, peaceful situation of the mind is pure love of Kṛṣṇa, in which there is no mental disturbance, disappointment or confusion. Artificially, the mind is dragged down to a lower platform in passion or ignorance, and thus one is never satisfied.

TEXT 13.11

*karoti kāma-vaśa-gaḥ
karmāṇy avijitendriyaḥ
duḥkhodarkāṇi sampaśyan
rajo-vega-vimohitaḥ*

karoti - performs; *kāma* - of material desires; *vaśa* - under the control; *gaḥ* - having gone; *karmāṇi* - fruitive activities; *avijita* - uncontrolled; *indriyaḥ* - whose senses; *duḥkha* - unhappiness; *udarkāṇi* - bringing as a future result; *sampaśyan* - seeing clearly; *rajaḥ* - of the mode of passion; *vega* - by the force; *vimohitaḥ* - bewildered.

TRANSLATION

One who does not control the material senses comes under the control of material desires and is thus bewildered by the strong waves of the mode of passion. Such a person executes material activities, although clearly seeing that the result will be future unhappiness.

TEXT 13.12

*rajas-tamobhyāṁ yad api
vidvān vikṣipta-dhīḥ punaḥ*

*atandrito mano yuñjan
doṣa-dṛṣṭir na sajjate*

rajaḥ-tamobhyām – by the modes of passion and ignorance; *yat api* – even though; *vidvān* – a learned person; *vikṣipta* – bewildered; *dhīḥ* – the intelligence; *punaḥ* – again; *atandritaḥ* – carefully; *manaḥ* – the mind; *yuñjan* – engaging; *doṣa* – the contamination of material attachment; *dṛṣṭiḥ* – seeing clearly; *na* – not; *sajjate* – becomes attached.

TRANSLATION

Although the intelligence of a learned person may be bewildered by the modes of passion and ignorance, he should again carefully bring the mind under control. By clearly seeing the contamination of the modes of nature, he does not become attached.

TEXT 13.13

*apramatto'nuyuñjīta
mano mayy arpayañ chanaiḥ
anirviṇṇo yathā-kālam
jita-śvāso jitāsanaḥ*

apramattaḥ – attentive and grave; *anuyuñjīta* – one should fix; *manaḥ* – the mind; *mayi* – in Me; *arpayan* – placing; *śanaiḥ* – gradually, step by step; *anirviṇṇaḥ* – without being lazy or morose; *yathā-kālam* – at least three times a day (dawn, noon and sunset); *jita* – having conquered; *śvāsaḥ* – the breathing process; *jita* – having conquered; *āsanaḥ* – the sitting postures.

TRANSLATION

A person should be attentive and grave and never lazy or morose. Mastering the yoga procedures of breathing and sitting properly, one should practice fixing the mind on Me at dawn, noon and sunset, and thus gradually the mind should be completely absorbed in Me.

TEXT 13.14

*etāvān yoga ādiṣṭo
mac-chiṣyaiḥ sanakādibhiḥ
sarvato mana ākṛṣya
mayy addhāveśyate yathā*

etāvān – actually this; *yogaḥ* – yoga system; *ādiṣṭaḥ* – instructed; *mac-śiṣyaiḥ* – by My devotees; *sanaka-ādibhiḥ* – headed by Sanaka-kumāra; *sarvataḥ* – from all sides; *manaḥ* – the mind; *ākṛṣya* – withdrawing; *mayi* – in Me; *addhā* – directly; *āveśyate* – is absorbed; *yathā* – accordingly.

TRANSLATION

The actual yoga system as taught by My devotees, headed by Sanaka-kumāra, is simply this: Having withdrawn the mind from all other objects, one should directly and appropriately absorb it in Me.

PURPORT

The word *yathā* (“accordingly” or “properly”) indicates that like Uddhava one should hear directly from Lord Kṛṣṇa or His bona fide representative and directly (*addhā*) fix the mind in Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 13.15

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
yadā tvam sanakādibhyo
yena rūpeṇa keśava
yogam ādiṣṭavān etad
rūpam icchāmi veditum*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *yadā* – when; *tvam* – You; *sanakā-ādibhyaḥ* – to Sanaka, etc.; *yena* – by which; *rūpeṇa* – form; *keśava* – my dear Keśava; *yogam* – the process of fixing the mind in the Absolute Truth; *ādiṣṭavān* – You have instructed; *etad* – that; *rūpam* – form; *icchāmi* – I desire; *veditum* – to know.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Keśava, at what time and in what form did You instruct the science of yoga to Sanaka and his brothers? I now desire to know about these things.

TEXT 13.16

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
putrā hiraṇyagarbhasya
mānasāḥ sanakādayaḥ
papracchuḥ pitaram sūkṣmām
yogasyaikāntikīm gatim*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *putrāḥ* – the sons; *hiraṇya-garbhasya* – of Lord Brahmā; *mānasāḥ* – born of the mind; *sanaka-ādayaḥ* – headed by Sanaka Ṛṣi; *papracchuḥ* – inquired; *pitaram* – from their father (Brahmā); *sūkṣmām* – subtle and therefore difficult to understand; *yogasya* – of the science of yoga; *ekāntikīm* – the supreme; *gatim* – destination.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Once, the mental sons of Lord Brahmā, namely, the sages headed by Sanaka, inquired from their father about the difficult subject matter of the supreme goal of yoga.

TEXT 13.17

*sanakādaya ūcuḥ
guṇeṣv āvísate ceto
guṇāś cetasi ca prabho
katham anyonya-santyaḅgo
mumukṣor atititīṣoḥ*

sanaka-ādayaḥ ūcuḥ – the sages headed by Sanaka said; *guṇeṣu* – in the sense objects; *āviśate* – directly enters; *cetaḥ* – the mind; *guṇāḥ* – the sense objects; *cetaśi* – within the mind; *ca* – also (enter); *prabho* – O Lord; *katham* – what is the process; *anyonya* – of the mutual relationship between the sense objects and the mind; *santyāgaḥ* – renunciation; *mumukṣoḥ* – of one desiring liberation; *atititīrṣoḥ* – of one desiring to cross over sense gratification.

TRANSLATION

The sages headed by Sanaka said: O Lord, people’s minds are naturally attracted to material sense objects, and similarly the sense objects in the form of desire enter within the mind. Therefore, how can a person who desires liberation, who desires to cross over activities of sense gratification, destroy this mutual relationship between the sense objects and the mind? Please explain this to us.

PURPORT

As described above, as long as one is a conditioned soul the modes of material nature, manifested in the form of sense objects, constantly disturb the mind, and by their harassment one is deprived of the actual perfection of life.

TEXT 13.18

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
evam pṛṣṭo mahā-devaḥ
svayambhūr bhūta-bhāvanaḥ
dhyāyamānaḥ praśna-bījaṁ
nābhyapadyata karma-dhīḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *evam* – thus; *pṛṣṭaḥ* – questioned; *mahā-devaḥ* – the great god Brahmā; *svayam-bhūḥ* – without material birth (born directly from the body of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu); *bhūta* – of all conditioned souls; *bhāvanaḥ* – the creator (of their conditioned life); *dhyāyamānaḥ* – seriously considering; *praśna* – of the question; *bījam* – the essential truth; *na abhyapadyata* – did not reach; *karma-dhīḥ* – intelligence bewildered by his own activities of creation.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, Brahmā himself, who is born directly from the body of the Lord and who is the creator of all living entities within the material world, being the best of the demigods, seriously contemplated the question of his sons headed by Sanaka. The intelligence of Brahmā, however, was affected by his own activities of creation, and thus he could not discover the essential answer to this question.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has quoted three verses from the Second Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as follows. In the Ninth Chapter, verse 32, Lord Kṛṣṇa blessed Brahmā with realized knowledge of the Lord’s actual form, qualities and activities. In the Ninth Chapter, verse 37, the Lord ordered Brahmā to rigidly

carry out the Lord's injunctions and affirmed that Brahmā would thus never be bewildered in his cosmic decision-making. In the Sixth Chapter, verse 34, Lord Brahmā assured his son Nārada, "O Nārada, because I have caught hold of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, with great zeal, whatever I say has never proved to have been false, nor is the progress of my mind ever deterred, nor are my senses ever degraded by temporary attachment to matter."

In the present verse in this Thirteenth Chapter of the Eleventh Canto, Lord Kṛṣṇa states that Brahmā unfortunately did become bewildered by his creative functions, thus providing a grave lesson to all of the Lord's empowered representatives. Although one may be elevated to an exalted position in the Lord's transcendental service, at any moment there is danger of false pride polluting one's devotional mentality.

TEXT 13.19

*sa mām acintayat devaḥ
praśna-pāra-titīṣayā
tasyāham haṁsa-rūpeṇa
sakāśam agamaṁ tadā*

saḥ - he (Lord Brahmā); *mām* - Me; *acintayat* - remembered; *devaḥ* - the original demigod; *praśna* - of the question; *pāra* - the end, conclusion (the answer); *titīṣayā* - with a desire to attain, understand; *tasya* - unto him; *aham* - I; *haṁsa-rūpeṇa* - in My form of Haṁsa; *sakāśam* - visible; *agamam* - became; *tadā* - at that time.

TRANSLATION

Lord Brahmā desired to attain the answer to the question that was puzzling him, and thus he fixed his mind on Me, the Supreme Lord. At that time, in My form of Haṁsa, I became visible to Lord Brahmā.

PURPORT

Haṁsa means "swan," and the specific ability of the swan is to separate a mixture of milk and water, extracting the rich, milky portion. Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared as Haṁsa, or the swan, in order to separate the pure consciousness of Lord Brahmā from the modes of material nature.

TEXT 13.20

*dṛṣtvā mām ta upavrajya
kṛtvā pādābhivandanam
brahmāṇam agrataḥ kṛtvā
papracchuḥ ko bhavān iti*

dṛṣtvā - thus seeing; *mām* - Me; *te* - they (the sages); *upavrajya* - approaching; *kṛtvā* - offering; *pāda* - at the lotus feet; *abhivandanam* - obeisances; *brahmāṇam* - Lord Brahmā; *agrataḥ* - in front; *kṛtvā* - keeping; *papracchuḥ* - they asked; *kaḥ bhavān* - "who are You, sir?"; *iti* - thus.

TRANSLATION

Thus seeing Me, the sages, placing Brahmā in the lead, came forward and worshiped My lotus feet. Then they frankly asked Me, “Who are You?”

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments, “When Brahmā was unable to answer the question placed by the sages, he fixed his mind in thought of the Supreme Lord. The Lord then assumed the form of Haṁsa and appeared before Lord Brahmā and the sages, who proceeded to inquire about the specific identity of the Lord.”

TEXT 13.21

*ity ahaṁ munibhiḥ pṛṣṭas
tattva-jijñāsubhis tadā
yad avocam ahaṁ tebhyaḥ
tad uddhava nibodha me*

iti – thus; *ahaṁ* – I; *munibhiḥ* – by the sages; *pṛṣṭaḥ* – questioned; *tattva* – the truth about the goal of *yoga*; *jijñāsubhiḥ* – by those desiring to know; *tadā* – at that time; *yad* – that which; *avocam* – spoke; *ahaṁ* – I; *tebhyaḥ* – unto them; *tad* – that; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *nibodha* – please learn; *me* – from Me.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, the sages, being eager to understand the ultimate truth of the yoga system, thus inquired from Me. Now please hear as I explain that which I spoke unto the sages.

TEXT 13.22

*vastuno yady anānātva
ātmanaḥ praśna īdṛśaḥ
kathaṁ ghaṭeta vo viprā
vaktur vā me ka āśrayaḥ*

vastunaḥ – of the essential reality; *yady* – if; *anānātve* – in the concept of nonindividuality; *ātmanaḥ* – of the *jīva* soul; *praśnaḥ* – question; *īdṛśaḥ* – such; *katham* – how; *ghaṭeta* – is it possible or appropriate; *vaḥ* – of you who are asking; *viprāḥ* – O *brāhmaṇas*; *vaktuḥ* – of the speaker; *vā* – or; *me* – of Me; *kaḥ* – what is; *āśrayaḥ* – the real situation or resting place.

TRANSLATION

My dear brāhmaṇas, if, when asking Me who I am, you believe that I am also a jīva soul and that there is no ultimate difference between us - since all souls are ultimately one without individuality - then how is your question possible or appropriate? Ultimately, what is the real situation or resting place both of yourselves and of Me?

PURPORT

Āśraya means “the resting place” or “shelter.” Lord Kṛṣṇa’s question “What is our actual resting place or shelter?” means “What is our ultimate nature or

constitutional position?” This is because no one can come to rest or be satisfied unless one is in one’s natural position. The example is given that one may travel all over the world, but ultimately one becomes satisfied by returning to one’s own home. Similarly, a crying child is satisfied when embraced by its own mother. By inquiring about the shelter or resting place of Himself and the *brāhmaṇas*, the Lord is indicating the eternal, constitutional position of every living entity.

If Lord Kṛṣṇa were also in the *jīva* category, and if all living entities including Him were thus equal, there would be no deep purpose in one living entity inquiring and another answering. Only one who is in a superior position can meaningfully answer important questions. It may be argued that the bona fide spiritual master answers all the questions of the disciple, and yet the *guru* is in the *jīva* category. The answer is that the bona fide spiritual master speaks not on his own behalf but as a representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is in the Viṣṇu category. A so-called *guru* speaking on his own behalf as a *jīva* soul is useless and is unable to meaningfully answer serious questions. Thus, the sages’ question *ko bhavān* (“Who are You?”) indicates that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally an individual person. And because the sages headed by Lord Brahmā offered obeisances and worshiped the Lord, it is understood that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Brahmā, as the first created being in this universe, could not accept any other living entity except the Lord as worshipable.

Lord Kṛṣṇa’s actual purpose is to explain the ultimate perfection of *yoga*, which the sages were desiring to know. If one becomes fixed in transcendental knowledge, the mutual attraction between the material mind and the material sense objects automatically ceases. The spiritual mind is not attracted to material objects of gratification, and thus by spiritualizing the mind, material existence automatically slackens. By questioning the propriety of the sages’ question, the Lord is assuming the position of the spiritual master and preparing to give valuable instructions. One should never be envious of a bona fide spiritual master, especially if, as in the case of Lord Haṁsa speaking to the sages headed by Brahmā and Sanaka-kumāra, the *guru* is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

TEXT 13.23

*pañcātmakeṣu bhūteṣu
samāneṣu ca vastutaḥ
ko bhavān iti vaḥ praśno
vācārambho hy anarthakaḥ*

pañca – of five elements; *ātmakeṣu* – made of; *bhūteṣu* – thus existing; *samāneṣu* – being the same; *ca* – also; *vastutaḥ* – in essence; *kaḥ* – who; *bhavān* – are You; *iti* – thus; *vaḥ* – your; *praśnaḥ* – question; *vācā* – merely with words; *ārambhaḥ* – such an endeavor; *hi* – certainly; *anarthakaḥ* – without real meaning or purpose.

TRANSLATION

If by asking Me “Who are You?” you were referring to the material body, then I must point out that all material bodies are constituted of five elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and ether. Thus, you should have asked, “Who are you five?” If you consider that all material bodies are ultimately one, being constituted essentially of the same elements, then your question is still meaningless, since there would be no deep purpose in distinguishing one body from another. Thus, it appears that in asking My identity, you are merely speaking words, without any real meaning or purpose.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains this verse as follows. “In the previous verse Lord Kṛṣṇa demonstrated that if the sages accepted the impersonal philosophy that all living beings are ultimately one in all respects, their question ‘Who are You?’ was meaningless, since there would be no philosophical basis to distinguish one manifestation of spirit soul from another. In this verse the Lord refutes the false identification with the material body composed of five elements. If the sages accepted the body as the self, then their question was meaningless, since they would have to ask, ‘Who are you five?’ If the sages replied that although the body is composed basically of five elements and these elements can be considered a single substance in the form of the whole body, then the Lord has already replied by the words *samāneṣu ca vastutaḥ*. The bodies of human beings, demigods, animals, etc., are all composed of the same five elements and are essentially the same. Therefore the question ‘Who are You?’ is ultimately meaningless. Thus, if one accepts either the theory that all living entities are ultimately the same or the theory that all living entities are ultimately nondifferent from their material bodies, in both cases the question of the sages is meaningless. “The sages might argue that even among learned persons it is common practice to ask questions and give answers on many subjects as a part of normal life. The sages could point out that Lord Kṛṣṇa also distinguished among them, by His saying *viprāḥ*, ‘O *brāhmaṇas*,’ and *vaḥ*, or ‘your [question],’ as expressed in this verse. In this way it is seen that the Lord also accepts the ordinary customs of questions and answers. To answer this argument, Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *vācārambho hy anarthakaḥ*. The Lord states, ‘My addressing you as *brāhmaṇas* is merely an exhibition of words if we are ultimately not different. I merely reciprocated with your approach to Me. Therefore, if we are ultimately one, neither My statement nor your question has any real meaning. I can conclude therefore by your question to Me that you are all not actually very intelligent. Therefore, why are you inquiring after ultimate knowledge? Aren’t you all embarrassed?’”

Śrīla Madhvācārya points out in this regard that the question of the sages was not appropriate, since they had already seen their father, Lord Brahmā, worshipping the lotus feet of Lord Haṁsa. Since their spiritual master and

father was worshiping Lord Haṁsa, they should have immediately understood the Lord's position, and their question is thus meaningless.

TEXT 13.24

*manasā vacasā dṛṣṭyā
gr̥hyate'nyair apīndriyaiḥ
aham eva na matto'nyad
iti budhyadhvam añjasā*

manasā – by the mind; *vacasā* – by speech; *dṛṣṭyā* – by sight; *gr̥hyate* – is perceived and thus accepted; *anyaiḥ* – by others; *api* – even; *indriyaiḥ* – senses; *aham* – I; *eva* – indeed; *na* – not; *mattoḥ* – besides Me; *anyat* – anything else; *iti* – thus; *budhyadhvam* – you should all understand; *añjasā* – by straightforward analysis of the facts.

TRANSLATION

Within this world, whatever is perceived by the mind, speech, eyes or other senses is Me alone and nothing besides Me. All of you please understand this by a straightforward analysis of the facts.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa has already explained that if the sages consider all living entities to be the same, or if they consider the living entity to be the same as his body, then their question “Who are You?” is inappropriate. Now the Lord refutes the conception that He is a Supreme God far beyond and different from everything within this world. Modern agnostic philosophers preach that God created the world and then retired or went away. According to them, God has no tangible connection with this world, nor does He interfere in human affairs. Ultimately, they claim, God is so great that He cannot be known; therefore no one should waste time trying to understand God. To refute such foolish ideas, the Lord here explains that since everything is the expansion of His potency, He is not different from anything. Nothing can exist separately from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus everything shares in the Lord's nature, although some manifestations are superior and others inferior. The Lord is testing the intelligence of the sages by pointing out various contradictions in their questions. Even if the Lord is supreme, He is not different from His creation; therefore, what is the meaning of the question “Who are You?” We can clearly see that the Lord is paving the way for a deep discussion of spiritual knowledge.

TEXT 13.25

*guṇeṣv āviśate ceto
guṇāś cetasi ca prajāḥ
jīvasya deha ubhayaṁ
guṇāś ceto mad-ātmanaḥ*

guṇeṣu – in the sense objects; *āviśate* – enters; *cetaḥ* – the mind; *guṇāḥ* – the sense objects; *cetasi* – in the mind; *ca* – also (enter); *prajāḥ* – My dear sons; *jīvasya* – of the living entity; *dehaḥ* – the outward body, existing as

designation; *ubhayam* – both of these; *guṇāḥ* – the sense objects; *cetaḥ* – the mind; *mat-ātmanaḥ* – having Me as the Supreme Soul.

TRANSLATION

My dear sons, the mind has a natural proclivity to enter into the material sense objects, and similarly the sense objects enter into the mind; but both this material mind and the sense objects are merely designations that cover the spirit soul, who is part and parcel of Me.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa in the form of Haṁsa-avatāra, on the pretext of finding contradictions in the simple inquiry of the sons of Brahmā (“Who are You?”), is actually preparing to teach the sages perfect spiritual knowledge, but only after first rejecting two false concepts of life, namely that all living entities are the same in all respects and that the living entity is identical with his outward or subtle body. Lord Kṛṣṇa now answers the difficult question that puzzled even Lord Brahmā. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the sons of Lord Brahmā were thinking as follows. “Our dear Lord, if it is indeed true that we are unintelligent, still Your Lordship has stated that You are actually everything because everything is the expansion of Your potency. Therefore, You are also the mind and the sense objects, which are the subject matter of our question. The material sense objects always enter into the functions of the mind, and similarly, the mind always enters into the material sense objects. Thus, it is proper that we inquire from Your Lordship about the process by which the sense objects will no longer enter the mind and the mind will no longer enter the sense objects. Please be merciful and give us the answer.” The Lord answers as follows. “My dear sons, it is a fact that the mind enters into the material sense objects and the sense objects into the mind. Thus, although the living entity is actually part and parcel of Me, being, as I am also, eternally conscious, and although the eternal form of the living entity is spiritual, in conditioned life the living entity artificially imposes upon himself the mind and sense objects, which act as covering designations of the eternal soul. Since it is the natural function of the material mind and sense objects to mutually interact, how can you possibly endeavor to prevent such a mutual attraction? Since both the material mind and sense objects are useless, they both should be completely given up, and thus automatically you will be free from all material duality.”

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī points out that the symptom of the material mind is the tendency to consider oneself to be the ultimate doer and enjoyer. Naturally, one with such a puffed-up mentality is helplessly attracted by the sense objects. One who considers himself to be the doer and enjoyer will be irresistibly attracted to the means for attaining sense gratification and false prestige, namely, exploitation of material objects. Above the material mind, however, is intelligence, which can perceive the existence of the eternal spirit soul. It is not possible to separate the material mind from the sense objects, because they naturally exist together. Therefore, by intelligence,

one must realize one's eternal form as spirit soul, part and parcel of the Lord, and completely reject the bogus material mentality. One who revives his original spiritual mentality becomes automatically detached from material attraction. Therefore, one should cultivate knowledge of the falsity of sense gratification. When the mind or senses are attracted to material enjoyment, the superior intelligence must immediately detect such illusion. In this way, one should purify one's mentality. By devotional service to the Lord, such detachment and intelligence automatically awaken, and by full understanding of one's original spiritual form, one is properly situated in eternal consciousness.

TEXT 13.26

*guṇeṣu cāviśac cittam
abhīkṣṇam guṇa-sevayā
guṇāś ca citta-prabhavā
mad-rūpa ubhayam tyajet*

guṇeṣu - in the sense objects; *ca* - and; *āviśat* - entered; *cittam* - the mind; *abhīkṣṇam* - again and again; *guṇa-sevayā* - by sense gratification; *guṇāḥ* - and the material sense objects; *ca* - also; *citta* - within the mind; *prabhavāḥ* - existing prominently; *mat-rūpaḥ* - one who has realized that he is not different from Me, and who is thus absorbed in My form, pastimes, etc.; *ubhayam* - both (the mind and sense objects); *tyajet* - should give up.

TRANSLATION

A person who has thus achieved Me by understanding that he is not different from Me realizes that the material mind is lodged within the sense objects because of constant sense gratification, and that the material objects are existing prominently within the material mind. Having understood My transcendental nature, he gives up both the material mind and its objects.

PURPORT

The Lord again states here that it is most difficult to separate the material mind from its objects because the material mind by definition considers itself to be the doer and enjoyer of everything. It must be understood that giving up the material mind does not mean giving up all mental activities, but instead means purifying the mind and engaging one's enlightened mentality in the devotional service of the Lord. Since time immemorial the material mind and senses have been in contact with the sense objects; therefore, how is it possible for the material mind to give up its objects, which are the basis of its existence? And not only does the mind reach out to material objects, but also, because of the mind's desires, the material objects cannot remain out of the mind, helplessly entering at every moment. Thus, separation between the mind and sense objects is not actually feasible, nor does it serve any purpose. If one retains a material mentality, considering oneself to be supreme, one may renounce sense gratification, considering it to be ultimately the cause of unhappiness, but one will not be able to remain on

such an artificial platform, nor will such renunciation serve any real purpose. Without surrender to the lotus feet of the Lord, mere renunciation cannot take one out of this material world.

Just as the sun's rays are part of the sun, the living entities are part of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When the living entity is completely absorbed in his identity as the part and parcel of the Personality of Godhead, he becomes actually wise and easily gives up the material mind and sense objects. The word *mad-rūpaḥ* in this verse indicates absorption of the mind in the form, qualities, pastimes and associates of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Immersed in such ecstatic meditation, one should render devotional service to the Lord, and this will automatically drive away the influence of sense gratification. By himself, the living entity does not have the potency to give up his false identification with the material mind and sense objects, but by worshiping the Lord in the mood of being His eternal part-and-parcel servant, one is infused with the Lord's potency, which easily drives away the darkness of ignorance.

TEXT 13.27

*jāgrat svapnaḥ suṣuptam ca
guṇato buddhi-vṛttayaḥ
tāsām vilakṣaṇo jīvaḥ
sākṣitvena viniścitaḥ*

jāgrat - being awake; *svapnaḥ* - dreaming; *su-suptam* - deep sleep; *ca* - also; *guṇataḥ* - caused by the modes of nature; *buddhi* - of intelligence; *vṛttayaḥ* - the functions; *tāsām* - from such functions; *vilakṣaṇaḥ* - possessing different characteristics; *jīvaḥ* - the living entity; *sākṣitvena* - with the characteristic of being a witness; *viniścitaḥ* - is ascertained.

TRANSLATION

Waking, sleeping and deep sleep are the three functions of the intelligence and are caused by the modes of material nature. The living entity within the body is ascertained to possess characteristics different from these three states and thus remains as a witness to them.

PURPORT

The spirit soul actually has nothing to do with the material world, having no permanent or natural relationship with it. Real renunciation means to give up the illusory identification with matter in its subtle and gross forms.

Suṣuptam, or deep sleep, indicates sleeping without any dreams or conscious activity. These three states are described by Lord Kṛṣṇa as follows:

*sattvāj jāgaraṇam vidyād
rajasā svapnam ādiśet
prasvāpaṁ tamasā jantōs
turīyaṁ triṣu santatam*

“One should know that wakefulness is born of the mode of goodness, dreams from the mode of passion, and deep dreamless sleep from the mode of

ignorance. The fourth element, pure consciousness, is different from these three and pervades them.” (Bhāg. 11.25.20) Real freedom means *sākṣitvena*, or to exist as a witness to the functions of illusion. Such an advantageous position is achieved by development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 13.28

*yarhi saṁsṛti-bandho'yam
ātmano guṇa-vṛtti-daḥ
mayi turye sthito jahyāt
tyāgas tad guṇa-cetasām*

yarhi – whereas; *saṁsṛti* – of material intelligence or material existence; *bandhaḥ* – bondage; *ayam* – this is; *ātmanaḥ* – of the soul; *guṇa* – in the modes of nature; *vṛtti-daḥ* – that which gives occupations; *mayi* – in Me; *turye* – in the fourth element (beyond wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep); *sthitaḥ* – being situated; *jahyāt* – one should give up; *tyāgaḥ* – renunciation; *tad* – at that time; *guṇa* – of the material sense objects; *cetasām* – and of the material mind.

TRANSLATION

The spirit soul is trapped in the bondage of material intelligence, which awards him constant engagement in the illusory modes of nature. But I am the fourth stage of consciousness, beyond wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep. Becoming situated in Me, the soul should give up the bondage of material consciousness. At that time, the living entity will automatically renounce the material sense objects and the material mind.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa now specifically answers the questions that the sages originally placed before Lord Brahmā. Ultimately, the spirit soul has nothing to do with the material sense objects and modes of nature. But because of one’s false identification with the material body, the modes of nature are empowered to engage one in illusory occupations. By destroying this false identification with matter, the soul gives up the illusory occupations awarded by the modes of nature. It is clearly stated in this verse that the living entity is not empowered to independently free himself from illusion, but must situate himself in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in full awareness of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 13.29

*ahaṅkāra-kṛtaṁ bandham
ātmano'rtha-viparyayam
vidvān nirvidya saṁsāra-
cintāṁ turye sthitas tyajet*

ahaṅkāra – by false ego; *kṛtaṁ* – produced; *bandham* – bondage; *ātmanaḥ* – of the soul; *artha* – of that which is really valuable; *viparyayam* – being the opposite; *vidvān* – one who knows; *nirvidya* – being detached; *saṁsāra* – in

material existence; *cintām* – constant thoughts; *turye* – in the fourth element, the Lord; *sthitaḥ* – being situated; *tyajet* – should give up.

TRANSLATION

The false ego of the living entity places him in bondage and awards him exactly the opposite of what he really desires. Therefore, an intelligent person should give up his constant anxiety to enjoy material life and remain situated in the Lord, who is beyond the functions of material consciousness.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī comments as follows. “How does material existence cause the bondage of the living entity, and how can such bondage be given up? The Lord explains this here by the word *ahaṅkāra-kṛtam*. Because of false ego, one is bound up in the network of illusion. *Artha-viparyayam* indicates that although the living entity desires blissful life, eternity and knowledge, he adopts procedures that actually cover over his eternal, blissful nature and give him exactly the opposite result. The living entity does not want death and suffering, but these are actually the results of material existence, which is therefore useless for all practical purposes. An intelligent person should contemplate the unhappiness of material life and thus become situated in the transcendental Lord. The word *saṁsāra-cintām* can be understood as follows. *Saṁsāra*, or material existence, indicates material intelligence, because material existence only occurs because of the living entity’s false intellectual identification with the material world. Because of this misidentification, one becomes overwhelmed with *saṁsāra-cintām*, anxiety to enjoy the material world. One should become situated in the Lord and give up such useless anxiety.”

TEXT 13.30

*yāvan nānārtha-dhīḥ puṁso
na nivarteta yuktibhiḥ
jāgarty api svapann ajñāḥ
svapne jāgaraṇam yathā*

yāvat – as long as; *nānā* – of many; *artha* – values; *dhīḥ* – the conception; *puṁsaḥ* – of a person; *na* – does not; *nivarteta* – subside; *yuktibhiḥ* – by the appropriate methods (described by Me); *jāgarty* – being awake; *api* – although; *svapan* – sleeping, dreaming; *ajñāḥ* – one who does not see things as they are; *svapne* – in a dream; *jāgaraṇam* – being awake; *yathā* – just as.

TRANSLATION

According to My instructions, one should fix the mind on Me alone. If, however, one continues to see many different values and goals in life rather than seeing everything within Me, then although apparently awake, one is actually dreaming due to incomplete knowledge, just as one may dream that one has wakened from a dream.

PURPORT

One who is not Kṛṣṇa conscious cannot understand that everything is resting within Lord Kṛṣṇa, and thus it is impossible for him to retire from material sense gratification. One may adopt a particular process of salvation and consider oneself to be “saved”; nevertheless, his material conditioning will remain and thus he will maintain his attachment to the material world. While one is dreaming he sometimes imagines that he has awakened from a dream and is experiencing normal consciousness. Similarly, one may consider oneself to be saved, but if he remains absorbed in making material value judgements between good and bad, without reference to devotional service to the Supreme Lord, he is understood to be a conditioned soul covered by the illusory identification with matter.

TEXT 13.31

*asattvād ātmano'nyeṣāṃ
bhāvānām tat-kṛtā bhidā
gatayo hetavaś cāsyā
mṛṣā svapna-dṛśo yathā*

asattvāt – because of lacking factual existence; *ātmanaḥ* – from the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *anyeṣāṃ* – of others; *bhāvānām* – states of existence; *tat* – by them; *kṛtā* – created; *bhidā* – difference or separation; *gatayaḥ* – destinations such as going to heaven; *hetavaḥ* – fruitive activities, which are the cause of future rewards; *ca* – also; *asya* – of the living entity; *mṛṣā* – false; *svapna* – of a dream; *dṛśaḥ* – of the seer; *yathā* – just as.

TRANSLATION

Those states of existence that are conceived of as separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead have no actual existence, although they create a sense of separation from the Absolute Truth. Just as the seer of a dream imagines many different activities and rewards, similarly, because of the sense of an existence separate from the Lord’s existence, the living entity falsely performs fruitive activities, thinking them to be the cause of future rewards and destinations.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments as follows: “Although Lord Kṛṣṇa in His form of Hamsa-avatāra has condemned the intelligence that sees duality and separate values within the material world, the *Vedas* themselves institute the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, by which the entire human society is divided into different castes, occupations and spiritual statuses. Therefore, how can the Lord recommend that one give up one’s faith in this Vedic system? The answer is given in this verse as follows. The words *anyeṣāṃ bhāvānām*, or ‘of other states of existence,’ refer to the innumerable divisions of false identification with the material body, mind, occupation, and so on. Such identification is illusion, and the material divisions of the *varṇāśrama* system are certainly based on this illusion. The Vedic literatures promise heavenly rewards such as residence in upper

planetary systems and prescribe the means to acquire such rewards. However, both the rewards and the means for achieving them are ultimately illusion. Since this world is the Lord's creation, one cannot deny that its existence is also real; yet the living entity who identifies the creations of this world as belonging to himself is certainly in illusion. The example may be given that horns are real and rabbits are real, but if one imagines a rabbit's horns, that is certainly illusion, though a rabbit's horns may occur in a dream. Similarly, the living entity dreams of a permanent relationship within the material world. One may dream that one is feasting on sumptuous sweet rice prepared with milk and sugar, but there is no actual nutritional value in the dream of royal feasting."

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura remarks in this regard that just as one soon forgets the experience of a dream after awakening, similarly, a liberated soul in Kṛṣṇa consciousness does not see anything substantial in even the most exalted rewards offered by the *Vedas*, such as promotion to the heavenly planets. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa advised Arjuna in *Bhagavad-gītā* to remain fixed in self-realization, without being deviated by fruitive rituals performed in the name of religion.

TEXT 13.32

*yo jāgare bahir anukṣaṇa-dharminḥ o'rthān
bhuṅkte samasta-karaṇair hṛdi tat-sadrkṣān
svapne suṣupta upasamharate sa ekaḥ
smṛty-anvayāt tri-guṇa-vṛtti-dṛg indriyeśaḥ*

yaḥ - the living entity who; *jāgare* - while awake; *bahiḥ* - external; *anukṣaṇa* - momentary; *dharminḥ* - qualities; *arthān* - the body and mind and their experiences; *bhuṅkte* - enjoys; *samasta* - with all; *karaṇaiḥ* - the senses; *hṛdi* - within the mind; *tat-sadrkṣān* - experiences similar to those in wakefulness; *svapne* - in dreams; *suṣupte* - in deep dreamless sleep; *upasamharate* - merges into ignorance; *saḥ* - he; *ekaḥ* - one; *smṛti* - of memory; *anvayāt* - by the succession; *tri-guṇa* - of the three stages wakefulness, dream and dreamless sleep; *vṛtti* - functions; *dṛk* - seeing; *indriya* - of the senses; *īśaḥ* - becomes the lord.

TRANSLATION

While awake the living entity enjoys with all of his senses the fleeting characteristics of the material body and mind; while dreaming he enjoys similar experiences within the mind; and in deep dreamless sleep all such experiences merge into ignorance. By remembering and contemplating the succession of wakefulness, dreaming and deep sleep, the living entity can understand that he is one throughout the three stages of consciousness and is transcendental. Thus, he becomes the lord of the senses.

PURPORT

In verse 30 of this chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa stated that one must retire from material duality by the proper means, which the Lord now explains. One may

first consider the three phases of consciousness mentioned above and then understand one's own transcendental position as spirit soul. One experiences childhood, boyhood, adolescence, adulthood, middle age and old age, and throughout these phases one is experiencing things while awake and while dreaming. Similarly, one may, by careful intelligence, understand one's lack of consciousness during deep sleep, and thus through intelligence one may have experience of lack of consciousness.

One may argue that it is actually the senses that experience during wakefulness and that it is the mind that experiences during dreams. However, the Lord here states, *indriyeśaḥ*: the living entity is actually the lord of the senses and mind, although temporarily he has become a victim of their influence. By Kṛṣṇa consciousness one may resume one's rightful position as master of the mental and sensory faculties. Also, since the living entity can remember his experiences in these three stages of consciousness, he is ultimately the experiencing agent or the seer of all phases of consciousness. He remembers, "I saw so many things in my dream, and then my dream ended and I didn't see anything. Now I'm waking up." This universal experience can be understood by everyone, and thus everyone can understand that one's actual identity is separate from the material body and mind.

TEXT 13.33

*evam vimṛśya guṇato manasas tri-avasthā
man-māyayā mayi kṛtā iti niścitarthāḥ
sañchidya hārdam anumāna-sat-ukti-tīkṣṇa-
jñānāsinā bhajata mākhila-samśayādhim*

evam – thus; *vimṛśya* – considering; *guṇataḥ* – by the modes of nature; *manasaḥ* – of the mind; *tri-avasthāḥ* – the three states of consciousness; *mat-māyayā* – by the influence of My illusory potency; *mayi* – in Me; *kṛtāḥ* – imposed; *iti* – thus; *niścitarthāḥ* – those who have ascertained the actual meaning of the soul; *sañchidya* – cutting off; *hārdam* – situated in the heart; *anumāna* – by logic; *sat-ukti* – and by the instructions of sages and the Vedic literatures; *tīkṣṇa* – sharpened; *jñāna* – of knowledge; *asinā* – by the sword; *bhajata* – all of you worship; *mā* – Me; *akhila* – of all; *samśaya* – doubts; *ādhim* – the cause (false ego).

TRANSLATION

You should consider how, by the influence of My illusory energy, these three states of the mind, caused by the modes of nature, have been artificially imagined to exist in Me. Having definitely ascertained the truth of the soul, you should utilize the sharpened sword of knowledge, acquired by logical reflection and from the instructions of sages and Vedic literatures, to completely cut off the false ego, which is the breeding ground of all doubts. All of you should then worship Me, who am situated within the heart.

PURPORT

One who has obtained transcendental knowledge is no longer dependent on the three stages of ordinary consciousness, namely waking, dreaming and dreamless sleep. One thus rids one's material mind of the tendency to become the enjoyer of the inferior energy of the Lord, and one sees everything as part and parcel of the Lord's potency, meant only for the enjoyment of the Lord Himself. In such a state of consciousness, one naturally surrenders fully to the Lord's devotional service, which Lord Haṁsa here advises the sons of Lord Brahmā to take up.

TEXT 13.34

*īkṣeta vibhramam idam manaso vilāsam
dṛṣṭam vinaṣṭam ati-lolam alāta-cakram
vijñānam ekam urudheva vibhāti māyā
svapnaḥ tridhā guṇa-visarga-kṛto vikalpaḥ*

īkṣeta – one should see; *vibhramam* – as illusion or mistake; *idam* – this (material world); *manasaḥ* – of the mind; *vilāsam* – appearance or jumping; *dṛṣṭam* – here today; *vinaṣṭam* – gone tomorrow; *ati-lolam* – extremely flickering; *alāta-cakram* – just like the moving red line created by whirling a fiery stick; *vijñānam* – the spirit soul, by nature fully conscious; *ekam* – is one; *urudhā* – in many divisions; *iva* – as if; *vibhāti* – appears; *māyā* – this is illusion; *svapnaḥ* – merely a dream; *tridhā* – in three divisions; *guṇa* – of the modes of nature; *visarga* – by the transformation; *kṛtaḥ* – created; *vikalpaḥ* – variety of perception or imagination.

TRANSLATION

One should see that the material world is a distinct illusion appearing in the mind, because material objects have an extremely flickering existence and are here today and gone tomorrow. They can be compared to the streaking red line created by whirling a fiery stick. The spirit soul by nature exists in the single state of pure consciousness. However, in this world he appears in many different forms and stages of existence. The modes of nature divide the soul's consciousness into normal wakefulness, dreaming and dreamless sleep. All such varieties of perception, however, are actually māyā and exist only like a dream.

PURPORT

The Lord now describes an additional process for transcending the illusory interaction of the material mind and material sense objects. *Lāsa* means “jumping” or “dancing,” and thus *manaso vilāsam* here indicates that the material mind is jumping superficially from one conception of life to another. Our original consciousness, however, is one (*vijñānam ekam*). Therefore, one should carefully study the flickering “here today, gone tomorrow” nature of the material world and detach oneself from the illusory variety of *māyā*.

TEXT 13.35

*dṛṣṭim tataḥ pratinivartya nivṛtta-tṛṣṇas
tūṣṇīm bhaven nija-sukhānubhavo nirīhaḥ
sandṛśyate kva ca yadīdam avastu-buddhyā
tyaktam bhramāya na bhavet smṛtir ā-nipātāt*

dṛṣṭim – sight; *tataḥ* – from that illusion; *pratinivartya* – pulling away; *nivṛtta* – ceased; *tṛṣṇaḥ* – material hankering; *tūṣṇīm* – silent; *bhavet* – one should become; *nija* – one’s own (of the soul); *sukha* – happiness; *anubhavaḥ* – perceiving; *nirīhaḥ* – without material activities; *sandṛśyate* – is observed; *kva ca* – sometimes; *yadi* – if; *īdam* – this material world; *avastu* – of not being reality; *buddhyā* – by the consciousness; *tyaktam* – given up; *bhramāya* – further illusion; *na* – not; *bhavet* – may become; *smṛtiḥ* – remembrance; *ā-nipātāt* – until giving up the material body.

TRANSLATION

Having understood the temporary illusory nature of material things, and thus having pulled one’s vision away from illusion, one should remain without material desires. By experiencing the happiness of the soul, one should give up material speaking and activities. If sometimes one must observe the material world, one should remember that it is not ultimate reality and therefore one has given it up. By such constant remembrance up till the time of death, one will not again fall into illusion.

PURPORT

To maintain the material body one cannot avoid eating and sleeping. In these and other ways, one will sometimes be forced to deal with the material world and the physical aspects of one’s own body. At such times one should remember that the material world is not actual reality and that therefore one has given it up to become Kṛṣṇa conscious. By such constant remembrance, by enjoying spiritual bliss within oneself and by retiring from any material activities of the mind, speech or body, one will not fall into material illusion. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments as follows. “The living entity, while living in the external energy of the Lord, should give up any anxiety for sense gratification and should not act for his personal enjoyment. Rather, one should search out spiritual bliss through devotional service to the Supreme Lord. By reviving one’s relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa, one will understand that if one accepts any material object for one’s personal enjoyment, attachment will inevitably develop, and thus one will be bewildered by illusion. By gradually developing one’s spiritual body, one will no longer desire to enjoy anything within the material world.”

TEXT 13.36

*deham ca naśvaram avasthitam utthitam vā
siddho na paśyati yato’dhyagamāt svarūpam
daivād apetam atha daiva-vaśād upetaṁ
vāso yathā parikṛtaṁ madirā-madāndhaḥ*

deham – the material body; *ca* – also; *naśvaram* – to be destroyed; *avasthitam* – seated; *utthitam* – risen; *vā* – or; *siddhaḥ* – one who is perfect; *na paśyati* – does not see; *yataḥ* – because; *adhyagamāt* – he has achieved; *sva-rūpam* – his actual spiritual identity; *daivāt* – by destiny; *apetam* – departed; *atha* – or thus; *daiva* – of destiny; *vaśāt* – by the control; *upetam* – achieved; *vāsaḥ* – clothes; *yathā* – just as; *parikṛtam* – placed on the body; *madirā* – of liquor; *mada* – by the intoxication; *andhaḥ* – blinded.

TRANSLATION

Just as a drunken man does not notice if he is wearing his coat or shirt, similarly, one who is perfect in self-realization and who has thus achieved his eternal identity does not notice whether the temporary body is sitting or standing. Indeed, if by God’s will the body is finished or if by God’s will he obtains a new body, a self-realized soul does not notice, just as a drunken man does not notice the situation of his outward dress.

PURPORT

A Kṛṣṇa conscious person who has achieved his spiritual identity does not accept sense gratification in the material world as the goal of his life. He is constantly engaged in the service of the Lord and knows that the temporary body and flickering mind are material. By superior intelligence in Kṛṣṇa consciousness he remains engaged in the Lord’s service. The example of a drunken man in this verse is very nice. It is common knowledge that at mundane social gatherings men become drunk and lose all awareness of their external situation. Similarly, a liberated soul has already achieved his spiritual body and therefore knows that his continued existence does not depend on the material body. A liberated soul does not, however, inflict punishment on the body but rather remains neutral, naturally accepting his destiny as the will of the Supreme.

TEXT 13.37

*deho’pi daiva-vaśa-gaḥ khalu karma yāvat
svārambhakaṁ pratisamīkṣata eva sāsuh
taṁ sa-prapañcam adhirūḍha-samādhi-yogaḥ
svāpnam punar na bhajate pratibuddha-vastuḥ*

dehaḥ – the body; *api* – even; *daiva* – of the Supreme; *vaśa-gaḥ* – under the control; *khalu* – indeed; *karma* – the chain of fruitive activities; *yāvat* – as long as; *sva-ārambhakam* – that which initiates or perpetuates itself; *pratisamīkṣate* – goes on living and waiting; *eva* – certainly; *sa-asuh* – along with the vital air and senses; *taṁ* – that (body); *sa-prapañcam* – with its variety of manifestations; *adhirūḍha* – highly situated; *samādhi* – the stage of perfection; *yogaḥ* – in the *yoga* system; *svāpnam* – just like a dream; *punaḥ* – again; *na bhajate* – does not worship or cultivate; *pratibuddha* – one who is enlightened; *vastuḥ* – in the supreme reality.

TRANSLATION

The material body certainly moves under the control of supreme destiny and therefore must continue to live along with the senses and vital air as long as one's karma is in effect. A self-realized soul, however, who is awakened to the absolute reality and who is thus highly situated in the perfect stage of yoga, will never again surrender to the material body and its manifold manifestations, knowing it to be just like a body visualized in a dream.

PURPORT

Although Lord Kṛṣṇa recommended in the previous verse that a self-realized soul not give attention to the body, it is clear from the Lord's statement here that one should not foolishly starve or injure the body, but should patiently wait until the chain of one's previous fruitive work has completely exhausted itself. At that time the body will automatically die according to destiny. The following doubt may then arise: If a Kṛṣṇa conscious person pays proper attention to the maintenance of the body, is there danger of again becoming attached to it? Lord Kṛṣṇa here states that one who is highly elevated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, having understood Lord Kṛṣṇa to be the actual *vastu*, or reality, never again surrenders to the illusory identification with the material body, which is just like the body seen in a dream.

TEXT 13.38

*mayaitad uktam vo viprā
guhyam yat sāṅkhya-yogayoḥ
jānīta māgataṁ yajñam
yuṣmad-dharma-vivakṣayā*

mayā – by Me; *etat* – this (knowledge); *uktam* – has been spoken; *vaḥ* – unto you; *viprāḥ* – O brāhmaṇas; *guhyam* – confidential; *yat* – which; *sāṅkhya* – of the philosophical method of distinguishing matter from spirit; *yogayoḥ* – and the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system; *jānīta* – please understand; *mā* – Me; *āgataṁ* – who have arrived; *yajñam* – as Viṣṇu, the Supreme Lord of sacrifice; *yuṣmat* – your; *dharma* – religious duties; *vivakṣayā* – with the desire to explain.

TRANSLATION

My dear brāhmaṇas, I have now explained to you the confidential knowledge of Sāṅkhya, by which one philosophically distinguishes matter from spirit, and of aṣṭāṅga-yoga, by which one links up with the Supreme. Please understand that I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, and that I have appeared before you desiring to explain your actual religious duties.

PURPORT

To increase the faith of Lord Brahmā's sons and establish the prestige of His teachings, Lord Kṛṣṇa now formally identifies Himself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu. As stated in Vedic literature, *yajño vai viṣṇuḥ*. After explaining the *sāṅkhya*- and *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* systems, the Lord clearly

answers the original question of the sages, “Who are You, sir?” Thus, Lord Brahmā and his sons were enlightened by Lord Haṁsa.

TEXT 13.39

*aham yogasya sāṅkhyasya
satyasyartasya tejasah
parāyaṇam dvija-śreṣṭhāḥ
śriyaḥ kīrter damasya ca*

aham – I; *yogasya* – of the *yoga* system; *sāṅkhyasya* – of the system of analytic philosophy; *satyasya* – of virtuous action; *ṛtasya* – of truthful religious principles; *tejasah* – of power; *para-ayaṇam* – the ultimate shelter; *dvija-śreṣṭhāḥ* – O best of the *brāhmaṇas*; *śriyaḥ* – of beauty; *kīrteḥ* – of fame; *damasya* – of self-control; *ca* – also.

TRANSLATION

O best of the brāhmaṇas, please know that I am the supreme shelter of the yoga system, analytic philosophy, virtuous action, truthful religious principles, power, beauty, fame and self-control.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the synonymous words *satyasya* and *ṛtasya* refer to, respectively, the proper or virtuous execution of religious principles and a convincing presentation of religion. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura points out that the sons of Brahmā were struck with wonder at the presentation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and were thinking, “What wonderful knowledge we have just heard.” The Lord, recognizing their astonishment, spoke this verse to confirm their understanding of Him.

TEXT 13.40

*mām bhajanti guṇāḥ sarve
nirguṇam nirapekṣakam
suhṛdam priyam ātmānam
sāmyāsaṅgādayo'guṇāḥ*

mām – Me; *bhajanti* – serve and take shelter of; *guṇāḥ* – qualities; *sarve* – all; *nirguṇam* – free from the modes of nature; *nirapekṣakam* – detached; *suhṛdam* – the well-wisher; *priyam* – the most dear; *ātmānam* – the Supersoul; *sāmya* – being equally situated everywhere; *asaṅga* – detachment; *ādayaḥ* – and so on; *aguṇāḥ* – free from the transformation of the material modes.

TRANSLATION

All superior transcendental qualities, such as being beyond the modes of nature, detached, the well-wisher, the most dear, the Supersoul, equally situated everywhere, and free from material entanglement - all such qualities, free from the transformations of material qualities, find their shelter and worshipable object in Me.

PURPORT

Because in the previous verse Lord Kṛṣṇa explained His exalted nature, the sons of Brahmā might have slightly doubted the Lord's position, thinking that they had detected some pride within the Lord's mind. Therefore, they may have doubted the instructions they had just received from Lord Hamsa. Anticipating any such reluctance, the Lord immediately clarifies the situation in the present verse. The Lord explains that, unlike ordinary living entities even up to the standard of Brahmā, the Lord's transcendental body is not different from His eternal Self and has no material qualities such as false egotism. The Lord's transcendental form is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss, and is thus *nirguṇam*, beyond the modes of nature. Because the Lord completely ignores the so-called enjoyment offered by the illusory energy, He is called *nirapekṣakam*, and being the best well-wisher of His devotees, He is called *suhṛdam*. *Priyam* indicates that the Lord is the supreme lovable object and that He establishes wonderful affectionate relationships with His devotees. *Sāmya* indicates that the Lord is neutral and detached in all material situations. These and other exalted qualities find their shelter and worshipable object in the Lord, who does not take material designations into consideration but awards His mercy to anyone who takes shelter of Him. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.16.26–30) mother Bhūmi, the predominating deity of the earth, gives a list of some of the Lord's transcendental qualities, and even more are found in *The Nectar of Devotion*. Actually, the Lord's qualities are unlimited, but a small sample is given here simply to establish the Lord's transcendental position.

Śrīla Madhvācārya has quoted from the *Kāla-saṁhitā* as follows. "The demigods are not actually perfectly endowed with transcendental qualities. Indeed, their opulences are limited, and therefore they worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, who is simultaneously free of all material qualities and completely endowed with all transcendental qualities, which exist in His personal body."

TEXT 13.41

*iti me chinna-sandehā
munayaḥ sanakādayaḥ
sabhājayitvā parayā
bhaktyāgrṇata saṁstavaiḥ*

iti – thus; *me* – by Me; *chinna* – destroyed; *sandehāḥ* – all their doubts; *munayaḥ* – the sages; *sanaka-ādayaḥ* – headed by Sanaka-kumāra; *sabhājayitvā* – fully worshiping Me; *parayā* – characterized by transcendental love; *bhaktiyā* – with devotion; *agrṇata* – they chanted My glories; *saṁstavaiḥ* – with beautiful hymns.

TRANSLATION

[Lord Kṛṣṇa continued:] My dear Uddhava, thus all of the doubts of the sages headed by Sanaka were destroyed by My words. Fully

**worshiping Me with transcendental love and devotion, they chanted
My glories with excellent hymns.**

TEXT 13.42

*tair ahaṁ pūjitaḥ saṁyak
saṁstutaḥ paramarṣibhiḥ
pratyeyāya svakaṁ dhāma
paśyataḥ parameṣṭhinaḥ*

taiḥ - by them; *ahaṁ* - I; *pūjitaḥ* - worshiped; *saṁyak* - perfectly; *saṁstutaḥ* - perfectly glorified; *parama-ṛṣibhiḥ* - by the greatest of sages; *pratyeyāya* - I returned; *svakaṁ* - to My own; *dhāma* - abode; *paśyataḥ parameṣṭhinaḥ* - as Lord Brahmā looked on.

TRANSLATION

**The greatest of sages, headed by Sanaka Ṛṣi, thus perfectly
worshiped and glorified Me, and as Lord Brahmā looked on, I
returned to My own abode.**

*Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Thirteenth
Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "The Haṁsa-avatāra Answers
the Questions of the Sons of Brahmā."*

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Lord Kṛṣṇa Explains the Yoga System to Śrī Uddhava

In this chapter, Kṛṣṇa explains that devotional service to the Supreme Lord is the most excellent method of spiritual practice. He also speaks about the process of meditation.

Śrī Uddhava wanted to know which process of spiritual advancement is the best. He also desired to hear about the superexcellence of devotional service free from ulterior motives. The Supreme Personality of Godhead replied to him that the original process of religion revealed in the *Vedas* had become lost during the time of annihilation. At the beginning of the new creation, therefore, the Supreme Lord spoke it again to Brahmā. Brahmā repeated it to Manu, Manu spoke it to the sages headed by Bhṛgu Muni, and these sages in turn instructed this eternal religion to the demigods and demons. Because of the living entities' multitude of diverse desires, this system of religion was elaborately explained in different ways. Thus different philosophies arose, including various atheistic doctrines. Because the living entity, bewildered by illusion, is incapable of ascertaining his eternal benefit, he mistakenly identifies ordinary vows of penance, austerity, etc., to be the topmost spiritual practice. But the only true means of achieving happiness is to meditate on offering everything to the Supreme Lord. In this way one becomes free from all desires for selfish gratification through enjoyment of mundane sense objects, and he becomes released from all hankering for either enjoyment or liberation.

The Lord then proceeded to describe the superior process of devotional service, which destroys countless sinful reactions and produces many symptoms of spiritual happiness, such as the standing of the hairs on end. Pure devotion, having the power to purify the heart, enables one to achieve the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and because the devotee is very dear to the Lord and is always close to Him, he is able in turn to purify the entire universe. By virtue of his unflinching devotion to the Lord, the devotee can never be completely diverted by the objects of sense enjoyment, even if he is not able to gain control over his senses in the beginning. One desiring to attain the perfection of life is advised to give up all material processes of elevation as well as the association of women. He should then merge his mind constantly in thought of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Finally, the Lord instructed Śrī Uddhava about the true object of meditation.

TEXT 14.1

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
vadanti kṛṣṇa śreyāṁsi
bahūni brahma-vādināḥ
teṣāṁ vikalpa-prādhānyam
utāho eka-mukhyatā*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *vadanti* – they speak; *kṛṣṇa* – my dear Kṛṣṇa; *śreyāṁsi* – processes for advancement in life; *bahūni* – many; *brahma-vādināḥ* – the learned sages who have explained the Vedic literature; *teṣāṁ* – of all such processes; *vikalpa* – of varieties of perception;

prādhānyam – supremacy; *uta* – or; *aho* – indeed; *eka* – of one; *mukhyatā* – being most important.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Kṛṣṇa, the learned sages who explain Vedic literature recommend various processes for perfecting one’s life. Considering these varieties of viewpoint, my Lord, please tell me whether all these processes are equally important, or whether one of them is supreme.

PURPORT

In order to clearly establish the exalted position of *bhakti-yoga*, or pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord, Śrī Uddhava requests Lord Kṛṣṇa to identify the supreme among all processes of self-realization. Not all Vedic processes lead directly to the ultimate goal, pure love of God; some only gradually elevate the consciousness of the living entity. For the purpose of giving a general outline of the process of self-realization, sages may discuss the various methods of elevation. But when the time comes to ascertain the most perfect process, the secondary methods must be cleared from the path.

TEXT 14.2

*bhavatodāhṛtaḥ svāmin
bhakti-yogo’napekṣitaḥ
nirasya sarvataḥ saṅgam
yena tvayy āviśen manaḥ*

bhavatā – by You; *udāhṛtaḥ* – clearly stated; *svāmin* – O my Lord; *bhakti-yogaḥ* – devotional service; *anapekṣitaḥ* – without material desires; *nirasya* – removing; *sarvataḥ* – in all respects; *saṅgam* – material association; *yena* – by which (devotional service); *tvayi* – in Your Lordship; *āviśet* – may enter; *manaḥ* – the mind.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, You have clearly explained the process of unalloyed devotional service, by which a devotee removes all material association from his life, enabling him to fix his mind on You.

PURPORT

It is now clearly established that pure devotional service is the supreme process for fixing the mind in the Supreme Truth, Lord Kṛṣṇa. The next point to be clarified is this: Can everyone practice this process, or is it limited to an elite class of transcendentalists? In discussing the relative advantages of different spiritual processes, one must immediately ascertain the goal of spiritual life and then isolate the process that actually awards this goal. Processes must be defined in terms of primary and secondary functions. A method that gives one the highest perfection is primary, whereas processes that merely assist or enhance the primary function are considered secondary. The mind is most flickering and unsteady; therefore by clear intelligence one must fix oneself in a progressive mode of life, and thus one

can achieve the Absolute Truth in this lifetime. This is the sober purpose of Lord Kṛṣṇa's conversation with Śrī Uddhava.

TEXT 14.3

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
kālena naṣṭā pralaye
vāṇīyaṁ veda-samjñitā
mayādau brahmaṇe proktā
dharmo yasyām mad-ātmakaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *kālena* - by the influence of time; *naṣṭā* - lost; *pralaye* - at the time of annihilation; *vāṇī* - message; *iyam* - this; *veda-samjñitā* - consisting of the *Vedas*; *mayā* - by Me; *ādau* - at the time of creation; *brahmaṇe* - unto Lord Brahmā; *proktā* - spoken; *dharmāḥ* - religious principles; *yasyām* - in which; *mat-ātmakaḥ* - identical with Me.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahmā because I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the Vedas.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa explains to Uddhava that although many processes and concepts of spiritual realization are described in the *Vedas*, the *Vedas* ultimately recommend devotional service to the Supreme Lord. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all pleasure, and His devotees directly enter into the Lord's *hlādinī*, or pleasure-giving, potency. Somehow or other one must fix one's mind in Lord Kṛṣṇa, and that is not possible without devotional service. One who has not developed his attraction to Lord Kṛṣṇa cannot restrain the senses from inferior engagements. Since other Vedic processes do not actually award Lord Kṛṣṇa to the practitioner, they cannot offer the highest benefit in life. The transcendental sound of the *Vedas* is itself the highest evidence, but one whose senses and mind are entangled in sense gratification and mental speculation, and whose heart is therefore covered by material dust, cannot directly receive the transcendental Vedic message. Thus one cannot appreciate the exalted position of devotional service to the Lord.

TEXT 14.4

*tena proktā sva-putrāya
manave pūrva-jāya sā
tato bhṛgv-ādayo'grhṇan
sapta brahma-maharṣayaḥ*

tena - by Brahmā; *proktā* - spoken; *sva-putrāya* - to his son; *manave* - to Manu; *pūrva-jāya* - the oldest; *sā* - that Vedic knowledge; *tataḥ* - from Manu;

bhṛgu-ādayaḥ – those headed by Bhṛgu Muni; *agr̥h̥ṇan* – accepted; *sapta* – seven; *brahma* – in Vedic literature; *mahā-r̥ṣayaḥ* – most learned sages.

TRANSLATION

Lord Brahmā spoke this Vedic knowledge to his eldest son, Manu, and the seven great sages headed by Bhṛgu Muni then accepted the same knowledge from Manu.

PURPORT

Everyone engages in a certain way of life based on one's own nature and propensities. *Bhakti-yoga* is the natural activity of one whose nature is completely purified by association with the Supreme Lord. Other processes are meant for those whose nature is still affected by the material modes, and thus such processes, along with their results, are themselves also materially contaminated. Devotional service to the Lord, however, is a pure spiritual process, and by executing it with a pure consciousness one comes directly in touch with the Personality of Godhead, who describes Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2) as *pavitram idam uttamam*, the supreme pure. The system of *paramparā*, or disciplic succession, is illustrated in this and the previous verse. The spiritual masters in Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement are part of such a disciplic succession, and through them the same Vedic knowledge spoken by Brahmā to Manu is still available.

TEXTS 14.5-7

*tebhyaḥ pitṛbhyas tat-putrā
deva-dānava-guhyakāḥ
manuṣyāḥ siddha-gandharvāḥ
sa-vidyādhara-cāraṇāḥ
kindevāḥ kinnarā nāgā
rakṣaḥ-kimpuruṣādayaḥ
bahvyas teṣāṃ prakṛtayo
rajaḥ-sattva-tamo-bhuvaḥ
yābhir bhūtāni bhidyante
bhūtānāṃ patayas tathā
yathā-prakṛti sarveṣāṃ
citrā vācaḥ sravanti hi*

tebhyaḥ – from them (Bhṛgu Muni, etc.); *pitṛbhyaḥ* – from the forefathers; *tat* – their; *putrāḥ* – sons, descendants; *deva* – the demigods; *dānava* – demons; *guhyakāḥ* – the Guhyakas; *manuṣyāḥ* – human beings; *siddha-gandharvāḥ* – Siddhas and Gandharvas; *sa-vidyādhara-cāraṇāḥ* – along with Vidyādharas and Cāraṇas; *kindevāḥ* – a different human species; *kinnarāḥ* – half-humans; *nāgāḥ* – snakes; *rakṣaḥ* – demons; *kimpuruṣa* – an advanced race of monkeys; *ādayaḥ* – and so on; *bahvyāḥ* – many different; *teṣāṃ* – of such living entities; *prakṛtayaḥ* – desires or natures; *rajaḥ-sattva-tamaḥ-bhuvaḥ* – being generated from the three modes of material nature; *yābhiḥ* – by such material desires or tendencies; *bhūtāni* – all such living entities; *bhidyante* – appear divided in many material forms; *bhūtānām* – and their; *patayaḥ* –

leaders; *tathā* – divided in the same way; *yathā-prakṛti* – according to propensity or desire; *sarveṣām* – of all of them; *citrāḥ* – variegated; *vācaḥ* – Vedic rituals and *mantras*; *sravanti* – flow down; *hi* – certainly.

TRANSLATION

From the forefathers headed by Bhṛgu Muni and other sons of Brahmā appeared many children and descendants, who assumed different forms as demigods, demons, human beings, Guhyakas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas, Kindevas, Kinnaras, Nāgas, Kimpuruṣas, and so on. All of the many universal species, along with their respective leaders, appeared with different natures and desires generated from the three modes of material nature. Therefore, because of the different characteristics of the living entities within the universe, there are a great many Vedic rituals, mantras and rewards.

PURPORT

If one is curious why Vedic literatures recommend so many different methods of worship and advancement, the answer is given here. Bhṛgu, Marīci, Atri, Aṅgirā, Pulastya, Pulaha and Kratu are the seven great *brāhmaṇa* sages and forefathers of this universe. The Kindevas are a race of human beings who are, like the demigods, completely free from fatigue, sweat and body odor. Seeing them, one may thus ask, *kiṁ devāḥ*: “Are they demigods?” Actually, they are human beings living on another planet within the universe. The Kinnaras are so called because they are *kiñcin narāḥ*, or “a little like human beings.” The Kinnaras have either a human head or human body (but not both) combined with a nonhuman form. The Kimpuruṣas are so called because they resemble human beings and thus prompt the question *kiṁ puruṣāḥ*: “Are these human beings?” Actually, they are a race of monkeys who are almost like human beings. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that this verse describes the varieties of forgetfulness of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The different Vedic *mantras* and rituals are especially meant for the different species of intelligent beings throughout the universe; but this proliferation of Vedic formulas indicates only the variety of material illusion and not a variety of ultimate purpose. The ultimate purpose of the many Vedic injunctions is one – to know and love the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord Himself is emphatically explaining this to Śrī Uddhava.

TEXT 14.8

*evam prakṛti-vaicityād
bhidyante matayo nṛṇām
pāramparyeṇa keṣāñcit
pāṣaṇḍa-matayo'pare*

evam – thus; *prakṛti* – of nature or desires; *vaicityāt* – due to the great variety; *bhidyante* – are divided; *matayaḥ* – philosophies of life; *nṛṇām* – among human beings; *pāramparyeṇa* – by tradition or disciplic succession;

keṣāñcit – among some people; *pāṣaṇḍa* – atheistic; *matayaḥ* – philosophies; *apare* – others.

TRANSLATION

Thus, due to the great variety of desires and natures among human beings, there are many different theistic philosophies of life, which are handed down through tradition, custom and disciplic succession. There are other teachers who directly support atheistic viewpoints.

PURPORT

The word *keṣāñcit* refers to those persons in various parts of the world who are ignorant of the Vedic conclusion and thus concoct many unauthorized and ultimately fruitless philosophies of life. *Pāṣaṇḍa-matayaḥ* refers to those who directly oppose the Vedic conclusion. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given a most interesting example, as follows. The water of the Ganges is always pure and very sweet. On the banks of that great river, however, there are several types of poisonous trees whose roots drink up the Ganges water from the soil and use it to produce poisonous fruits. Similarly, those who are atheistic or demoniac utilize their association with Vedic knowledge to produce the poisonous fruits of atheistic or materialistic philosophy.

TEXT 14.9

*man-māyā-mohita-dhiyaḥ
puruṣāḥ puruṣarṣabha
śreyo vadanty anekāntam
yathā-karma yathā-ruci*

mat-māyā – by My illusory potency; *mohita* – bewildered; *dhiyaḥ* – those whose intelligence; *puruṣāḥ* – people; *puruṣa-rṣabha* – O best among men; *śreyaḥ* – what is good for people; *vadanti* – they speak; *aneka-antam* – in innumerable ways; *yathā-karma* – according to their own activities; *yathā-ruci* – according to what pleases them.

TRANSLATION

O best among men, the intelligence of human beings is bewildered by My illusory potency, and thus, according to their own activities and whims, they speak in innumerable ways about what is actually good for people.

PURPORT

Unlike the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the individual living entity is not omniscient, therefore his activities and pleasures do not represent the whole truth. According to one's individual way of doing things (*yathā-karma*) and one's personal preference (*yathā-ruci*), one speaks to others about what is good for them. Everyone thinks, "What is good for me is good for everyone." Actually, the best thing for everyone is to surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, and thus realize one's eternal nature of bliss and knowledge. Without knowledge of the Absolute Truth, many so-

called learned people are whimsically advising other whimsical people who also lack perfect knowledge of the actual goal of life.

TEXT 14.10

*dharmam eke yaśaś cānye
kāmaṁ satyaṁ damaṁ śamam
anye vadanti svārthaṁ vā
aiśvaryaṁ tyāga-bhojanam
kecid yajñam tapo dānam
vratāni niyamān yamān*

dharmam – pious activities; *eke* – some people; *yaśaḥ* – fame; *ca* – also; *anye* – others; *kāmam* – sense gratification; *satyam* – truthfulness; *damam* – self-control; *śamam* – peacefulness; *anye* – others; *vadanti* – propound; *sva-artham* – pursuing one’s self-interest; *vai* – certainly; *aiśvaryam* – opulence or political influence; *tyāga* – renunciation; *bhojanam* – consumption; *kecid* – some people; *yajñam* – sacrifice; *tapah* – austerity; *dānam* – charity; *vratāni* – taking vows; *niyamān* – regular religious duties; *yamān* – strict regulative discipline.

TRANSLATION

Some say that people will be happy by performing pious religious activities. Others say that happiness is attained through fame, sense gratification, truthfulness, self-control, peace, self-interest, political influence, opulence, renunciation, consumption, sacrifice, penance, charity, vows, regulated duties or strict disciplinary regulation. Each process has its proponents.

PURPORT

Dharmam eke refers to those atheistic philosophers called *karma-mīmāṃsakas*, who state that one should not waste time worrying about a kingdom of God that no one has ever seen and from which no one has ever returned; rather, one should expertly utilize the laws of *karma*, performing fruitive activities in such a way that one will always be well situated. Concerning fame, it is said that as long as the fame of a human being is sung in the pious planets, he may live for thousands of years in material heaven. *Kāmam* refers to Vedic texts like the *Kāma-sūtra* as well as millions of modern books that advise one about sex pleasure. Some people state that the highest virtue in life is honesty; others say it is self-control, peace of mind and so on. Each viewpoint has proponents and “scriptures.” Others say that law, order and morality are the highest good, whereas still others propose political influence as the real self-interest of human beings. Some state that one should give away one’s material possessions to the needy; others state that one should try to enjoy this life as far as possible; and others recommend daily rituals, disciplinary vows, penances, and so on.

TEXT 14.11

*ādy-anta-vanta evaiṣāṁ
lokāḥ karma-vinirmītāḥ
duḥkhodarkās tamo-niṣṭhāḥ
kṣudrā mandāḥ śucārpitāḥ*

ādi-anta-vantaḥ – possessing a beginning and end; *eva* – undoubtedly; *eṣāṁ* – of them (the materialistic); *lokāḥ* – achieved destinations; *karma* – by one’s material work; *vinirmītāḥ* – produced; *duḥkha* – misery; *udarkāḥ* – bringing as the future result; *tamaḥ* – ignorance; *niṣṭhāḥ* – situated in; *kṣudrāḥ* – meager; *mandāḥ* – wretched; *śucā* – with lamentation; *arpitāḥ* – filled.

TRANSLATION

All the persons I have just mentioned obtain temporary fruits from their material work. Indeed, the meager and miserable situations they achieve bring future unhappiness and are based on ignorance. Even while enjoying the fruits of their work, such persons are filled with lamentation.

PURPORT

Those who have grasped temporary material things, mistaking them to be ultimate reality, are not considered very intelligent by anyone except themselves. Such foolish persons are always in anxiety because by the laws of nature the very fruits of their work are constantly being transformed in ways neither desired nor expected. The performer of Vedic rituals can elevate himself to heavenly planets, whereas one who is atheistic has the privilege of transferring himself to hell. The entire panorama of material existence is actually uninteresting and dull (*mandāḥ*). One can make no real progress within the material world; therefore one should take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and prepare oneself to go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 14.12

*mayi arpitātmanaḥ sabhya
nirapekṣasya sarvataḥ
mayātmanā sukhaṁ yat tat
kutaḥ syād viṣayātmanām*

mayi – in Me; *arpita* – fixed; *ātmanaḥ* – of one whose consciousness; *sabhya* – O learned Uddhava; *nirapekṣasya* – of one bereft of material desires; *sarvataḥ* – in all respects; *mayā* – with Me; *ātmanā* – with the Supreme Personality of Godhead or with one’s own spiritual body; *sukham* – happiness; *yat tat* – such; *kutaḥ* – how; *syāt* – could it be; *viṣaya* – in material sense gratification; *ātmanām* – of those who are attached.

TRANSLATION

O learned Uddhava, those who fix their consciousness on Me, giving up all material desires, share with Me a happiness that cannot possibly be experienced by those engaged in sense gratification.

PURPORT

The actual purport of Vedic knowledge is explained in this verse. The word *viṣayātmanām* includes those who are cultivating material peace of mind,

self-control and speculative philosophy. But even if such persons rise to the platform of *sattva-guṇa*, the mode of goodness, they do not attain perfection, because *sattva-guṇa*, being material, is also part and parcel of *māyā*, or illusion. As stated by Śrī Nārada Muni:

*kiṁ vā yogena sāṅkhyena
nyāsa-svādhyāyayor api
kiṁ vā śreyobhir anyaiś ca
na yatrātma-prado hariḥ*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is not inclined to award Himself even to one who executes the *yoga* system, speculative philosophy, the renounced order of life or Vedic studies. Indeed, no so-called materially auspicious process can induce the Lord to reveal Himself.” (*Bhāg.* 4.31.12) According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, one enjoys the happiness spoken of in this verse while associating, in one’s own spiritual body, with the supreme transcendental form of the Lord. The Lord’s transcendental form is filled with infinite, wonderful qualities, and the happiness of being with the Lord is unlimited. Unfortunately, materialistic people cannot possibly imagine such happiness, since they are not at all inclined to love the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 14.13

*akiñcanasya dāntasya
śāntasya sama-cetasaḥ
mayā santuṣṭa-manasaḥ
sarvāḥ sukha-mayā diśaḥ*

akiñcanasya – of one who does not desire anything; *dāntasya* – whose senses are controlled; *śāntasya* – peaceful; *sama-cetasaḥ* – whose consciousness is equal everywhere; *mayā* – with Me; *santuṣṭa* – completely satisfied; *manasaḥ* – whose mind; *sarvāḥ* – all; *sukha-mayāḥ* – full of happiness; *diśaḥ* – directions.

TRANSLATION

One who does not desire anything within this world, who has achieved peace by controlling his senses, whose consciousness is equal in all conditions and whose mind is completely satisfied in Me finds only happiness wherever he goes.

PURPORT

A devotee who is always meditating upon Lord Kṛṣṇa experiences transcendental sound, touch, form, flavor and aroma in the pastimes of the Lord. These sublime perceptions are certainly due to the causeless mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa upon one whose mind and senses are completely satisfied in Him. Such a person finds only happiness wherever he goes. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives the example that when a very wealthy man travels all over the world, at every place he stays he always enjoys the same luxurious standard of comfort. Similarly, one who has developed Kṛṣṇa consciousness is never separated from happiness, because Lord Kṛṣṇa is all-

pervading. The word *kiñcana* indicates the so-called enjoyable things of this world. One who is *akiñcana* has correctly understood that material sense gratification is simply the glare of illusion, and therefore such a person is *dāntasya*, or self-controlled, *śāntasya*, or peaceful, and *mayā santuṣṭa-manasaḥ*, or completely satisfied with his transcendental experience of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 14.14

*na pārameṣṭhyam na mahendra-dhiṣṇyam
na sārvabhaumam na rasādhipatyam
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavam vā
mayy arpitātmecchati mad vinānyat*

na - not; *pārameṣṭhyam* - the position or abode of Lord Brahmā; *na* - never; *mahā-indra-dhiṣṇyam* - the position of Lord Indra; *na* - neither; *sārvabhaumam* - empire on the earth; *na* - nor; *rasa-ādhipatyam* - sovereignty in the lower planetary systems; *na* - never; *yoga-siddhīḥ* - the eightfold *yoga* perfections; *apunaḥ-bhavam* - liberation; *vā* - nor; *mayi* - in Me; *arpita* - fixed; *ātmā* - consciousness; *icchati* - he desires; *mat* - Me; *vinā* - without; *anyat* - anything else.

TRANSLATION

One who has fixed his consciousness on Me desires neither the position or abode of Lord Brahmā or Lord Indra, nor an empire on the earth, nor sovereignty in the lower planetary systems, nor the eightfold perfection of yoga, nor liberation from birth and death. Such a person desires Me alone.

PURPORT

The position of the *akiñcana* pure devotee is described in this verse. Śrī Priyavrata Mahārāja is an example of a great devotee who was not interested in universal sovereignty because his love was completely absorbed in the lotus feet of the Lord. Even the greatest material enjoyment appears most insignificant and useless to a pure devotee of the Lord.

TEXT 14.15

*na tathā me priyatama
ātma-yonir na śaṅkaraḥ
na ca saṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr
naivātmā ca yathā bhavān*

na - not; *tathā* - in the same way; *me* - to Me; *priya-tamaḥ* - most dear; *ātma-yoniḥ* - Lord Brahmā, who is born from My body; *na* - nor; *śaṅkaraḥ* - Lord Śiva; *na* - nor; *ca* - also; *saṅkarṣaṇaḥ* - My direct expansion Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa; *na* - nor; *śrīḥ* - the goddess of fortune; *na* - nor; *eva* - certainly; *ātmā* - My own self as the Deity; *ca* - also; *yathā* - as much as; *bhavān* - you.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, neither Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, the goddess of fortune nor indeed My own self are as dear to Me as you are.

PURPORT

The Lord has described in the previous verses the unalloyed love of His pure devotees for Him, and now the Lord describes His love for His devotees. *Ātma-yoni* means Lord Brahmā, who is born directly from the Lord's body. Lord Śiva always gives great pleasure to Lord Kṛṣṇa by his constant meditation upon Him, and Saṅkarṣaṇa, or Balarāma, is the Lord's brother in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. The goddess of fortune is the Lord's wife, and the word *ātmā* here indicates the Lord's own self as the Deity. None of these personalities – even the Lord's own self – are as dear to Him as His pure devotee Uddhava, an *akiñcana* devotee of the Lord. Śrīla Madhvācārya cites from Vedic literature the example that a gentleman sometimes neglects his own interest and that of his children to give charity to a poor beggar. Similarly, the Lord gives preference to a helpless devotee who depends completely on His mercy. The only way to obtain the Lord's mercy is through His causeless love, and the Lord is most lovingly inclined toward those devotees who are most dependent on Him, just as ordinary mothers and fathers worry more about their helpless children than about those who are self-sufficient. Thus even if one lacks any material qualification, one should simply depend upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without any other interest, and surely one will achieve the highest perfection of life.

TEXT 14.16

*nirapekṣam munim śāntam
nirvairam sama-darśanam
anuvrajāmy aham nityam
pūyety aṅghri-reṇubhiḥ*

nirapekṣam – without personal desire; *munim* – always thinking of assisting Me in My pastimes; *śāntam* – peaceful; *nirvairam* – not inimical to anyone; *sama-darśanam* – equal consciousness everywhere; *anuvrajāmi* – follow; *aham* – I; *nityam* – always; *pūyeya* – I may be purified (I will purify the universe within Me); *iti* – thus; *aṅghri* – of the lotus feet; *reṇubhiḥ* – by the dust.

TRANSLATION

With the dust of My devotees' lotus feet I desire to purify the material worlds, which are situated within Me. Thus, I always follow the footsteps of My pure devotees, who are free from all personal desire, rapt in thought of My pastimes, peaceful, without any feelings of enmity, and of equal disposition everywhere.

PURPORT

Just as the devotees always follow the footsteps of Lord Kṛṣṇa, similarly Lord Kṛṣṇa, being a devotee of His devotees, follows the footsteps of His

devotees. A pure servitor of the Lord is always meditating on the pastimes of the Lord and considering how to assist the Lord in His mission. All the material universes are situated in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's body, as demonstrated to Arjuna, mother Yaśodā and others. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore there is no question of impurity in the Lord. Still, the Lord desires to purify the universes situated within Him by taking the dust of the lotus feet of His pure devotees. Without the dust of the lotus feet of the devotees, it is not possible to engage in pure devotional service, without which one cannot directly experience transcendental bliss. Lord Kṛṣṇa thought, "I have established this strict rule that one can enjoy My transcendental bliss only through devotional service obtained from the dust of the lotus feet of My devotees. Since I also desire to experience My own bliss, I will observe the standard procedure and accept the dust of My devotees' feet." Śrīla Madhvācārya points out that Lord Kṛṣṇa follows the footsteps of His devotees in order to purify them. As the Lord walks along behind His pure devotees, the wind blows the dust of the Lord's feet in the front of His devotees, who then become purified by contact with such transcendental dust. One should not foolishly look for material logic in these transcendental pastimes of the Lord. It is simply a question of love between the Lord and His devotees.

TEXT 14.17

*niṣkiñcanā mayi anurakta-cetasah
śāntā mahānto'khila-jīva-vatsalāḥ
kāmair anālabdha-dhiyo juṣanti te
yan nairapekṣyam na viduḥ sukham mama*

niṣkiñcanāḥ – without any desire for sense gratification; *mayi* – in Me, the Supreme Lord; *anurakta-cetasah* – mind constantly attached; *śāntāḥ* – peaceful; *mahāntaḥ* – great souls without false ego; *akhila* – to all; *jīva* – living entities; *vatsalāḥ* – affectionate well-wishers; *kāmaiḥ* – by opportunities for sense gratification; *anālabdha* – untouched and unaffected; *dhiyaḥ* – whose consciousness; *juṣanti* – experience; *te* – they; *yat* – which; *nairapekṣyam* – achieved only by complete detachment; *na viduḥ* – they do not know; *sukham* – happiness; *mama* – My.

TRANSLATION

Those who are without any desire for personal gratification, whose minds are always attached to Me, who are peaceful, without false ego and merciful to all living entities, and whose consciousness is never affected by opportunities for sense gratification – such persons enjoy in Me a happiness that cannot be known or achieved by those lacking such detachment from the material world.

PURPORT

The pure devotees always experience transcendental bliss in their service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of pleasure; thus they are completely detached from material pleasure and do not desire even liberation. Since all others have

some personal desire, they cannot experience such happiness. Pure devotees always desire to give Kṛṣṇa conscious happiness to all others, and therefore they are called *mahāntaḥ*, or great souls. In the course of a devotee's service, many opportunities for sense gratification arise, but a pure devotee is not tempted or attracted and does not fall down from his exalted transcendental position.

TEXT 14.18

*bādhyamāno'pi mad-bhakto
viṣayair ajitendriyaḥ
prāyaḥ pragalbhayā bhaktyā
viṣayair nābhibhūyate*

bādhyamānaḥ - being harassed; *api* - even though; *mat-bhaktaḥ* - My devotee; *viṣayaiḥ* - by the sense objects; *ajita* - without having conquered; *indriyaḥ* - the senses; *prāyaḥ* - generally; *pragalbhayā* - effective and strong; *bhaktyā* - by devotion; *viṣayaiḥ* - by sense gratification; *na* - not; *abhibhūyate* - is defeated.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, if My devotee has not fully conquered his senses, he may be harassed by material desires, but because of his unflinching devotion for Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification.

PURPORT

Abhibhūyate indicates falling down into the material world and being defeated by *māyā*. But even though one's senses are not fully conquered, one who has unflinching devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa does not run the risk of being separated from Him. The words *pragalbhayā bhaktyā* indicate a person who has great devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa, and not one who desires to commit sinful activities and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa to avoid the reaction. Because of previous bad habits and immaturity, even a sincere devotee may be harassed by lingering attraction to the bodily concept of life; but his unflinching devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa will act. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives the following two examples. A great warrior may be struck by the weapon of his enemy, but because of his courage and strength he is not killed or defeated. He accepts the blow and goes on to victory. Similarly, one may contract a serious disease, but if he takes the proper medicine he is quickly cured.

If those who follow the impersonal system of speculation and austerity deviate even slightly from their path, they fall down. A devotee, however, even though immature, never falls from the path of devotional service. Even if he displays occasional weakness, he is still considered a devotee if his devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa is very strong. As the Lord states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.30):

*api cet su-durācāro
bhajate mām ananya-bhāk*

*sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ
samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

“Even if one commits the most abominable actions, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated.”

TEXT 14.19

*yathāgniḥ su-samṛddhārciḥ
karoty edhāṁsi bhasmasāt
tathā mad-viṣayā bhaktir
uddhavaināṁsi kṛtsnaśaḥ*

yathā – just as; *agniḥ* – fire; *su-samṛddha* – blazing; *arciḥ* – whose flames; *karoti* – turns; *edhāṁsi* – firewood; *bhasma-sāt* – into ashes; *tathā* – similarly; *mat-viṣayā* – with Me as the object; *bhaktiḥ* – devotion; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *enāṁsi* – sins; *kṛtsnaśaḥ* – completely.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, just as a blazing fire turns firewood into ashes, similarly, devotion unto Me completely burns to ashes sins committed by My devotees.

PURPORT

One should carefully note that the Lord refers to devotion that is like a blazing fire. To commit sinful activity on the strength of chanting the holy name is the greatest offense, and the devotion of one who commits this offense cannot be compared to a blazing fire of love for Kṛṣṇa. As stated in the previous verse, a sincere loving devotee, because of immaturity or previous bad habits, may be disturbed by his senses even though he has accepted Lord Kṛṣṇa as the only goal in his life. But if even by chance the devotee accidentally falls down without premeditation or indifference, the Lord immediately burns to ashes his sinful reactions, just as a blazing fire immediately consumes an insignificant piece of wood. Lord Kṛṣṇa is glorious, and one who takes exclusive shelter of the Lord receives the unique benefits of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 14.20

*na sādhayati mām yogo
na sāṅkhyam dharma uddhava
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo
yathā bhaktir mamorjitā*

na – not; *sādhayati* – brings under control; *mām* – Me; *yogaḥ* – the *yoga* system; *na* – nor; *sāṅkhyam* – the system of Sāṅkhya philosophy; *dharmaḥ* – pious activities within the *varṇāśrama* system; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *na* – not; *svādhyāyaḥ* – Vedic study; *tapas* – austerity; *tyāgaḥ* – renunciation; *yathā* – as; *bhaktiḥ* – devotional service; *mama* – unto Me; *ūrjitā* – strongly developed.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, the unalloyed devotional service rendered to Me by My devotees brings Me under their control. I cannot be thus controlled by those engaged in mystic yoga, Sāṅkhya philosophy, pious work, Vedic study, austerity or renunciation.

PURPORT

One may make Kṛṣṇa the goal of mystic *yoga*, Sāṅkhya philosophy, etc.; yet such activities do not please the Lord as much as direct loving service, which one practices by hearing and chanting about the Lord and executing His mission. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states, *jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam*: a devotee should simply depend on Kṛṣṇa and should not unnecessarily complicate his loving service with tendencies toward fruitive work or mental speculation. The residents of Vṛndāvana simply depend on Lord Kṛṣṇa. When the great serpent Aghāsura appeared in the precincts of Vraja, the cowherd boys, completely confident in their friendship with Lord Kṛṣṇa, fearlessly marched into the serpent's gigantic mouth. Such pure love for Kṛṣṇa brings the Lord under the control of the devotee.

TEXT 14.21

*bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyaḥ
śraddhayātmā priyaḥ satām
bhaktiḥ punāti man-niṣṭhā
śva-pākān api sambhavāt*

bhaktyā – by devotional service; *aham* – I; *ekayā* – unalloyed; *grāhyaḥ* – am to be obtained; *śraddhayā* – by faith; *ātmā* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *priyaḥ* – the object of love; *satām* – of the devotees; *bhaktiḥ* – pure devotional service; *punāti* – purifies; *mat-niṣṭhā* – fixing Me as the only goal; *śva-pākān* – dog-eaters; *api* – even; *sambhavāt* – from the contamination of low birth.

TRANSLATION

Only by practicing unalloyed devotional service with full faith in Me can one obtain Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I am naturally dear to My devotees, who take Me as the only goal of their loving service. By engaging in such pure devotional service, even the dog-eaters can purify themselves from the contamination of their low birth.

PURPORT

Sambhavāt indicates *jāti-doṣāt*, or the pollution of low birth. *Jāti-doṣa* does not refer to mundane social, economic or professional status, but rather to one's degree of spiritual enlightenment. All around the world, many people are born into rich and powerful families, but they often acquire abominable habits that are part of their so-called family tradition. However, even unfortunate persons who are taught from birth to engage in sinful activities can at once be purified by the potency of pure devotional service. Such service must have Lord Kṛṣṇa as the only goal (*man-niṣṭhā*), must be

rendered with full faith (*śraddhayā*), and must be unalloyed, or without any selfish motivation (*ekayā*).

TEXT 14.22

*dharmah satya-dayopeto
vidyā vā tapasānvitā
mad-bhaktyāpetam ātmānam
na samyak prapunāti hi*

dharmah – religious principles; *satya* – with truthfulness; *dayā* – and mercy; *upetaḥ* – endowed; *vidyā* – knowledge; *vā* – or; *tapasā* – with austerity; *anvitā* – endowed; *mat-bhaktyā* – devotional service to Me; *apetam* – bereft of; *ātmānam* – consciousness; *na* – not; *samyak* – completely; *prapunāti* – purifies; *hi* – certainly.

TRANSLATION

Neither religious activities endowed with honesty and mercy nor knowledge obtained with great penance can completely purify one’s consciousness if they are bereft of loving service to Me.

PURPORT

Although pious religious work, truthfulness, mercy, penances and knowledge partially purify one’s existence, they do not take out the root of material desires. Thus the same desires will reappear at a later time. After an extensive program of material gratification, one becomes eager to perform austerities, acquire knowledge, perform selfless work and in general purify one’s existence. After sufficient piety and purification, however, one again becomes eager for material enjoyment. When clearing an agricultural field one must uproot the unwanted plants, otherwise with the coming of rain everything will grow back as it was. Pure devotional service to the Lord uproots one’s material desires, so that there is no danger of relapsing into a degraded life of material gratification. In the eternal kingdom of God, loving reciprocation between the Lord and His devotees is manifest. One who has not come to this stage of enlightenment must remain on the material platform, which is always full of discrepancies and contradictions. Thus everything is incomplete and imperfect without loving service to the Lord.

TEXT 14.23

*katham vinā roma-harṣam
dravatā cetasā vinā
vinānandāśru-kalayā
śudhyed bhaktyā vināśayaḥ*

katham – how; *vinā* – without; *roma-harṣam* – standing of the hairs on end; *dravatā* – melted; *cetasā* – heart; *vinā* – without; *vinā* – without; *ānanda* – of bliss; *aśru-kalayā* – the flowing of tears; *śudhyet* – can be purified; *bhaktyā* – loving service; *vinā* – without; *āśayaḥ* – the consciousness.

TRANSLATION

If one's hairs do not stand on end, how can the heart melt? And if the heart does not melt, how can tears of love flow from the eyes? If one does not cry in spiritual happiness, how can one render loving service to the Lord? And without such service, how can the consciousness be purified?

PURPORT

Loving service to the Lord is the only process that can completely purify one's consciousness; such service produces waves of ecstatic love that completely cleanse the soul. As mentioned earlier by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Śrī Uddhava, other processes such as self-control, pious activities, mystic *yoga*, penances, etc., certainly purify the mind, as stated in many authorized literatures. Such processes, however, do not completely remove the desire to perform forbidden activities. But pure devotional service rendered in love of Godhead is so powerful that it burns to ashes any obstacle encountered on the path of progress. The Lord has stated in this chapter that loving service to Him is a blazing fire that burns to ashes all impediments. In contrast, the small fires of mental speculation or mystic *yoga* can be extinguished by sinful desires at any moment. Thus, by hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* one should ignite the blazing fire of loving service to the Lord and burn to ashes the network of material illusion.

TEXT 14.24

*vāg gadgadā dravate yasya cittam
rudaty abhīkṣṇam hasati kvacit ca
vilajja udgāyati nṛtyate ca
mad-bhakti-yukto bhuvanam punāti*

vāk - speech; *gadgadā* - choked up; *dravate* - melts; *yasya* - of whom; *cittam* - the heart; *rudati* - cries; *abhīkṣṇam* - again and again; *hasati* - laughs; *kvacit* - sometimes; *ca* - also; *vilajjaḥ* - ashamed; *udgāyati* - sings out loudly; *nṛtyate* - dances; *ca* - also; *mat-bhakti-yuktaḥ* - one fixed in devotional service to Me; *bhuvanam* - the universe; *punāti* - purifies.

TRANSLATION

A devotee whose speech is sometimes choked up, whose heart melts, who cries continually and sometimes laughs, who feels ashamed and cries out loudly and then dances - a devotee thus fixed in loving service to Me purifies the entire universe.

PURPORT

Vāg gadgadā refers to a highly emotional state in which the throat is choked up and one cannot express oneself. *Vilajjaḥ* indicates that a devotee sometimes feels embarrassment due to bodily functions and memories of past sinful activities. In this condition, a devotee loudly cries out the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and sometimes dances in ecstasy. As stated here, such a devotee purifies the three worlds.

By melting of the heart, one becomes very steady in spiritual life. Normally, one whose heart easily melts is thought to be unsteady; but because Lord Kṛṣṇa is the stable foundation of all existence, one whose heart melts in love of Kṛṣṇa becomes most stable and cannot be disturbed by opposing arguments, bodily suffering, mental problems, supernatural disasters or the interference of envious persons. Because such a devotee is fixed in loving service to the Lord, he becomes the very heart of the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 14.25

*yathāgninā hema malaṁ jahāti
dhmātaṁ punaḥ svam bhajate ca rūpam
ātmā ca karmānuśayaṁ vidhūya
mad-bhakti-yogena bhajaty atho mām*

yathā – just as; *agninā* – by fire; *hema* – gold; *malaṁ* – impurities; *jahāti* – gives up; *dhmātam* – smelted; *punaḥ* – again; *svam* – its own; *bhajate* – enters; *ca* – also; *rūpam* – form; *ātmā* – the spirit soul or consciousness; *ca* – also; *karma* – of fruitive activities; *anuśayam* – the resultant contamination; *vidhūya* – removing; *mat-bhakti-yogena* – by loving service to Me; *bhajati* – worships; *atho* – thus; *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

Just as gold, when smelted in fire, gives up its impurities and returns to its pure brilliant state, similarly, the spirit soul, absorbed in the fire of bhakti-yoga, is purified of all contamination caused by previous fruitive activities and returns to its original position of serving Me in the spiritual world.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, this verse indicates that the devotee goes back home, back to Godhead, and there worships Lord Kṛṣṇa in his original spiritual body, which is compared to the original pure form of smelted gold. Gold alloyed with inferior metals cannot be purified by water and soap; similarly, the heart's impurities cannot be removed by superficial processes. Only the fire of love of Godhead can cleanse one's soul and send one back home, back to Godhead, to engage in eternal loving service to the Lord.

TEXT 14.26

*yathā yathātmā parimṛjyate'sau
mat-puṇya-gāthā-śravaṇābhidhānaiḥ
tathā tathā paśyati vastu sūkṣmaṁ
cakṣur yathaivāñjana-samprayuktam*

yathā yathā – as much as; *ātmā* – the spirit soul, the conscious entity; *parimṛjyate* – is cleansed of material contamination; *asau* – he; *mat-puṇya-gāthā* – the pious narrations of My glories; *śravaṇa* – by hearing; *abhidhānaiḥ* – and by chanting; *tathā tathā* – exactly in that proportion; *paśyati* – he sees;

vastu – the Absolute Truth; *sūkṣmam* – subtle, being nonmaterial; *cakṣuḥ* – the eye; *yathā* – just as; *eva* – certainly; *añjana* – with medicinal ointment; *samprayuktam* – treated.

TRANSLATION

When a diseased eye is treated with medicinal ointment it gradually recovers its power to see. Similarly, as a conscious living entity cleanses himself of material contamination by hearing and chanting the pious narrations of My glories, he regains his ability to see Me, the Absolute Truth, in My subtle spiritual form.

PURPORT

The Lord is called *sūkṣmam* because He is pure spiritual consciousness, without any tinge of material energy. If one chants and hears the holy name and glories of Kṛṣṇa with great sincerity, there is immediately a transcendental effect. We can immediately see the spiritual world and pastimes of the Lord if we fully surrender to the process mentioned here. A blind person feels perpetual gratitude to a doctor who restores his sight. Similarly, we sing *cakṣu-dāna dila yei, janme janme prabhu sei*: the bona fide spiritual master, the representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa, restores our spiritual sight, and thus he is our eternal lord and master.

TEXT 14.27

*viṣayān dhyāyataś cittam
viṣayeṣu viṣajjate
mām anusmarataś cittam
mayy eva pravilīyate*

viṣayān – objects of sense gratification; *dhyāyataḥ* – of one who is meditating on; *cittam* – the consciousness; *viṣayeṣu* – in the objects of gratification; *viṣajjate* – becomes attached; *mām* – Me; *anusmarataḥ* – of one remembering constantly; *cittam* – the consciousness; *mayi* – in Me; *eva* – certainly; *pravilīyate* – is absorbed.

TRANSLATION

The mind of one meditating upon the objects of sense gratification is certainly entangled in such objects, but if one constantly remembers Me, then the mind is absorbed in Me.

PURPORT

One should not think that one can attain complete transcendental knowledge of Kṛṣṇa by mechanically engaging in worship of the Lord. Lord Kṛṣṇa states here that one must endeavor constantly to keep the Lord within one's mind. *Anusmarataḥ*, or constant remembrance, is possible for one who always chants and hears the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa. It is therefore stated, *śravaṇam, kīrtanam, smaraṇam*: the process of devotional service begins with hearing (*śravaṇam*) and chanting (*kīrtanam*), from which remembrance (*smaraṇam*) develops. One who constantly thinks of the objects of material gratification becomes attached to them; similarly, one who constantly keeps Lord Kṛṣṇa within his mind becomes absorbed in the Lord's transcendental nature and

thus becomes qualified to render personal service to the Lord in His own abode.

TEXT 14.28

*tasmād asad-abhidhyānaṁ
yathā svapna-manoratham
hitvā mayi samādhatsva
mano mad-bhāva-bhāvitam*

tasmāt – therefore; *asad* – material; *abhidhyānam* – processes of elevation which absorb one’s attention; *yathā* – just as; *svapna* – in a dream; *manaḥ-ratham* – mental concoction; *hitvā* – giving up; *mayi* – in Me; *samādhatsva* – completely absorb; *manaḥ* – the mind; *mat-bhāva* – by consciousness of Me; *bhāvitam* – purified.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, one should reject all material processes of elevation, which are like the mental creations of a dream, and should completely absorb one’s mind in Me. By constantly thinking of Me, one becomes purified.

PURPORT

The word *bhāvitam* means “caused to be.” As explained in *Bhagavad-gītā*, material existence is an unstable platform subject to the constant disturbances of creation and annihilation. One who absorbs his consciousness in Kṛṣṇa, however, attains to Kṛṣṇa’s nature and is therefore described as *mad-bhāva-bhāvitam*, or one situated in real existence because of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The Lord here concludes His analysis of different processes of human perfection.

TEXT 14.29

*strīṅāṁ strī-saṅgināṁ saṅgam
tyaktvā dūrata ātmavān
kṣeme vivikta āsīnaś
cintayen mām atandritaḥ*

strīṅāṁ – of women; *strī* – to women; *saṅginām* – of those who are attached or intimately associated; *saṅgam* – association; *tyaktvā* – giving up; *dūrataḥ* – far away; *ātma-vān* – being conscious of the self; *kṣeme* – fearless; *vivikte* – in a separated or isolated place; *āsīnaḥ* – sitting; *cintayet* – one should concentrate; *mām* – on Me; *atandritaḥ* – with great care.

TRANSLATION

Being conscious of the eternal self, one should give up association with women and those intimately associated with women. Sitting fearlessly in a solitary place, one should concentrate the mind on Me with great attention.

PURPORT

One who has intimate contact with women and becomes attached to them will gradually lose his determination to go back home, back to Godhead.

Association with lusty men gives exactly the same result. Therefore, one is advised to be fearless and to sit down in a solitary place, or a place where there are no lusty men and women committing spiritual suicide. Without fear of failure or of unhappiness in life, one should remain with sincere devotees of the Lord. *Atandrita* means that one should not compromise this principle but should be rigid and cautious. All this is possible only for one who is *ātmavān*, or fixed in practical understanding of the eternal soul.

TEXT 14.30

*na tathāśya bhavet kleśo
bandhaś cānya-prasaṅgataḥ
yoṣit-saṅgād yathā puṁso
yathā tat-saṅgi-saṅgataḥ*

na – not; *tathā* – like that; *asya* – of him; *bhavet* – could be; *kleśaḥ* – suffering; *bandhaḥ* – bondage; *ca* – and; *anya-prasaṅgataḥ* – from any other attachment; *yoṣit* – of women; *saṅgāt* – from attachment; *yathā* – just as; *puṁsaḥ* – of a man; *yathā* – similarly; *tat* – to women; *saṅgi* – of those attached; *saṅgataḥ* – from the association.

TRANSLATION

Of all kinds of suffering and bondage arising from various attachments, none is greater than the suffering and bondage arising from attachment to women and intimate contact with those attached to women.

PURPORT

One should make a great endeavor to give up intimate contact with women and those fond of women. A learned gentleman will automatically be on guard if placed in intimate contact with lusty women. In the company of lusty men, however, the same man may engage in all kinds of social dealings and thus be contaminated by their polluted mentality. Association with lusty men is often more dangerous than association with women and should be avoided by all means. There are innumerable verses in the *Bhāgavatam* describing the intoxication of material lust. Suffice it to say that a lusty man becomes exactly like a dancing dog and, by the influence of Cupid, loses all gravity, intelligence and direction in life. The Lord warns here that one who surrenders to the illusory form of a woman suffers unbearably in this life and the next.

TEXT 14.31

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
yathā tvām aravindākṣa
yādṛśam vā yad-ātmakam
dhyāyen mumukṣur etan me
dhyānam tvam vaktum arhasi*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *yathā* – in what way; *tvām* – You; *aravinda-akṣa* – O my dear lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa; *yādṛśam* – of what specific

nature; *vā* – or; *yat-ātmakam* – in what specific form; *dhyāyet* – should meditate; *mumukṣuḥ* – one who desires liberation; *etat* – this; *me* – to me; *dhyānam* – meditation; *tvam* – You; *vaktum* – to speak or explain; *arhasi* – ought.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, by what process should one who desires liberation meditate upon You, of what specific nature should his meditation be, and upon which form should he meditate? Kindly explain to me this topic of meditation.

PURPORT

It has already been elaborately explained by the Supreme Lord that without loving devotional service rendered to Him in the association of devotees, no other process of self-realization will work. Therefore it may be asked why Uddhava is again referring to the system of meditation, *dhyāna*. The *ācāryas* explain that one cannot fully appreciate the beauty and perfection of *bhakti-yoga* unless one sees its superiority to all other processes. Through comparative analysis, the devotees become fully ecstatic in their appreciation of *bhakti-yoga*. It should also be understood that although Uddhava asks about those who aspire for liberation, he is not actually a *mumukṣu*, or salvationist; rather, he is asking questions for the benefit of those who are not on the platform of love of Godhead. Uddhava wants to hear this knowledge for his personal appreciation and so that those who pursue salvation, or liberation, can be protected and redirected to the path of pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

TEXTS 14.32-33

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
sama āsana āsīnaḥ
sama-kāyo yathā-sukham
hastāv utsaṅga ādhāya
sva-nāsāgra-kṛtekṣaṇaḥ
prāṇasya śodhayen mārgam
pūra-kumbhaka-recakaiḥ
viparyayeṇāpi śanair
abhyasen nirjitendriyaḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *sama* – having a level surface; *āsane* – on the seat; *āsīnaḥ* – sitting; *sama-kāyaḥ* – sitting with the body straight and erect; *yathā-sukham* – sitting comfortably; *hastau* – the two hands; *utsaṅge* – in the lap; *ādhāya* – placing; *sva-nāsā-agra* – on the tip of one’s own nose; *kṛta* – focusing; *īkṣaṇaḥ* – the glance; *prāṇasya* – of the breath; *śodhayet* – should purify; *mārgam* – the pathway; *pūra-kumbhaka-recakaiḥ* – by the mechanical breathing exercises, or *prāṇāyāma*; *viparyayeṇa* – by reversing the processes, namely *recaka*, *kumbhaka* and *pūraka*; *api* – also; *śanaiḥ* – following the process step by

step; *abhyaset* – one should practice *prāṇāyāma*; *nirjita* – having controlled; *indriyaḥ* – the senses.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Sitting on a level seat that is not too high or too low, keeping the body straight and erect yet comfortable, placing the two hands on one’s lap and focusing the eyes on the tip of one’s nose, one should purify the pathways of breathing by practicing the mechanical exercises of *pūraka*, *kumbhaka* and *recaka*, and then one should reverse the procedure (*recaka*, *kumbhaka*, *pūraka*). Having fully controlled the senses, one may thus practice *prāṇāyāma* step by step.

PURPORT

According to this procedure, the hands are to be placed palms upward, one on top of the other. Thus, one may practice *prāṇāyāma* through mechanical breath control in order to achieve steadiness of the mind. As stated in the *yoga-sāstra*, *antar-lakṣyo bahir-dṛṣṭiḥ sthira-cittaḥ susaṅgataḥ*: “The eyes, which generally see externally, must be turned inward, and thus the mind is steadied and fully controlled.”

TEXT 14.34

*hṛdy avicchinnam oṃkāraṃ
ghaṅṭā-nādaṃ bisorṇa-vat
prāṇenodīrya tatrātha
punaḥ saṁveśayet svaram*

hṛdi – in the heart; *avicchinnam* – uninterrupted, continuous; *oṃkāraṃ* – the sacred vibration *om*; *ghaṅṭā* – like a bell; *nādam* – sound; *bisa-ūrṇa-vat* – like the fiber running up the lotus stalk; *prāṇena* – by the wind of *prāṇa*; *udīrya* – pushing upward; *tatra* – therein (at a distance of twelve thumb-breadths); *atha* – thus; *punaḥ* – again; *saṁveśayet* – one should join together; *svaram* – the fifteen vibrations produced with *anusvāra*.

TRANSLATION

Beginning from the *mūlādhāra*-cakra, one should move the life air continuously upward like the fibers in the lotus stalk until one reaches the heart, where the sacred syllable *om* is situated like the sound of a bell. One should thus continue raising the sacred syllable upward the distance of twelve *aṅgulas*, and there the *oṃkāra* should be joined together with the fifteen vibrations produced with *anusvāra*.

PURPORT

It appears that the *yoga* system is somewhat technical and difficult to perform. *Anusvāra* refers to a nasal vibration pronounced after the fifteen Sanskrit vowels. The complete explanation of this process is extremely complicated and obviously unsuitable for this age. From this description we can appreciate the sophisticated achievements of those who in former ages practiced mystic meditation. Despite such appreciation, however, we should

stick firmly to the simple, foolproof method of meditation prescribed for the present age, the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

TEXT 14.35

*evam praṇava-saṁyuktam
prāṇam eva samabhyaset
daśa-kṛtvas tri-śavaṇam
māsād arvāg jitānilaḥ*

evam - thus; *praṇava* - with the syllable *om*; *saṁyuktam* - joined; *prāṇam* - the *prāṇāyāma* system of controlling the bodily airs; *eva* - indeed; *samabhyaset* - one should carefully practice; *daśa-kṛtvaḥ* - ten times; *tri-savaṇam* - at sunrise, noon and sunset; *māsāt* - one month; *arvāk* - after; *jita* - one will conquer; *anilaḥ* - the life air.

TRANSLATION

Being fixed in the oṁkāra, one should carefully practice the prāṇāyāma system ten times at each sunrise, noon and sunset. Thus, after one month one will have conquered the life air.

TEXTS 14.36-42

*hṛt-puṇḍarīkam antaḥ-stham
ūrdhva-nālam adho-mukham
dhyātvordhva-mukham unnidram
aṣṭa-patraṁ sa-karṇikam
karṇikāyām nyaset sūrya-
somāgnīn uttarottaram
vahni-madhye smared rūpaṁ
mamaitad dhyāna-maṅgalam
samaṁ praśāntaṁ su-mukhaṁ
dīrgha-cāru-catur-bhujam
su-cāru-sundara-grīvaṁ
su-kapolaṁ śuci-smitam
samāna-karṇa-vinyasta-
sphuran-makara-kuṇḍalam
hemāmbaram ghana-śyāmaṁ
śrīvatsa-śrī-niketanam
śaṅkha-cakra-gadā-padma-
vanamālā-vibhūṣitam
nūpurair vilasat-pādaṁ
kaustubha-prabhayā yutam
dyumat-kirīṭa-kaṭaka-
kaṭi-sūtrāṅgadāyutam
sarvāṅga-sundaraṁ hṛdyaṁ
prasāda-sumukheḥṣaṇam*

*su-kumāram abhidhyāyet
sarvāṅgeṣu mano dadhat
indriyāṅīndriyārthebhyo
manasākṛṣya tan manaḥ
buddhyā sārathinā dhīraḥ
praṇayen mayi sarvataḥ*

hṛt - in the heart; *puṇḍarīkam* - lotus flower; *antaḥ-stham* - situated within the body; *ūrdhva-nālam* - having erected the lotus stalk; *adhaḥ-mukham* - with eyes half closed, staring at the tip of the nose; *dhyātvā* - having fixed the mind in meditation; *ūrdhva-mukham* - enlivened; *unnidram* - alert without dozing off; *aṣṭa-patram* - with eight petals; *sa-karṇikam* - with the whorl of the lotus; *karṇikāyām* - within the whorl; *nyaset* - one should place by concentration; *sūrya* - the sun; *soma* - moon; *agnīn* - and fire; *uttara-uttaram* - in order, one after the other; *vahni-madhye* - within the fire; *smaret* - one should meditate; *rūpam* - upon the form; *mama* - My; *etat* - this; *dhyāna-maṅgalam* - the auspicious object of meditation; *samam* - balanced, all the parts of the body proportionate; *praśāntam* - gentle; *su-mukham* - cheerful; *dīrgha-cāru-catuḥ-bhujam* - having four beautiful long arms; *su-cāru* - charming; *sundara* - beautiful; *grīvam* - neck; *su-kapolam* - beautiful forehead; *śuci-smitam* - having a pure smile; *samāna* - alike; *karṇa* - in the two ears; *vinyasta* - situated; *sphurat* - glowing; *makara* - shaped like sharks; *kuṇḍalam* - earrings; *hema* - golden colored; *ambaram* - dress; *ghana-śyāmam* - the color of a dark rain cloud; *śrī-vatsa* - the unique curl of hair on the Lord's chest; *śrī-niketanam* - the abode of the goddess of fortune; *śaṅkha* - with the conchshell; *cakra* - Sudarśana disc; *gadā* - club; *padma* - lotus; *vana-mālā* - and a garland of forest flowers; *vibhūṣitam* - decorated; *nūpuraiḥ* - with ankle bells and bracelets; *vilasat* - shining; *pādam* - the lotus feet; *kaustubha* - of the Kaustubha gem; *prabhayā* - with the effulgence; *yutam* - enriched; *dyumat* - shining; *kirīṭa* - crown or helmet; *kaṭaka* - gold bracelets; *kaṭi-sūtra* - a band for the waist or upper hip; *aṅgada* - bracelets; *āyutam* - equipped with; *sarva-aṅga* - all the parts of the body; *sundaram* - beautiful; *hṛdyam* - charming; *prasāda* - with mercy; *sumukha* - smiling; *īkṣaṇam* - His glance; *su-kumāram* - most delicate; *abhidhyāyet* - one should meditate; *sarva-aṅgeṣu* - in all the parts of the body; *manaḥ* - the mind; *dadhat* - placing; *indriyāṅi* - the material senses; *indriya-arthebhyaḥ* - from the object of the senses; *manasā* - by the mind; *ākṛṣya* - pulling back; *tat* - that; *manaḥ* - mind; *buddhyā* - by intelligence; *sārathinā* - which is like the driver of a chariot; *dhīraḥ* - being grave and self-controlled; *praṇayet* - one should strongly lead; *mayi* - unto Me; *sarvataḥ* - in all limbs of the body.

TRANSLATION

Keeping the eyes half closed and fixed on the tip of one's nose, being enlivened and alert, one should meditate on the lotus flower situated within the heart. This lotus has eight petals and is situated on an erect lotus stalk. One should meditate on the sun, moon and fire, placing them one after the other within the whorl of that lotus

flower. Placing My transcendental form within the fire, one should meditate upon it as the auspicious goal of all meditation. That form is perfectly proportioned, gentle and cheerful. It possesses four beautiful long arms, a charming, beautiful neck, a handsome forehead, a pure smile and glowing, shark-shaped earrings suspended from two identical ears. That spiritual form is the color of a dark rain cloud and is garbed in golden-yellowish silk. The chest of that form is the abode of Śrīvatsa and the goddess of fortune, and that form is also decorated with a conchshell, disc, club, lotus flower and garland of forest flowers. The two brilliant lotus feet are decorated with ankle bells and bracelets, and that form exhibits the Kaustubha gem along with an effulgent crown. The upper hips are beautified by a golden belt, and the arms are decorated with valuable bracelets. All of the limbs of that beautiful form capture the heart, and the face is beautified by merciful glancing. Pulling the senses back from the sense objects, one should be grave and self-controlled and should use the intelligence to strongly fix the mind upon all of the limbs of My transcendental body. Thus one should meditate upon that most delicate transcendental form of Mine.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa here answers Uddhava's question concerning the correct procedure, nature and object of meditation for those desiring liberation.

TEXT 14.43

*tat sarva-vyāpakam cittam
ākr̥ṣyaikatra dhārayet
nānyāni cintayed bhūyaḥ
su-smitam bhāvayen mukham*

tat – therefore; *sarva* – in all the parts of the body; *vyāpakam* – spread; *cittam* – consciousness; *ākr̥ṣya* – pulling back; *ekatra* – in one place; *dhārayet* – one should concentrate; *na* – not; *anyāni* – other limbs of the body; *cintayet* – one should meditate on; *bhūyaḥ* – again; *su-smitam* – wonderfully smiling or laughing; *bhāvayet* – one should concentrate on; *mukham* – the face.

TRANSLATION

One should then pull the consciousness back from all the limbs of that transcendental body. At that time, one should meditate only on the wonderfully smiling face of the Lord.

TEXT 14.44

*tatra labdha-padam cittam
ākr̥ṣya vyomni dhārayet
tac ca tyaktvā mad-āroho
na kiñcid api cintayet*

tatra – in such meditation on the Lord’s face; *labdha-padam* – being established; *cittam* – consciousness; *ākṛṣya* – withdrawing; *vyomni* – in the sky; *dhārayet* – one should meditate; *tat* – such meditation in the sky as the cause of material manifestation; *ca* – also; *tyaktvā* – giving up; *mat* – to Me; *ārohaḥ* – having ascended; *na* – not; *kiñcit* – anything; *api* – at all; *cintayet* – one should think of.

TRANSLATION

Being established in meditation on the Lord’s face, one should then withdraw the consciousness and fix it in the sky. Then giving up such meditation, one should become established in Me and give up the process of meditation altogether.

PURPORT

As one becomes established in pure consciousness, the duality of “I am meditating and this is the object of my meditation” vanishes, and one comes to the stage of spontaneous relationship with the Personality of Godhead. Every living entity is originally part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, and when that forgotten eternal relationship is revived one experiences remembrance of the Absolute Truth. In that stage, described here as *mad-ārohaḥ*, one no longer sees oneself as a meditator nor the Lord as a mere object of meditation, but rather one enters the spiritual sky for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge in direct loving relationship with the Lord. Uddhava originally inquired about the procedure of meditation for those desiring liberation. The word *labdha-padam* indicates that when one fixes the mind upon the Lord’s face, one achieves full liberation. In the postliberation phase one then proceeds to render service to the original Personality of Godhead. By giving up the concept of being a meditator, one casts off the last small remnant of illusory energy and sees the Lord as He actually is.

TEXT 14.45

*evam samāhita-matir
mām evātmānam ātmani
vicaṣṭe mayi sarvātman
jyotir jyotiṣi saṁyutam*

evam – thus; *samāhita* – completely fixed; *matih* – consciousness; *mām* – Me; *eva* – indeed; *ātmānam* – the individual soul; *ātmani* – within the individual soul; *vicaṣṭe* – sees; *mayi* – in Me; *sarva-ātman* – in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *jyotiḥ* – the sun rays; *jyotiṣi* – within the sun; *saṁyutam* – united.

TRANSLATION

One who has completely fixed his mind on Me should see Me within his own soul and should see the individual soul within Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, he sees the individual souls united with the Supreme Soul, just as one sees the sun’s rays completely united with the sun.

PURPORT

In the spiritual world everything is naturally effulgent because that is the nature of spirit. Thus when one sees the individual soul as part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, the experience can be compared to seeing the sun's rays emanating from the sun. The Supreme Lord is within the living entity, and simultaneously the living entity is within the Lord. But in both cases the Supreme Lord, and not the living entity, is the maintainer and controller. How happy everyone could be by taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and finding the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, within everything and everything within Kṛṣṇa. Liberated life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so pleasurable that the greatest misfortune is to be without such consciousness. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is kindly explaining in many different ways the supremacy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and fortunate persons will understand the sincere message of the Lord.

TEXT 14.46

*dhyānenetthaṁ su-tīvreṇa
yuñjato yogino manaḥ
saṁyāsyaty āśu nirvāṇaṁ
dravya-jñāna-kriyā-bhramaḥ*

dhyānena – by meditation; *itthaṁ* – as thus mentioned; *su-tīvreṇa* – extremely concentrated; *yuñjataḥ* – of one practicing; *yoginaḥ* – of the *yogī*; *manaḥ* – the mind; *saṁyāsyati* – will go together; *āśu* – quickly; *nirvāṇam* – to extinction; *dravya-jñāna-kriyā* – based on perception of material objects, knowledge and activities; *bhramaḥ* – the illusory identification.

TRANSLATION

When the yogī thus controls his mind by intensely concentrated meditation, his illusory identification with material objects, knowledge and activities is very quickly extinguished.

PURPORT

Because of false material identification, we accept our own body and mind, the bodies and minds of others, and supernatural material control to be ultimate realities. Supernatural control refers to the bodies and minds of the demigods, who ultimately are humble servitors of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even the mighty sun, which displays immense potencies, obediently treads its universal path by the order of Lord Kṛṣṇa. It is clearly seen in this chapter that *haṭha-yoga*, *karma-yoga*, *rāja-yoga*, etc., are part and parcel of *bhakti-yoga* and do not actually exist separately. The goal of life is Lord Kṛṣṇa, and one must eventually come to the stage of pure devotion if one desires to perfect one's meditation or *yoga* practice. In the mature stage of devotion, as described in this chapter, one becomes free from the artificial duality of meditator and object of meditation, and one spontaneously engages in hearing about and glorifying the Supreme Absolute Truth. Such activities of *bhakti-yoga* are natural because they spring from spontaneous love. When one revives one's original nature as the loving servitor of Lord Kṛṣṇa, other *yoga* processes cease to be interesting.

Uddhava was a pure devotee even before the Lord began His instruction; therefore it was not expected that Uddhava would give up the supreme platform of being a personal associate of the Lord to take up the mechanical exercises of the *yoga* system. *Bhakti-yoga*, or devotional service, is so elevated that even in the beginning stages of practice one is considered liberated, because all of one's activities are executed under proper guidance for the pleasure of the Lord. In the *haṭha-yoga* system one is concerned with bodily control, and in *jñāna-yoga* one is concerned with speculative knowledge. In both systems one endeavors selfishly, desiring to become a great *yogī* or a philosopher. Such egoistic activity is described in this verse as *kriyā*. One must give up the illusory designations of *dravya*, *jñāna* and *kriyā* and come to the prideless stage of loving service to the Lord. *Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Fourteenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Lord Kṛṣṇa Explains the Yoga System to Śrī Uddhava."*

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Description of Mystic Yoga Perfections

This chapter describes the eight primary and ten minor mystic perfections. They are developed by fixing one's mind in *yoga*, but they are ultimately obstructions to achieving the spiritual abode of Lord Viṣṇu. Being questioned by Uddhava, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa describes the characteristics of the eighteen mystic perfections and the particular kind of meditation by which each is achieved. In conclusion, Kṛṣṇa states that for one who desires to perform pure devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, the achievement of these mystic perfections is a waste of time, because they distract one from proper worship. All these perfections are automatically offered to a pure devotee, but he does not accept them. Unless used in the *yoga* of devotional service, these perfections are valueless. A devotee simply sees that the Personality of Godhead is always present everywhere, both externally and internally, and depends completely upon Him.

TEXT 15.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
jitendriyasya yuktasya
jita-śvāsasya yoginaḥ
mayi dhārayataś ceta
upatiṣṭhanti siddhayaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *jita-indriyasya* – of one who has conquered his senses; *yuktasya* – who has steadied the mind; *jita-śvāsasya* – and conquered his breathing system; *yoginaḥ* – of such a *yogī*; *mayi* – in Me; *dhārayataḥ* – fixing; *cetaḥ* – his consciousness; *upatiṣṭhanti* – appear; *siddhayaḥ* – the mystic perfections of *yoga*.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, the mystic perfections of yoga are acquired by a yogī who has conquered his senses, steadied his mind, conquered the breathing process and fixed his mind on Me.

PURPORT

There are eight primary mystic perfections, such as *aṇimā-siddhi*, and ten secondary perfections. In this Fifteenth Chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa will explain that such mystic perfections are actually impediments to the development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and that therefore one should not desire them.

TEXT 15.2

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
kayā dhāraṇayā kā svit
katham vā siddhir acyuta
kati vā siddhaya brūhi
yoginām siddhi-do bhavān*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *kayā* – by what; *dhāraṇayā* – process of meditation; *kā svit* – which indeed; *katham* – in what manner; *vā* – or;

siddhiḥ – mystic perfection; *acyuta* – My dear Lord; *kati* – how many; *vā* – or; *siddhayaḥ* – perfections; *brūhi* – please speak; *yoginām* – of all *yogīs*; *siddhi-daḥ* – the giver of mystic perfections; *bhavān* – You.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord Acyuta, by what process can mystic perfection be achieved, and what is the nature of such perfection? How many mystic perfections are there? Please explain these things to me. Indeed, You are the bestower of all mystic perfections.

TEXT 15.3

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
siddhayo'ṣṭādaśa proktā
dhāraṇā yoga-pāra-gaiḥ
tāsām aṣṭau mat-pradhānā
daśaiva guṇa-hetavaḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *siddhayaḥ* – mystic perfections; *aṣṭādaśa* – eighteen; *proktāḥ* – are declared; *dhāraṇāḥ* – meditations; *yoga* – of *yoga*; *pāra-gaiḥ* – by the masters; *tāsām* – of the eighteen; *aṣṭau* – eight; *mat-pradhānāḥ* – have their shelter in Me; *daśa* – ten; *eva* – indeed; *guṇa-hetavaḥ* – are manifested from the material mode of goodness.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: The masters of the yoga system have declared that there are eighteen types of mystic perfection and meditation, of which eight are primary, having their shelter in Me, and ten are secondary, appearing from the material mode of goodness.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains the word *mat pradhānāḥ* as follows. Lord Kṛṣṇa is naturally the shelter of the eight primary mystic potencies and meditations because such perfections emanate from the Lord's personal potency, and thus they are fully developed only within the Lord Himself and the Lord's personal associates. When materialistic persons mechanically acquire such potencies, the perfections awarded are of an inferior degree and are considered to be manifestations of *māyā*, illusion. A pure devotee of the Lord automatically receives from the Lord wonderful potencies to execute his devotional service. If for sense gratification one mechanically endeavors to acquire mystic perfections, then these perfections are certainly considered to be inferior expansions of the Lord's external potency.

TEXTS 15.4-5

aṇimā mahimā mūrter
laghimā prāptir indriyaiḥ

*prākāmyaṁ śruta-dr̥ṣṭeṣu
śakti-preraṇam īsitā
guṇeṣv asaṅgo vaśitā
yat-kāmas tad avasyati
etā me siddhayaḥ saumya
aṣṭāv autpattikā matāḥ*

aṇimā – the perfection of becoming smaller than the smallest; *mahimā* – becoming greater than the greatest; *mūrteḥ* – of the body; *laghimā* – becoming lighter than the lightest; *prāptiḥ* – acquisition; *indriyaiḥ* – by the senses; *prākāmyam* – obtaining or performing whatever one desires; *śruta* – things invisible,, about which one only hears; *dr̥ṣṭeṣu* – and things visible; *śakti-preraṇam* – manipulating the subpotencies of *māyā*; *īsitā* – the perfection of controlling; *guṇeṣu* – in the modes of material nature; *asaṅgaḥ* – being unobstructed; *vaśitā* – the power to bring others under control; *yat* – whatever; *kāmaḥ* – desire (there may be); *tad* – that; *avasyati* – one can obtain; *etāḥ* – these; *me* – My (potencies); *siddhayaḥ* – mystic perfections; *saumya* – O gentle Uddhava; *aṣṭau* – eight; *autpattikāḥ* – natural and unexcelled; *matāḥ* – understood to be.

TRANSLATION

Among the eight primary mystic perfections, the three by which one transforms one’s own body are aṇimā, becoming smaller than the smallest; mahimā, becoming greater than the greatest; and laghimā, becoming lighter than the lightest. Through the perfection of prāpti one acquires whatever one desires, and through prākāmya-siddhi one experiences any enjoyable object, either in this world or the next. Through īsitā-siddhi one can manipulate the subpotencies of māyā, and through the controlling potency called vaśitā-siddhi one is unimpeded by the three modes of nature. One who has acquired kāmāvasāyitā-siddhi can obtain anything from anywhere, to the highest possible limit. My dear gentle Uddhava, these eight mystic perfections are considered to be naturally existing and unexcelled within this world.

PURPORT

Through *aṇimā-siddhi* one can become so small that one can enter a stone or pass through any obstacle. Through *mahimā-siddhi* one becomes so great that one covers everything, and through *laghimā* one becomes so light that one can ride on the sun’s rays into the sun planet. Through *prāpti-siddhi* one can acquire anything from anywhere and can even touch the moon with one’s finger. By this mystic perfection one can also enter into the senses of any other living entity through the predominating deities of the particular senses; and by thus utilizing the senses of others, one can acquire anything. Through *prākāmya* one can experience any enjoyable object, either in this world or the next, and through *īsitā*, or the controlling potency, one can manipulate the subpotencies of *māyā*, which are material. In other words, even by acquiring mystic powers one cannot pass beyond the control of

illusion; however, one may manipulate the subpotencies of illusion. Through *vaśitā*, or the power to control, one can bring others under one's dominion or keep oneself beyond the control of the three modes of nature. Ultimately, one acquires through *kāmāvasāyitā* the maximum powers of control, acquisition and enjoyment. The word *autpattikāḥ* in this verse indicates being original, natural and unexcelled. These eight mystic potencies originally exist in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, in the superlative degree. Lord Kṛṣṇa becomes so small that He enters within the atomic particles, and He becomes so large that as Mahā-Viṣṇu He breathes out millions of universes. The Lord can become so light or subtle that even great mystic *yogīs* cannot perceive Him, and the Lord's acquisitive power is perfect, because He keeps the total existence eternally within His body. The Lord certainly can enjoy whatever He likes, control all energies, dominate all other persons and exhibit complete omnipotency. Therefore it is to be understood that these eight mystic perfections are insignificant expansions of the mystic potency of the Lord, who in *Bhagavad-gītā* is called Yogeśvara, the Supreme Lord of all mystic potencies. These eight perfections are not artificial, but are natural and unexcelled because they originally exist in the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXTS 15.6-7

*anūrmimattvaṁ dehe'smin
dūra-śravaṇa-darśanam
mano-javaḥ kāma-rūpaṁ
para-kāya-praveśanam
svacchanda-mṛtyur devānām
saha-kṛīḍānudarśanam
yathā-saṅkalpa-saṁsiddhir
ājñāpratihatā gatiḥ*

anūrmi-mattvam – being undisturbed by hunger, thirst, etc.; *dehe asmin* – in this body; *dūra* – things very far away; *śravaṇa* – hearing; *darśanam* – and seeing; *manaḥ-javaḥ* – moving the body at the speed of the mind; *kāma-rūpaṁ* – assuming any body that one desires; *para-kāya* – the bodies of others; *praveśanam* – entering; *sva-chanda* – according to one's own desire; *mṛtyuḥ* – dying; *devānām* – of the demigods; *saha* – together with (the celestial girls); *kṛīḍā* – the sporting pastimes; *anudarśanam* – witnessing; *yathā* – according to; *saṅkalpa* – one's determination; *saṁsiddhiḥ* – perfect accomplishment; *ājñā* – order; *apratihatā* – unimpeded; *gatiḥ* – whose progress.

TRANSLATION

The ten secondary mystic perfections arising from the modes of nature are the powers of freeing oneself from hunger and thirst and other bodily disturbances, hearing and seeing things far away, moving the body at the speed of the mind, assuming any form one desires, entering the bodies of others, dying when one desires,

witnessing the pastimes between the demigods and the celestial girls called Apsarās, completely executing one's determination and giving orders whose fulfillment is unimpeded.

TEXTS 15.8-9

*tri-kāla-jñatvam advandvam
para-cittādy-abhijñatā
agny-arkāmbu-viṣādīnām
pratiṣṭambho'parājayaḥ
etāś coddeśataḥ proktā
yoga-dhāraṇa-siddhayaḥ
yayā dhāraṇayā yā syād
yathā vā syān nibodha me*

tri-kāla-jñatvam – the perfection of knowing past, present and future; *advandvam* – being unaffected by dualities such as heat and cold; *para* – of others; *citta* – the mind; *ādi* – and so on; *abhijñatā* – knowing; *agni* – of fire; *arka* – the sun; *ambu* – water; *viṣa* – of poison; *ādīnām* – and so on; *pratiṣṭambhaḥ* – checking the potency; *aparājayaḥ* – not being conquered by others; *etāḥ* – these; *ca* – also; *uddeśataḥ* – merely by mentioning their names and characteristics; *proktāḥ* – are described; *yoga* – of the *yoga* system; *dhāraṇa* – of meditation; *siddhayaḥ* – perfections; *yayā* – by which; *dhāraṇayā* – meditation; *yā* – which (perfection); *syāt* – may occur; *yathā* – by which means; *vā* – or; *syāt* – may occur; *nibodha* – please learn; *me* – from Me.

TRANSLATION

The power to know past, present and future; tolerance of heat, cold and other dualities; knowing the minds of others; checking the influence of fire, sun, water, poison, and so on; and remaining unconquered by others - these constitute five perfections of the mystic process of yoga and meditation. I am simply listing these here according to their names and characteristics. Now please learn from Me how specific mystic perfections arise from specific meditations and also of the particular processes involved.

PURPORT

According to the *ācāryas* these five perfections are considered to be quite inferior to the others already mentioned, since they involve more or less ordinary physical and mental manipulations. According to Śrīla Madhvācārya, in the perfection called *agny-arkāmbu-viṣādīnām pratiṣṭambhaḥ*, or checking the influence of fire, sun, water, poison, and so on, the term “and so on” refers to one's remaining invulnerable to all types of weapons as well as attacks by nails, teeth, beating, curses and other such sources.

TEXT 15.10

*bhūta-sūkṣmātmani mayi
tan-mātraṁ dhārayen manaḥ*

*aṇimānam avāpnoti
tan-mātropāsako mama*

bhūta-sūkṣma - of the subtle elements; *ātmani* - in the soul; *mayi* - in Me; *tat-mātram* - on the subtle, elemental forms of perception; *dhārayet* - one should concentrate; *manaḥ* - the mind; *aṇimānam* - the mystic perfection called *aṇimā*; *avāpnoti* - obtains; *tat-mātra* - in the subtle elements; *upāsakaḥ* - the worshiper; *mama* - My.

TRANSLATION

One who worships Me in My atomic form pervading all subtle elements, fixing his mind on that alone, obtains the mystic perfection called aṇimā.

PURPORT

Aṇimā refers to the mystic ability to make oneself smaller than the smallest and thus able to enter within anything. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is within the atoms and atomic particles, and one who perfectly fixes his mind in that subtle atomic form of the Lord acquires the mystic potency called *aṇimā*, by which one can enter within even the most dense matter such as stone.

TEXT 15.11

*mahat-tattvātmani mayi
yathā-saṁstham mano dadhat
mahimānam avāpnoti
bhūtānām ca pṛthak pṛthak*

mahat-tattva - of the total material energy; *ātmani* - in the Soul; *mayi* - in Me; *yathā* - according to; *saṁstham* - the particular situation; *manaḥ* - the mind; *dadhat* - fixing; *mahimānam* - the mystic perfection called *mahimā*; *avāpnoti* - one achieves; *bhūtānām* - of the material elements; *ca* - also; *pṛthak pṛthak* - each one individually.

TRANSLATION

One who absorbs his mind in the particular form of the mahat-tattva and thus meditates upon Me as the Supreme Soul of the total material existence achieves the mystic perfection called mahimā. By further absorbing the mind in the situation of each individual element such as the sky, air, fire, and so on, one progressively acquires the greatness of each material element.

PURPORT

There are innumerable verses in Vedic literatures explaining that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is qualitatively not different from His creation and thus a *yogī* may meditate upon the total material existence as a manifestation of the external potency of the Lord. Once the *yogī* has established his realization that the material creation is not different from the Lord, he obtains the perfection called *mahimā-siddhi*. By realizing the Lord's presence in each individual element the *yogī* also acquires the greatness of each element. However, the pure devotees are not very interested in such

perfections because they are surrendered to the Personality of Godhead, who exhibits such perfections to the infinite degree. Being always protected by the Lord, the pure devotees save their precious time to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Thus they achieve for themselves and others *saṁsiddhi*, or the supreme perfection, pure love of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by which one expands one's existence beyond the total material creation to the spiritual planets called Vaikuṅṭha.

TEXT 15.12

*paramāṇu-maye cittam
bhūtānām mayi rañjayan
kāla-sūkṣmārthatām yogī
laghimānam avāpnuyāt*

parama-aṇu-maye - in the form of atoms; *cittam* - his consciousness; *bhūtānām* - of the material elements; *mayi* - in Me; *rañjayan* - attaching; *kāla* - of time; *sūkṣma* - subtle; *arthatām* - being the substance; *yogī* - the yogī; *laghimānam* - the mystic perfection *laghimā*; *avāpnuyāt* - may obtain.

TRANSLATION

I exist within everything, and I am therefore the essence of the atomic constituents of material elements. By attaching his mind to Me in this form, the yogī may achieve the perfection called laghimā, by which he realizes the subtle atomic substance of time.

PURPORT

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam elaborately explains that *kāla*, or time, is the transcendental form of the Lord that moves the material world. Since the five gross elements are composed of atoms, the atomic particles are the subtle substance or manifestation of the movements of time. More subtle than time is the Personality of Godhead Himself, who expands His potency as the time factor. By understanding all these things clearly the *yogī* obtains *laghimā-siddhi*, or the power to make himself lighter than the lightest.

TEXT 15.13

*dhārayan mayi aham-tattve
mano vaikārike'khilam
sarvendriyāṇām ātmatvam
prāptim prāpnoti man-manāḥ*

dhārayan - concentrating; *mayi* - in Me; *aham-tattve* - within the element of false ego; *manaḥ* - the mind; *vaikārike* - in that which is produced from the mode of goodness; *akhilam* - completely; *sarva* - of all living entities; *indriyāṇām* - of the senses; *ātmatvam* - proprietorship; *prāptim* - the mystic perfection of acquisition; *prāpnoti* - obtains; *mat-manāḥ* - the *yogī* whose mind is fixed in Me.

TRANSLATION

Fixing his mind completely in Me within the element of false ego generated from the mode of goodness, the yogī obtains the power of mystic acquisition, by which he becomes the proprietor of the senses of all living entities. He obtains such perfection because his mind is absorbed in Me.

PURPORT

It is significant that in order to acquire each mystic perfection one must fix one's mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura states that those who pursue such perfections without fixing the mind in the Supreme Lord acquire a gross and inferior reflection of each mystic potency. Those who are not conscious of the Lord cannot actually synchronize their minds perfectly with the universal functions and therefore cannot elevate their mystic opulences to the universal platform.

TEXT 15.14

*mahaty ātmani yaḥ sūtre
dhārayen mayi mānasam
prākāmyaṁ pārameṣṭhyaṁ me
vindate'vyakta-janmanaḥ*

mahati – in the *mahat-tattva*; *ātmani* – in the Supersoul; *yaḥ* – one who; *sūtre* – characterized by the chain of fruitive activities; *dhārayet* – should concentrate; *mayi* – in Me; *mānasam* – the mental activities; *prākāmyam* – the mystic perfection called *prākāmya*; *pārameṣṭhyam* – most excellent; *me* – from Me; *vindate* – obtains or enjoys; *avyakta-janmanaḥ* – from Him whose appearance in this world cannot be materially perceived.

TRANSLATION

One who concentrates all mental activities in Me as the Supersoul of that phase of the mahat-tattva which manifests the chain of fruitive activities obtains from Me, whose appearance is beyond material perception, the most excellent mystic perfection called prākāmya.

PURPORT

Śrīla Vīrarāghava Ācārya explains that the word *sūtra*, or “thread,” is used to indicate that the *mahat-tattva* sustains one's fruitive activities just as a thread sustains a row of jewels. Thus by fixed meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the soul of the *mahat-tattva*, one can achieve the most excellent perfection called *prākāmya*. *Avyakta-janmanaḥ* indicates that the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears from the *avyakta*, or the spiritual sky, or that His birth is *avyakta*, beyond the perception of material senses. Unless one accepts the transcendental form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no possibility of obtaining *prākāmya* or any other genuine mystic perfection.

TEXT 15.15

*viṣṇau try-adhīśvare cittam
dhārayet kāla-vigrahe
sa īśitvam avāpnoti
kṣetrajña-kṣetra-codanām*

viṣṇau – in Lord Viṣṇu, the Supersoul; *tri-adhīśvare* – the supreme controller of *māyā*, which consists of three modes of nature; *cittam* – the consciousness; *dhārayet* – one concentrates; *kāla* – of time, the prime mover; *vigrahe* – in the form; *saḥ* – he, the *yogī*; *īśitvam* – the mystic perfection of controlling; *avāpnoti* – obtains; *kṣetra-jña* – the conscious living entity; *kṣetra* – and the body with its designations; *codanām* – impelling.

TRANSLATION

One who places his consciousness on Viṣṇu, the Supersoul, the prime mover and Supreme Lord of the external energy consisting of three modes, obtains the mystic perfection of controlling other conditioned souls, their material bodies and their bodily designations.

PURPORT

We should remember that mystic perfection never enables a living entity to challenge the supremacy of the Personality of Godhead. In fact, one cannot obtain such perfections without the mercy of the Supreme Lord; thus one's controlling power can never disturb the plan of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One is allowed to exhibit mystic control only within the confines of the law of God, and even a great *yogī* who transgresses the law of God by his so-called mystic opulences will be severely punished, as revealed in the story of Durvāsā Muni cursing Ambarīṣa Mahārāja.

TEXT 15.16

*nārāyaṇe turīyākhye
bhagavac-chabda-śabdite
mano mayy ādadhad yogī
mad-dharmā vaśitām iyāt*

nārāyaṇe – in the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa; *turīya-ākhye* – known as the fourth, beyond the three modes of material nature; *bhagavat* – full of all opulences; *śabda-śabdite* – known by the word; *manaḥ* – the mind; *mayi* – in Me; *ādadhat* – placing; *yogī* – the *yogī*; *mat-dharmā* – being endowed with My nature; *vaśitām* – the mystic opulence called *vaśitā*; *iyāt* – may obtain.

TRANSLATION

The yogī who places his mind in My form of Nārāyaṇa, known as the fourth factor, full of all opulences, becomes endowed with My nature and thus obtains the mystic perfection called vaśitā.

PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.13) Lord Kṛṣṇa states:

*tribhir guṇa-mayair bhāvair
ebhiḥ sarvam idaṁ jagat*

*mohitaṁ nābhijānāti
mām ebhyaḥ param avyayam*

“Deluded by the three modes [goodness, passion and ignorance], the whole world does not know Me, who am above the modes and inexhaustible.” Thus the Lord is called *turīya*, or the fourth factor beyond the three modes of nature. According to Śrīla Vīrarāghava Ācārya, *turīya* also indicates that the Lord is beyond the three ordinary phases of consciousness, namely wakefulness, dreaming and dreamless sleep. *Bhaga-vac-chabda-śabdite* indicates that the Lord is known as Bhagavān, or the possessor of unlimited opulences, principally beauty, fame, wealth, knowledge, renunciation and intelligence.

In conclusion, one can obtain the mystic opulence *vaśitā*, or freedom from the modes of nature, by meditating upon the Lord as *turīya*, the fourth factor beyond those modes. Everything depends upon the favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 15.17

*nirguṇe brahmaṇi mayi
dhārayan viśadam manaḥ
paramānandam āpnoti
yatra kāmo'vasīyate*

nirguṇe – without qualities; *brahmaṇi* – in Brahman; *mayi* – in Me; *dhārayan* – concentrating; *viśadam* – pure; *manaḥ* – the mind; *parama-ānandam* – the greatest happiness; *āpnoti* – obtains; *yatra* – wherein; *kāmaḥ* – desire; *avasīyate* – is completely fulfilled.

TRANSLATION

One who fixes his pure mind on Me in My manifestation as the impersonal Brahman obtains the greatest happiness, wherein all his desires are completely fulfilled.

PURPORT

Paramānanda, or “the greatest happiness,” here indicates the greatest material happiness, since it is clearly stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that a devotee has no personal desire, or *kāma*. One who has personal desire is certainly within the material world, and on the material platform the greatest happiness is *kāmavasāyitā-siddhi*, or the perfection of completely obtaining anything that one desires.

TEXT 15.18

*śvetadvīpa-patau cittam
śuddhe dharmamaye mayi
dhārayaṅ chvetatām yāti
ṣaḍ-ūrmi-rahito naraḥ*

śveta-dvīpa – of the white island, the abode of Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu; *patau* – in the Lord; *cittam* – consciousness; *śuddhe* – in the personification of goodness; *dharmamaye* – in He who is always situated in piety; *mayi* – in

Me; *dhārayan* – concentrating; *śvetatām* – pure existence; *yāti* – obtains; *ṣaṭ-ūrmi* – the six waves of material disturbance; *rahitaḥ* – freed from; *naraḥ* – a person.

TRANSLATION

A human being who concentrates on Me as the upholder of religious principles, the personification of purity and the Lord of Śvetadvīpa obtains the pure existence in which he is freed from the six waves of material disturbance, namely hunger, thirst, decay, death, grief and illusion.

PURPORT

The Lord now begins to explain the processes for obtaining the ten secondary mystic perfections derived from the modes of nature. Within the material world Lord Viṣṇu, addressed here as *śvetadvīpa-pati*, the Lord of Śvetadvīpa, governs the material mode of goodness and is thus called *śuddha* and *dharma-maya*, or the personification of purity and piety. By worshiping Lord Viṣṇu as the personification of material goodness one obtains the material benediction of freedom from bodily disturbance.

TEXT 15.19

*mayy ākāśātmani prāṇe
manasā ghoṣam udvahan
tatropalabdhā bhūtānām
haṁso vācaḥ śṛṇoty asau*

mayi – in Me; *ākāśa-ātmani* – in the personification of the sky; *prāṇe* – in the life air; *manasā* – with the mind; *ghoṣam* – the transcendental sound; *udvahan* – concentrating on; *tatra* – there in the sky; *upalabdhāḥ* – perceived; *bhūtānām* – of all living entities; *haṁsaḥ* – the purified living entity; *vācaḥ* – words or speaking; *śṛṇoti* – hears; *asau* – he.

TRANSLATION

That purified living entity who fixes his mind on the extraordinary sound vibrations occurring within Me as the personified sky and total life air is then able to perceive within the sky the speaking of all living entities.

PURPORT

Speech occurs by vibrating air within the sky. One who meditates on the Supreme Lord as the personified sky and air thereby acquires the ability to hear that which is vibrated at great distance. The word *prāṇa* indicates that the Lord is the personified life air of the individual living entities and for the total aggregate of life forms. Ultimately, the pure devotees meditate on the supreme vibration – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare – and are thus able to hear the speech originating from liberated living entities far beyond the material universe. Any living entity can hear such discussions by reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā* and other such literatures. One who has

properly understood the opulences of the Supreme Personality of Godhead finds all perfection, mystic and otherwise, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 15.20

*cakṣus tvaṣṭari saṁyojya
tvaṣṭāram api cakṣuṣi
mām tatra manasā dhyāyan
viśvaṁ paśyati dūrataḥ*

cakṣuḥ – the eyes; *tvaṣṭari* – in the sun; *saṁyojya* – merging; *tvaṣṭāram* – the sun; *api* – also; *cakṣuṣi* – in one’s eyes; *mām* – Me; *tatra* – there, in the mutual merging of sun and eye; *manasā* – with the mind; *dhyāyan* – meditating; *viśvam* – everything; *paśyati* – he sees; *dūrataḥ* – far away.

TRANSLATION

Merging one’s sight into the sun planet and then the sun planet into one’s eyes, one should meditate on Me as existing within the combination of sun and vision; thus one acquires the power to see any distant thing.

TEXT 15.21

*mano mayi su-saṁyojya
dehaṁ tad-anuvāyunā
mad-dhāraṇānubhāvena
tatrātmā yatra vai manaḥ*

manaḥ – the mind; *mayi* – in Me; *su-saṁyojya* – completely absorbing; *deham* – the material body; *tat* – the mind; *anu-vāyunā* – by the wind that follows; *mat-dhāraṇā* – of meditation in Me; *anubhāvena* – by the potency; *tatra* – there; *ātmā* – the material body (goes); *yatra* – wherever; *vai* – certainly; *manaḥ* – the mind (goes).

TRANSLATION

The yogī who completely absorbs his mind in Me, and who then makes use of the wind that follows the mind to absorb the material body in Me, obtains through the potency of meditation on Me the mystic perfection by which his body immediately follows his mind wherever it goes.

PURPORT

Tad-anuvāyunā indicates the particular subtle air that follows the mind. When the *yogī* merges this air together with the body and mind in Kṛṣṇa by the potency of meditation on the Lord, his gross material body, like the subtle air, can follow the mind anywhere. This perfection is called *mano-javaḥ*.

TEXT 15.22

*yadā mana upādāya
yad yad rūpaṁ bubhūṣati*

*tat tad bhaven mano-rūpaṁ
mad-yoga-balam āśrayaḥ*

yadā – when; *manaḥ* – the mind; *upādāya* – applying; *yat yat* – whatever; *rūpaṁ* – form; *bubhūṣati* – one desires to assume; *tat tat* – that very form; *bhavet* – may appear; *manaḥ-rūpaṁ* – the form desired by the mind; *mat-yoga-balam* – My inconceivable mystic potency, by which I manifest innumerable forms; *āśrayaḥ* – being the shelter.

TRANSLATION

When the yogī, applying his mind in a certain way, desires to assume a particular form, that very form immediately appears. Such perfection is possible by absorbing the mind in the shelter of My inconceivable mystic potency, by which I assume innumerable forms.

PURPORT

This perfection is called *kāma-rūpa*, or the ability to assume any form that one desires, even the form of a demigod. The pure devotees absorb their minds in a particular type of service to Lord Kṛṣṇa and thus gradually assume a spiritual body for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge. Thus anyone who takes to the process of chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa and follows the regulative principles of human life can acquire the ultimate perfection of *kāma-rūpa*, assuming an eternal, spiritual body in the kingdom of God.

TEXT 15.23

*para-kāyaṁ viśan siddha
ātmānam tatra bhāvayet
piṇḍaṁ hitvā viśet prāṇo
vāyu-bhūtaḥ ṣaḍaṅghri-vat*

para – of another; *kāyam* – the body; *viśan* – desiring to enter; *siddhaḥ* – one perfected in *yoga* practice; *ātmānam* – oneself; *tatra* – in that body; *bhāvayet* – imagines; *piṇḍam* – one’s own gross body; *hitvā* – giving up; *viśet* – one should enter; *prāṇaḥ* – in the subtle body; *vāyu-bhūtaḥ* – becoming just like the wind; *ṣaṭ-aṅghri-vat* – like the bee, who easily moves from one flower to another.

TRANSLATION

When a perfect yogī desires to enter another’s body, he should meditate upon himself within the other body, and then, giving up his own gross body, he should enter the other’s body through the pathways of air, as easily as a bee leaves one flower and flies into another.

PURPORT

As air is inhaled into the body through the nostrils and mouth, similarly, the life air of the *yogī’s* subtle body travels through the pathways of external air and easily enters into the body of another person, just as the bee easily flies from flower to flower. One may admire a heroic man or beautiful woman and desire to experience life within their extraordinary material body. Such

opportunities are available through the mystic perfection called *para-kāya-praveśanam*. Pure devotees, being absorbed in meditation upon the spiritual form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are not actually attracted to any material body. Thus the devotees remain transcendental and satisfied on the platform of eternal life.

TEXT 15.24

*pārṣṇyāpīḍya gudam prāṇam
hṛd-uraḥ-kaṅṭha-mūrdhasu
āropya brahma-randhreṇa
brahma nītvotsrjet tanum*

pārṣṇyā – with the heel of the foot; *āpīḍya* – blocking; *gudam* – the anus; *prāṇam* – the vital air carrying the living entity; *hṛt* – from the heart; *uraḥ* – to the chest; *kaṅṭha* – to the neck; *mūrdhasu* – and to the head; *āropya* – placing; *brahma-randhreṇa* – by the spiritual seat at the top of the head; *brahma* – to the spiritual world or impersonal Brahman (or any other destination one has selected); *nītvā* – leading (the soul); *utsrjet* – one should give up; *tanum* – the material body.

TRANSLATION

The yogī who has achieved the mystic perfection called svacchanda-mṛtyu blocks the anus with the heel of the foot and then lifts the soul from the heart to the chest, to the neck and finally to the head. Situated within the brahma-randhra, the yogī then gives up his material body and guides the spirit soul to the selected destination.

PURPORT

This mystic opulence of *svacchandū-mṛtyu*, or dying at will, was wonderfully exhibited by Bhīṣmadeva at the end of the Battle of Kurukṣetra. According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the term *brahma*, as used in this verse, is an example of *upalakṣaṇa*, or the use of a general term to indicate various concepts. *Brahma* here indicates the particular destination selected by the *yogī*, namely the spiritual sky, the impersonal *brahmajyoti* or any other destination that has attracted the *yogī's* mind.

TEXT 15.25

*vihariṣyan surākrīḍe
mat-stham sattvaṁ vibhāvayet
vimānenopatiṣṭhanti
sattva-vṛttīḥ sura-striyaḥ*

vihariṣyan – desiring to enjoy; *sura* – of the demigods; *ākrīḍe* – in the pleasure gardens; *mat* – in Me; *stham* – situated; *sattvam* – the mode of goodness; *vibhāvayet* – one should meditate on; *vimānena* – by airplane; *upatiṣṭhanti* – they arrive; *sattva* – in the mode of goodness; *vṛttīḥ* – appearing; *sura* – of the demigods; *striyaḥ* – the women.

TRANSLATION

The yogī who desires to enjoy in the pleasure gardens of the demigods should meditate on the purified mode of goodness, which is situated within Me, and then the heavenly women, generated from the mode of goodness, will approach him in airplanes.

TEXT 15.26

*yathā saṅkalpayed buddhyā
yadā vā mat-paraḥ pumān
mayi satye mano yuñjanś
tathā tat samupāśnute*

yathā – by which means; *saṅkalpayet* – one may determine or resolve; *buddhyā* – by the mind; *yadā* – when; *vā* – or; *mat-paraḥ* – having faith in Me; *pumān* – the *yogī*; *mayi* – in Me; *satye* – whose desire always becomes truth; *manaḥ* – the mind; *yuñjan* – absorbing; *tathā* – by that means; *tat* – that very purpose; *samupāśnute* – he obtains.

TRANSLATION

A yogī who has faith in Me, absorbing his mind in Me and knowing that My purpose is always fulfilled, will always achieve his purpose by the very means he has determined to follow.

PURPORT

In this verse the word *yadā* (“whenever”) indicates that by the mystic power called *yathā-saṅkalpa-saṁsiddhi* one will achieve one’s objective even if one pursues it at an inauspicious time. Lord Kṛṣṇa is called *satya-saṅkalpa*, or He whose desire, intention, purpose or resolve always comes to pass. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura mentions that one should determine to revive one’s lost relationship with the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa through the infallible means of devotional service, which can be executed at any time or in any place. There are many books giving proper guidance for achieving Lord Kṛṣṇa, and the following are mentioned: Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s *Saṅkalpa-kalpavṛkṣa*, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja’s *Śrī Govinda-līlāmṛta*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī’s *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta* and *Saṅkalpa-kalpadruma*, and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s *Śrī Gaurāṅga-smaraṇa-maṅgala*. In the modern age, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda has given us over sixty large volumes of transcendental literature, which can fix us firmly on the path back home, back to Godhead. Our *saṅkalpa*, or determination, should be practical and not useless. We should resolve to make a permanent solution to the problems of life by going back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 15.27

*yo vai mad-bhāvam āpanna
īśitur vaśituḥ pumān
kutaścin na vihanyeta
tasya cājñā yathā mama*

yaḥ – one who (a *yogī*); *vai* – indeed; *mat* – from Me; *bhāvam* – nature; *āpannaḥ* – achieved; *īśituḥ* – from the supreme ruler; *vaśituḥ* – the supreme controller; *pumān* – a person (*yogī*); *kutaścit* – in any way; *na vihanyeta* – cannot be frustrated; *tasya* – his; *ca* – also; *ājñā* – order, command; *yathā* – just as; *mama* – Mine.

TRANSLATION

A person who perfectly meditates on Me acquires My nature of being the supreme ruler and controller. His order, like Mine, can never be frustrated by any means.

PURPORT

By the command of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the entire creation is moving. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10):

*mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ
sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya
jagad viparivartate*

“This material nature is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, and it is producing all moving and unmoving beings. By its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.” Similarly, Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given His command that people all over the world should take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The sincere devotees of the Lord should go all over the world repeating the Lord’s command. In this way, they can share in His mystic opulence of giving orders that cannot be counteracted.

TEXT 15.28

*mad-bhaktyā śuddha-sattvasya
yogino dhāraṇā-vidaḥ
tasya trai-kālikī buddhir
janma-mṛtyūpabṛṁhitā*

mat-bhaktyā – by devotion to Me; *śuddha-sattvasya* – of one whose existence is purified; *yoginaḥ* – of a *yogī*; *dhāraṇā-viduḥ* – who knows the process of meditation; *tasya* – of him; *trai-kālikī* – functioning in three phases of time, namely past, present and future; *buddhiḥ* – intelligence; *janma-mṛtyu* – birth and death; *upabṛṁhitā* – including.

TRANSLATION

A yogī who has purified his existence by devotion to Me and who thus expertly knows the process of meditation obtains knowledge of past, present and future. He can therefore see the birth and death of himself and others.

PURPORT

After having explained the eight primary and ten secondary mystic perfections of *yoga*, the Lord now explains the five inferior potencies.

TEXT 15.29

*agny-ādibhir na hanyeta
muner yoga-mayaṁ vapuḥ
mad-yoga-śānta-cittasya
yādasām udakaṁ yathā*

agni – by fire; *ādibhiḥ* – and so on (sun, water, poison, etc.); *na* – not; *hanyeta* – can be injured; *muneḥ* – of a wise *yogī*; *yoga-mayaṁ* – fully cultivated in *yoga* science; *vapuḥ* – the body; *mat-yoga* – by devotional connection with Me; *śānta* – pacified; *cittasya* – whose consciousness; *yādasām* – of the aquatics; *udakaṁ* – water; *yathā* – just as.

TRANSLATION

Just as the bodies of aquatics cannot be injured by water, similarly, the body of a yogī whose consciousness is pacified by devotion to Me and who is fully developed in yoga science cannot be injured by fire, sun, water, poison, and so forth.

PURPORT

The creatures dwelling in the ocean are never injured by water; rather, they enjoy life within the watery medium. Similarly, for one skilled in the techniques of *yoga*, fending off attacks by weapons, fire, poison, and so on, is a recreational activity. Prahlāda Mahārāja was attacked by his father in all these ways, but because of his perfect Kṛṣṇa consciousness he was not injured. The pure devotees of the Lord depend fully on the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who possesses mystic opulences to an infinite degree and is therefore known as *Yogeśvara*, the master of all mystic power. Because devotees are always connected to Lord Kṛṣṇa, they do not feel any need to separately develop powers already possessed unlimitedly by their Lord, master and protector.

If a human being falls into the middle of the ocean he quickly drowns, whereas the fish enjoy happiness sporting in the same waves. Similarly, the conditioned souls have fallen into the ocean of material existence and are drowning in the reactions to their sinful activities, whereas the devotees recognize this world to be the potency of the Lord and enjoy pleasurable pastimes within it by fully engaging in the loving service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 15.30

*mad-vibhūtīr abhidhyāyan
śrīvatsāstra-vibhūṣitāḥ
dhvajātapatra-vyajanaḥ
sa bhaved aparājitaḥ*

mat – My; *vibhūtīḥ* – opulent incarnations; *abhidhyāyan* – meditating upon; *śrīvatsa* – with the Lord’s Śrīvatsa opulence; *astra* – and weapons; *vibhūṣitāḥ* – decorated; *dhvaja* – with flags; *ātapatra* – with ceremonial umbrellas; *vyajanaḥ* – and different types of fans; *saḥ* – he, the devotee-*yogī*; *bhavet* – becomes; *aparājitaḥ* – unconquerable by others.

TRANSLATION

My devotee becomes unconquerable by meditating on My opulent incarnations, which are decorated with Śrīvatsa and various weapons and are endowed with imperial paraphernalia such as flags, ornamental umbrellas and fans.

PURPORT

The imperial paraphernalia of the Lord's opulent incarnations indicates His omnipotency, and the devotees become unconquerable by meditating on the Lord's powerful, royally equipped incarnations. As stated by Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura in *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*, verse 107:

*bhaktis tvayi sthiratarā bhagavan yadi syād
daivena naḥ phalati divya-kīśora-mūrtiḥ
muktiḥ svayaṁ mukulitāñjaliḥ sevate'smān
dharmārtha-kāma-gatayaḥ samaya-pratīkṣāḥ*

“My dear Lord, if we develop unflinching devotional service unto You, then automatically Your transcendental, youthful form is revealed to us. Thus liberation herself waits with folded hands to serve us, and the ultimate goals of religiosity, economic development and sense gratification patiently wait to render service to us.”

TEXT 15.31

*upāsakasya mām evaṁ
yoga-dhāraṇayā muneḥ
siddhayaḥ pūrva-kathitā
upatiṣṭhanty aśeṣataḥ*

upāsakasya – of one who is worshiping; *mām* – Me; *evaṁ* – thus; *yoga-dhāraṇayā* – by the process of mystic meditation; *muneḥ* – of a learned person; *siddhayaḥ* – the mystic perfections; *pūrva* – previously; *kathitāḥ* – described; *upatiṣṭhanti* – approach; *aśeṣataḥ* – in all respects.

TRANSLATION

A learned devotee who worships Me through yoga meditation certainly obtains in all respects the mystic perfections that I have described.

PURPORT

The word *yoga-dhāraṇayā* indicates that each devotee obtains the particular perfection for which he has qualified himself. The Lord thus concludes His discussion of *yoga-siddhis*.

TEXT 15.32

*jitendriyasya dāntasya
jita-śvāsātmano muneḥ
mad-dhāraṇām dhārayataḥ
kā sā siddhiḥ su-durlabhā*

jita-indriyasya – of one who has conquered his senses; *dāntasya* – who is disciplined and self-controlled; *jita-śvāsa* – who has conquered his breathing;

ātmanaḥ – and conquered the mind; *muneḥ* – of such a sage; *mat* – in Me; *dhāraṇām* – meditation; *dhārayataḥ* – who is conducting; *kā* – what is; *sā* – that; *siddhiḥ* – perfection; *su-durlabhā* – which is very difficult to achieve.

TRANSLATION

For a sage who has conquered his senses, breathing and mind, who is self-controlled and always absorbed in meditation on Me, what mystic perfection could possibly be difficult to achieve?

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī comments as follows. “Lord Kṛṣṇa here expresses that there is no need to practice many different processes, for by completely carrying out even one of the above-mentioned procedures one controls one’s senses, becomes absorbed in Him and thus achieves all mystic perfections.” Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī notes that one must meditate on the transcendental form of the Lord, which is free from any material designation. This is the essence of advancing in the *yoga* system; thus one acquires all mystic perfections very easily from the personal body of the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 15.33

*antarāyān vadanty etā
yuñjato yogam uttamam
mayā sampadyamānasya
kāla-kṣapaṇa-hetavaḥ*

antarāyān – impediments; *vadanti* – they say; *etāḥ* – these mystic perfections; *yuñjataḥ* – of one engaging in; *yogam* – connection with the Absolute; *uttamam* – the supreme stage; *mayā* – with Me; *sampadyamānasya* – of one who is becoming completely opulent; *kāla* – of time; *kṣapaṇa* – of the interruption, waste; *hetavaḥ* – causes.

TRANSLATION

Learned experts in devotional service state that the mystic perfections of yoga that I have mentioned are actually impediments and are a waste of time for one who is practicing the supreme yoga, by which one achieves all perfection in life directly from Me.

PURPORT

It is common sense that whatever is a useless waste of time should be given up; therefore one should not pray to God for mystic *yoga* perfections. For a pure devotee, who has no material desire, even impersonal liberation is a useless disturbance in his life, and what to speak of the material perfections of *yoga*, which cannot even be compared to impersonal liberation. Such mystic perfections may be wonderful for an immature and inexperienced person, but they are not impressive for a learned man who has understood the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Simply by obtaining Lord Kṛṣṇa one dwells within an infinite ocean of mystic opulences; therefore he should not waste precious time pursuing separate mystic perfections.

TEXT 15.34

*janmauṣadhi-tapo-mantrair
yāvatīr iha siddhayaḥ
yogenāpnoti tāḥ sarvā
nānyair yoga-gatim vrajet*

janma – by birth; *auṣadhi* – herbs; *tapaḥ* – austerities; *mantraiḥ* – and by *mantras*; *yāvatīḥ* – as many as there are; *iha* – in this world; *siddhayaḥ* – perfections; *yogena* – by devotional service to Me; *āpnoti* – one obtains; *tāḥ* – those; *sarvāḥ* – all of them; *na* – not; *anyaiḥ* – by other methods; *yoga-gatim* – the actual perfection of *yoga*; *vrajet* – one can achieve.

TRANSLATION

Whatever mystic perfections can be achieved by good birth, herbs, austerities and mantras can all be achieved by devotional service to Me; indeed, one cannot achieve the actual perfection of yoga by any other means.

PURPORT

By taking birth as a demigod one is automatically endowed with many mystic perfections. Simply by birth on Siddhaloka one automatically acquires all of the eight principal perfections of *yoga*. Similarly, by birth as a fish one becomes invulnerable to water, by birth as a bird one gets the mystic perfection of flying, and by birth as a ghost one gets the mystic perfection of disappearing and entering into the bodies of others. Patañjali Muni states that the mystic perfections of *yoga* can be achieved by birth, herbs, austerities and *mantras*. The Lord states, however, that such perfections are ultimately a waste of time and an impediment to achieving the actual perfection of *yoga*, Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Those who give up the process of *bhakti-yoga* and shop around for other objects of meditation besides Kṛṣṇa are certainly not very intelligent. Those who claim to be *yogīs* but pursue the satisfaction of their own senses are certainly *kuyogīs*, or *bhogi-yogīs*. Such *kuyogīs* cannot understand that just as they have tiny senses, the Absolute Truth has absolute senses, nor can they understand that *yoga* is actually meant to satisfy the absolute senses of the Lord. Therefore, persons who give up the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa in order to pursue so-called happiness in mystic perfection will undoubtedly be frustrated in their attempt. By meditating exclusively on the Supreme Personality of Godhead one can achieve *yoga-gati*, the ultimate goal of *yoga*, which means living on Lord Kṛṣṇa’s planet and there enjoying spiritual opulences.

TEXT 15.35

*sarvāsām api siddhīnām
hetuḥ patir ahaṁ prabhuḥ
ahaṁ yogasya sāṅkhyasya
dharmasya brahma-vādinām*

sarvāsām – of all of them; *api* – indeed; *siddhīnām* – of the mystic perfections; *hetuḥ* – the cause; *patiḥ* – the protector; *ahaṁ* – I am; *prabhuḥ* –

the Lord; *aham* – I; *yogasya* – of unalloyed meditation on Me; *sāṅkhyasya* – of analytic knowledge; *dharmasya* – of work executed without personal desire; *brahma-vādinām* – of the learned community of Vedic teachers.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, I am the cause, the protector and the Lord of all mystic perfections, of the yoga system, of analytic knowledge, of pure activity and of the community of learned Vedic teachers.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *yoga* here indicates liberation from material life, and *sāṅkhya* indicates the means of obtaining liberation. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa is not merely the Lord of material *yoga* perfections, but of the highest liberated perfections as well. One can obtain *sāṅkhya*, or knowledge leading to liberation, by performing pious activities, and Lord Kṛṣṇa is also the cause, protector and Lord of such activities as well as of the learned teachers who instruct ordinary people in the means of piety. In many different ways Lord Kṛṣṇa is the real object of meditation and worship for every living entity. Lord Kṛṣṇa through the expansion of His potencies is everything, and this simple understanding, called Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is the supreme perfection of the *yoga* system.

TEXT 15.36

*aham ātmāntaro bāhyo
'nāvṛtaḥ sarva-dehinām
yathā bhūtāni bhūteṣu
bahir antaḥ svayaṁ tathā*

aham – I; *ātmā* – the Supreme Lord; *āntaraḥ* – existing within as the Supersoul; *bāhyaḥ* – existing externally in My all-pervading feature; *anāvṛtaḥ* – uncovered; *sarva-dehinām* – of all living entities; *yathā* – just as; *bhūtāni* – the material elements; *bhūteṣu* – among living entities; *bahiḥ* – externally; *antaḥ* – internally; *svayaṁ* – Myself; *tathā* – in the same way.

TRANSLATION

Just as the same material elements exist within and outside of all material bodies, similarly, I cannot be covered by anything else. I exist within everything as the Supersoul and outside of everything in My all-pervading feature.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa is the entire basis of meditation for all *yogīs* and philosophers, and here the Lord clarifies His absolute position. Since the Lord is within everything, one might think that the Lord is divided into pieces. However, the word *anāvṛta*, or “completely uncovered,” indicates that nothing can interrupt, disturb or in any way infringe upon the supreme existence of the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. There is no actual separation between the internal and external existence of the material elements, which continuously exist everywhere. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervading and is the ultimate perfection of everything.

*Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Fifteenth Chapter,
of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Lord Kṛṣṇa’s Description of Mystic Yoga
Perfections.”*

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

The Lord's Opulence

In this chapter the Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, describes His manifest opulences in terms of His specific potencies of knowledge, strength, influence, and so on.

Śrī Uddhava offered glorification to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and ultimate shelter of all holy places, saying, “The Supreme Lord has no beginning and no end. He is the cause of the birth, maintenance and destruction of all living entities. He is the soul of all beings, and by secretly taking up residence within all living bodies He sees everything. The conditioned souls, on the other hand, are bewildered by His external energy and thus are unable to see Him.” After offering such prayers at the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Uddhava revealed his desire to know about the Lord’s various opulences in heaven, on earth, in hell and in all directions. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa then described all these opulences, after which He commented that all power, beauty, fame, opulence, humility, charity, charm, good fortune, valor, tolerance and wisdom – wherever they are manifest – are simply expansions from Himself. It therefore cannot be truthfully said that a material object actually possesses these opulences. Such conceptions are the results of mentally combining two ideas to produce an object that exists only in the imagination, such as a sky flower. Material opulences are not substantially true, and therefore one should not become too involved in meditating upon them. The pure devotees of the Supreme Lord utilize their intelligence to properly regulate the activities of their speech, mind and vital force and thus perfect their existence in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 16.1

śrī-uddhava uvāca
tvam brahma paramam sākṣād
anādy-antam apāvṛtam
sarveṣām api bhāvānām
trāṇa-sthity-apyayodbhavaḥ

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *tvam* – You are; *brahma* – the greatest; *paramam* – the supreme; *sākṣāt* – Himself; *anādi* – without beginning; *antam* – without end; *apāvṛtam* – unlimited by anything else; *sarveṣām* – of all; *api* – indeed; *bhāvānām* – things which exist; *trāṇa* – the protector; *sthiti* – the life-giver; *apyaya* – the destruction; *udbhavaḥ* – and the creation.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, You are beginningless and endless, the Absolute Truth Himself, unlimited by anything else. You are the protector and life-giver, the destruction and creation of all things that exist.

PURPORT

Brahma means the greatest of all and the cause of everything. Uddhava here addresses the Lord as the *paramam*, or supreme *brahma*, because in His feature as Bhagavān the Lord is the highest feature of the Absolute Truth

and the shelter of unlimited spiritual opulences. Unlike those of ordinary living entities, the Lord's opulences cannot be restricted by time, and thus the Lord is *anādy-antam*, without beginning or end, and *apāvṛtam*, unhindered by any superior or equal potency. The opulence of the material world is also resting within the Lord, who alone can protect, maintain, create and destroy the material world. In this chapter, Śrī Uddhava inquires from the Lord about His spiritual and material opulences in order to refine his appreciation of the Lord's position as the Absolute Truth. Even Lord Viṣṇu, the ultimate creator of the material world, is an expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and thus Śrī Uddhava wishes to fully appreciate the unique status of his personal friend.

TEXT 16.2

*uccāvaceṣu bhūteṣu
durjñeyam akṛtātmabhiḥ
upāsate tvām bhagavan
yāthā-tathyena brāhmaṇāḥ*

ucca - in the superior; *avaceṣu* - and the inferior; *bhūteṣu* - created objects and entities; *durjñeyam* - hard to understand; *akṛta-ātmabhiḥ* - by the impious; *upāsate* - they worship; *tvām* - You; *bhagavan* - my dear Lord; *yāthā-tathyena* - in truth; *brāhmaṇāḥ* - those dedicated to the Vedic conclusion.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, although it is difficult for the impious to understand that You are situated in all superior and inferior creations, those brāhmaṇas who are actual knowers of the Vedic conclusion worship You in truth.

PURPORT

The behavior of saintly persons is also to be taken as evidence, and therefore it is here stated that although ignorant, impious persons are bewildered before the Lord's all-pervading feature, those with purified, clear consciousness worship the Lord as He is. In this chapter Śrī Uddhava inquires about the Lord's opulences, and here the words *uccāvaceṣu bhūteṣu* ("within superior and inferior creations") clearly refer to the Lord's external opulences, those manifested in the material world. The saintly *brāhmaṇas*, or Vaiṣṇavas, worship Lord Kṛṣṇa within all things and yet recognize the variety in the Lord's creation. For example, in worshiping the Deity, the devotees will select the nicest flowers, fruits and ornaments for decorating the transcendental form of the Lord. Similarly, although the Lord is present in the heart of every conditioned soul, the devotee will give more attention to a conditioned soul interested in the message of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Although the Lord is everywhere, the devotees make distinctions, for the sake of the Lord's service, between His presence in superior (*ucca*) and inferior (*avaceṣu*) creations.

TEXT 16.3

*yeṣu yeṣu ca bhūteṣu
bhaktyā tvām paramarṣayaḥ
upāsīnāḥ prapadyante
saṁsiddhiṁ tad vadasva me*

yeṣu yeṣu – in which various; *ca* – also; *bhūteṣu* – forms; *bhaktyā* – with devotion; *tvām* – You; *parama-rṣayaḥ* – the great sages; *upāsīnāḥ* – worshipping; *prapadyante* – achieve; *saṁsiddhiṁ* – perfection; *tad* – that; *vadasva* – please speak; *me* – to me.

TRANSLATION

Please tell me of the perfections that great sages achieve by worshiping You with devotion. Also, kindly explain which of Your different forms they worship.

PURPORT

Śrī Uddhava here inquires about the spiritual opulences of the Lord, which consist primarily of His *viṣṇu-tattva* expansions such as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. By worshiping different plenary expansions of the Lord one achieves particular perfections, and Śrī Uddhava wants to know about this.

TEXT 16.4

*gūḍhaś carasi bhūtātmā
bhūtānām bhūta-bhāvana
na tvām paśyanti bhūtāni
paśyantam mohitāni te*

gūḍhaḥ – hidden; *carasi* – You are engaged; *bhūta-ātmā* – the Supersoul; *bhūtānām* – of the living entities; *bhūta-bhāvana* – O maintainer of all living beings; *na* – not; *tvām* – You; *paśyanti* – they see; *bhūtāni* – living entities; *paśyantam* – who are seeing; *mohitāni* – bewildered; *te* – by You.

TRANSLATION

O my Lord, maintainer of all, although You are the Supersoul of the living entities, You remain hidden. Thus being bewildered by You, the living entities cannot see You, although You are seeing them.

PURPORT

The Lord exists as the Supersoul within everything. He also appears in various incarnations or sometimes empowers a devotee to act as an incarnation. All such forms of the Lord are unknown to the nondevotees. The bewildered conditioned souls think that the supreme enjoyer, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is actually meant to be enjoyed by them for their sense gratification. Praying to God for specific material benedictions and assuming God's creation to be their personal property, the nondevotees cannot understand the actual form of the Lord. They therefore remain foolish and bewildered. Within the

universe everything is subject to creation, maintenance and destruction, and thus the Supersoul is the only actual controller in the material world. Unfortunately, when the Supersoul appears in various incarnations to clarify His position, ignorant persons think that the Supersoul is merely another creation of the modes of material nature. As stated in this verse, they cannot see that person who is actually seeing them, and simply remain bewildered.

TEXT 16.5

*yāḥ kāś ca bhūmau divi vai rasāyām
vibhūtaḥ dikṣu mahā-vibhūte
tā mahyam ākhyāhy anubhāvitās te
namāmi te tīrtha-padāṅghri-padmaḥ*

yāḥ kāḥ - whatever; *ca* - also; *bhūmau* - on the earth; *divi* - in heaven; *vai* - indeed; *rasāyām* - in hell; *vibhūtaḥ* - potencies; *dikṣu* - in all directions; *mahā-vibhūte* - O supremely potent; *tāḥ* - those; *mahyam* - unto me; *ākhyāhi* - please explain; *anubhāvitāḥ* - manifested; *te* - by You; *namāmi* - I offer my humble obeisances; *te* - Your; *tīrtha-pada* - the abode of all holy places; *āṅghri-padmaḥ* - at the lotus feet.

TRANSLATION

O supremely potent Lord, please explain to me Your innumerable potencies, which You manifest on the earth, in heaven, in hell and indeed in all directions. I offer my humble obeisances at Your lotus feet, which are the shelter of all holy places.

PURPORT

Uddhava here inquires about the Lord's material and spiritual potencies, as manifested within our universe. Just as ordinary animals or insects living in human cities cannot appreciate the scientific, cultural or military achievements of man, similarly, foolish materialists cannot appreciate the mighty opulences of the Personality of Godhead, even those manifested within our universe. For the appreciation of ordinary human beings Uddhava requests the Lord to reveal exactly how and in what forms He expands His potencies. As already explained, the Lord is the essential ingredient of all that exists, and thus any mighty or opulent manifestation must ultimately rest on the Lord Himself.

TEXT 16.6

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
evam etad ahaṁ pṛṣṭaḥ
praśnaṁ praśna-vidāṁ vara
yuyutsunā vinaśane
sapatnair arjunena vai*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *evam* - thus; *etat* - this; *ahaṁ* - I; *pṛṣṭaḥ* - was asked; *praśnam* - the question or topic; *praśna-vidāṁ* - of those who know how to inquire; *vara* - you who are the best; *yuyutsunā* - by him who desired to fight; *vinaśane* - in the Battle of

Kurukṣetra; *sapatnaiḥ* – with his rivals or enemies; *arjunena* – by Arjuna; *vai* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best of those who know how to inquire, on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Arjuna, desiring to fight with his rivals, asked Me the same question that you are now posing.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa was pleased that His two friends, Arjuna and Uddhava, had posed the same question regarding the opulences of the Personality of Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa considered it wonderful that His two dear friends had asked exactly the same question.

TEXT 16.7

*jñātvā jñāti-vadham garhyam
adharmam rājya-hetukam
tato nivṛtto hantāham
hato'yam iti laukikaḥ*

jñātvā – being aware; *jñāti* – of his relatives; *vadham* – the killing; *garhyam* – abominable; *adharmam* – irreligion; *rājya* – to acquire a kingdom; *hetukam* – having as the motive; *tataḥ* – from such activity; *nivṛttaḥ* – retired; *hantā* – the killer; *aham* – I am; *hataḥ* – killed; *ayam* – this group of relatives; *iti* – thus; *laukikaḥ* – mundane.

TRANSLATION

On the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra Arjuna thought that killing his relatives would be an abominable, irreligious activity, motivated only by his desire to acquire a kingdom. He therefore desisted from the battle, thinking, “I would be the killer of my relatives. They would be destroyed.” Thus Arjuna was afflicted with mundane consciousness.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa here explains to Uddhava the circumstances in which Śrī Arjuna posed his questions.

TEXT 16.8

*sa tadā puruṣa-vyāghro
yuktyā me pratibodhitaḥ
abhyabhāṣata mām evam
yathā tvam raṇa-mūrdhani*

saḥ – he; *tadā* – at that time; *puruṣa-vyāghraḥ* – the tiger among men; *yuktyā* – by logical argument; *me* – by Me; *pratibodhitaḥ* – enlightened in real knowledge; *abhyabhāṣata* – addressed questions; *mām* – to Me; *evam* – thus; *yathā* – just as; *tvam* – you; *raṇa* – of the battle; *mūrdhani* – in the front.

TRANSLATION

At that time I enlightened Arjuna, the tiger among men, with logical arguments, and thus in the front of the battle Arjuna addressed Me with questions in the same way that you are now inquiring.

TEXT 16.9

*aham ātmoddhavāmīṣāṁ
bhūtānāṁ suhṛd īśvaraḥ
aham sarvāṇi bhūtāni
teṣāṁ sthity-udbhavāpyayaḥ*

aham - I am; *ātmā* - the Supersoul; *uddhava* - O Uddhava; *amīṣāṁ* - of these; *bhūtānām* - living entities; *su-hṛt* - the well-wisher; *īśvaraḥ* - the supreme controller; *aham* - I am; *sarvāṇi bhūtāni* - all entities; *teṣām* - of them; *sthiti* - the maintenance; *udbhava* - creation; *apyayaḥ* - and annihilation.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, I am the Supersoul of all living entities, and therefore I am naturally their well-wisher and supreme controller. Being the creator, maintainer and annihilator of all entities, I am not different from them.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī points out that the Personality of Godhead maintains an ablative and genitive relationship with His opulences. In other words, the Lord is not different from all living entities, because they are coming from Him and they belong to Him. The Lord gave a similar explanation to Arjuna in the Tenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.20), beginning with the same words, *aham ātmā*. Although the Lord describes His external, or material, opulences, the Lord's position is always transcendental and nonmaterial. Just as the living soul within the body gives life to the body, similarly, the Lord, by His supreme potency, gives life to all universal opulences.

TEXT 16.10

*aham gatir gatimatām
kālaḥ kalayatām aham
gunāṅgām cāpy aham sāmyaṁ
guṇiny utpattiko guṇaḥ*

aham - I am; *gatiḥ* - the ultimate goal; *gati-matām* - of those who seek progress; *kālaḥ* - time; *kalayatām* - of those who exert control; *aham* - I am; *gunāṅgām* - of the modes of material nature; *ca* - also; *api* - even; *aham* - I am; *sāmyaṁ* - material equilibrium; *guṇini* - in the pious; *utpattikaḥ* - natural; *guṇaḥ* - virtue.

TRANSLATION

I am the ultimate goal of all those seeking progress, and I am time among those who exert control. I am the equilibrium of the modes of material nature, and I am natural virtue among the pious.

TEXT 16.11

*guṇinām apy ahaṁ sūtram
mahatām ca mahān aham
sūkṣmāṇām apy ahaṁ jīvo
durjayānām ahaṁ manaḥ*

guṇinām – among things possessing qualities; *api* – indeed; *aham* – I am; *sūtram* – the primary *sūtra-tattva*; *mahatām* – among great things; *ca* – also; *mahān* – the total material manifestation; *aham* – I am; *sūkṣmāṇām* – among subtle things; *api* – indeed; *aham* – I am; *jīvaḥ* – the spirit soul; *durjayānām* – among things difficult to conquer; *aham* – I am; *manaḥ* – the mind.

TRANSLATION

Among things possessing qualities I am the primary manifestation of nature, and among great things I am the total material creation. Among subtle things I am the spirit soul, and of things that are difficult to conquer I am the mind.

TEXT 16.12

*hiraṇyagarbho vedānām
mantrāṇām praṇavas tri-vṛt
akṣarāṇām a-kāro'smi
padāni cchandasām aham*

hiraṇya-garbhaḥ – Lord Brahmā; *vedānām* – of the Vedas; *mantrāṇām* – of mantras; *praṇavaḥ* – the *oṃkāra*; *tri-vṛt* – consisting of three letters; *akṣarāṇām* – of letters; *a-kāraḥ* – the first letter, *a*; *asmi* – I am; *padāni* – the three-line Gāyatrī mantra; *chandasām* – among sacred meters; *aham* – I am.

TRANSLATION

Among the Vedas I am their original teacher, Lord Brahmā, and of all mantras I am the three-lettered oṃkāra. Among letters I am the first letter, “a,” and among sacred meters I am the Gāyatrī mantra.

TEXT 16.13

*indro'haṁ sarva-devānām
vasūnām asmi havya-vāṭ
ādityānām ahaṁ viṣṇu
rudrāṇām nīla-lohitaḥ*

indraḥ – Lord Indra; *aham* – I am; *sarva-devānām* – among the demigods; *vasūnām* – among the Vasus; *asmi* – I am; *havya-vāṭ* – the carrier of oblations, the fire-god Agni; *ādityānām* – among the sons of Aditi; *aham* – I am; *viṣṇuḥ* – Viṣṇu; *rudrāṇām* – among the Rudras; *nīla-lohitaḥ* – Lord Śiva.

TRANSLATION

Among the demigods I am Indra, and among the Vasus I am Agni, the god of fire. I am Viṣṇu among the sons of Aditi, and among the Rudras I am Lord Śiva.

PURPORT

Lord Viṣṇu appeared among the sons of Aditi as Vāmanadeva.

TEXT 16.14

*brahmaṛṣīṇām bhṛgur aham
rājarṣīṇām aham manuḥ
devarṣīṇām nārado'ham
havirdhāny asmi dhenuṣu*

brahma-ṛṣīṇām - among the saintly *brāhmaṇas*; *bhṛguḥ* - Bhṛgu Muni; *aham* - I am; *rāja-ṛṣīṇām* - among the saintly kings; *aham* - I am; *manuḥ* - Manu; *deva-ṛṣīṇām* - among the saintly demigods; *nāradaḥ* - Nārada Muni; *aham* - I am; *havirdhānī* - Kāmadhenu; *asmi* - I am; *dhenuṣu* - among cows.

TRANSLATION

Among saintly brāhmaṇas I am Bhṛgu Muni, and I am Manu among saintly kings. I am Nārada Muni among saintly demigods, and I am Kāmadhenu among cows.

TEXT 16.15

*siddheśvarāṇām kapilaḥ
suparṇo'ham patatriṇām
prajāpatīnām dakṣo'ham
pitṛṇām aham aryamā*

siddha-īśvarāṇām - among perfected beings; *kapilaḥ* - I am Lord Kapila; *suparṇaḥ* - Garuḍa; *aham* - I am; *patatriṇām* - among birds; *prajāpatīnām* - among the progenitors of mankind; *dakṣaḥ* - Dakṣa; *aham* - I am; *pitṛṇām* - among the forefathers; *aham* - I am; *aryamā* - Aryamā.

TRANSLATION

I am Lord Kapila among perfected beings and Garuḍa among birds. I am Dakṣa among the progenitors of mankind, and I am Aryamā among the forefathers.

TEXT 16.16

*mām viddhy uddhava daityānām
prahlādam asureśvaram
somam nakṣatrauśadhīnām
dhaneśam yakṣa-rakṣasām*

mām - Me; *viddhi* - you should know; *uddhava* - My dear Uddhava; *daityānām* - among the sons of Diti, the demons; *prahlādam* - Prahlāda Mahārāja; *asura-īśvaram* - the lord of the *asuras*; *somam* - the moon; *nakṣatra-ōśadhīnām* - among the stars and herbs; *dhana-īśam* - the lord of wealth, Kuvera; *yakṣa-rakṣasām* - among the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, among the demoniac sons of Diti know Me to be Prahlāda Mahārāja, the saintly lord of the asuras. Among the stars and herbs I am their lord, Candra (the moon), and among Yakṣas and Rākṣasas I am the lord of wealth, Kuvera.

TEXT 16.17

*airāvataṁ gajendrāṇāṁ
yādasāṁ varuṇaṁ prabhum
tapatāṁ dyumatāṁ sūryaṁ
manuṣyāṇāṁ ca bhū-patim*

airāvataṁ – the elephant Airāvata; *gaja-indrāṇāṁ* – among lordly elephants; *yādasāṁ* – among aquatics; *varuṇaṁ* – Varuṇa; *prabhum* – the lord of seas; *tapatāṁ* – among things that heat; *dyu-matāṁ* – among things that illuminate; *sūryaṁ* – I am the sun; *manuṣyāṇāṁ* – among human beings; *ca* – also; *bhū-patim* – the king.

TRANSLATION

I am Airāvata among lordly elephants, and among aquatics I am Varuṇa, the lord of the seas. Among all things that heat and illuminate I am the sun, and among human beings I am the king.

PURPORT

It is significant to know that Lord Kṛṣṇa is represented within this universe by the lord or supreme in all categories. No one can be as aristocratic and perfect as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, nor can anyone estimate the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa is without doubt the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 16.18

*uccaiḥśravās turaṅgāṇāṁ
dhātūnām asmi kāñcanam
yamaḥ saṁyamatāṁ cāham
sarpāṇāṁ asmi vāsukiḥ*

uccaiḥśravāḥ – the horse Uccaiḥśravā; *turaṅgāṇāṁ* – among horses; *dhātūnām* – among metals; *asmi* – I am; *kāñcanam* – gold; *yamaḥ* – Yamarāja; *saṁyamatāṁ* – among those who punish and suppress; *ca* – also; *aham* – I; *sarpāṇāṁ* – among serpents; *asmi* – am; *vāsukiḥ* – Vāsuki.

TRANSLATION

Among horses I am Uccaiḥśravā, and I am gold among metals. I am Yamarāja among those who suppress and punish, and among serpents I am Vāsuki.

TEXT 16.19

*nāgandrāṇāṁ ananto'haṁ
mṛgendraḥ śṛṅgi-damṣṭriṇāṁ
āśramāṇāṁ ahaṁ turyo
varṇānāṁ prathamo'nagha*

nāga-indrāṇām – among the best of many-hooded snakes; *anantaḥ* – Anantadeva; *aham* – I am; *mṛga-indraḥ* – the lion; *śṛṅgi-damṣṭriṇām* – among animals with sharp horns or teeth; *āśramāṇām* – among the four social orders of life; *aham* – I am; *turyaḥ* – the fourth, *sannyāsa*; *varṇānām* – among the four occupational orders; *prathamaḥ* – the first, the *brāhmaṇas*; *anagha* – O sinless one.

TRANSLATION

O sinless Uddhava, among the best of snakes I am Anantadeva, and among those animals with sharp horns or teeth I am the lion. Among the social orders I am the fourth, or the renounced order of life, and among the occupational divisions I am the first, the brāhmaṇas.

TEXT 16.20

*tīrthānām srotasām gaṅgā
samudraḥ sarasām aham
āyudhānām dhanur aham
tripura-ghno dhanuṣmatām*

tīrthānām – among holy places; *srotasām* – among flowing things; *gaṅgā* – the sacred Ganges; *samudraḥ* – the ocean; *sarasām* – among steady bodies of water; *aham* – I am; *āyudhānām* – among weapons; *dhanuḥ* – the bow; *aham* – I am; *tri-pura-ghnaḥ* – Lord Śiva; *dhanuḥ-matām* – among those who wield the bow.

TRANSLATION

Among sacred and flowing things I am the holy Ganges, and among steady bodies of water I am the ocean. Among weapons I am the bow, and of the wielders of weapons I am Lord Śiva.

PURPORT

Lord Śiva used his bow to completely cover with arrows the three demoniac cities built by Maya Dānava.

TEXT 16.21

*dhiṣṇyānām asmy aham merur
gahanānām himālayaḥ
vanaspatīnām aśvattha
oṣadhīnām aham yavaḥ*

dhiṣṇyānām – residences; *asmi* – am; *aham* – I; *meruḥ* – Mount Sumeru; *gahanānām* – of impervious places; *himālayaḥ* – the Himālayas; *vanaspatīnām* – among trees; *aśvatthaḥ* – banyan tree; *oṣadhīnām* – among plants; *aham* – I; *yavaḥ* – barley.

TRANSLATION

Among residences I am Mount Sumeru, and of impervious places I am the Himālayas. Among trees I am the holy fig tree, and among plants I am those that bear grains.

PURPORT

Oṣadhīnām here indicates those plants that fructify once and then die. Among them, those that give grains, which sustain human life, represent Kṛṣṇa. Without grains it is not possible to produce milk products, nor can one properly perform Vedic fire sacrifices without offerings of grains.

TEXT 16.22

*purodhasām vasiṣṭho'ham
brahmiṣṭhānām bṛhaspatiḥ
skando'ham sarva-senānyām
agraṇyām bhagavān ajaḥ*

purodhasām – among priests; *vasiṣṭhaḥ* – Vasiṣṭha Muni; *aham* – I am; *brahmiṣṭhānām* – among those fixed in the Vedic conclusion and purpose; *bṛhaspatiḥ* – Bṛhaspati, the spiritual master of the demigods; *skandaḥ* – Kārtikeya; *aham* – I am; *sarva-senānyām* – among all military leaders; *agraṇyām* – among those advancing in pious life; *bhagavān* – the great personality; *ajaḥ* – Lord Brahmā.

TRANSLATION

Among priests I am Vasiṣṭha Muni, and among those highly situated in Vedic culture I am Bṛhaspati. I am Kārtikeya among great military leaders, and among those advancing in superior ways of life I am the great personality Lord Brahmā.

TEXT 16.23

*yajñānām brahma-yajño'ham
vratānām avihimsanam
vāyv-agny-arkāmbu-vāg-ātmā
śucīnām apy aham śuciḥ*

yajñānām – of sacrifices; *brahma-yajñaḥ* – study of the *Veda*; *aham* – I am; *vratānām* – of vows; *avihimsanam* – nonviolence; *vāyu* – wind; *agni* – fire; *arka* – the sun; *ambu* – water; *vāk* – and speech; *ātmā* – personified; *śucīnām* – of all purifiers; *api* – indeed; *aham* – I am; *śuciḥ* – pure.

TRANSLATION

Among sacrifices I am study of the Veda, and I am nonviolence among vows. Among all things that purify I am the wind, fire, the sun, water and speech.

TEXT 16.24

*yogānām ātma-saṁrodho
mantra'smi vijigīṣatām
ānvīkṣikī kauśalānām
vikalpaḥ khyāti-vādinām*

yogānām – among the eight stages of *yoga* practice (*aṣṭāṅga*); *ātma-saṁrodhaḥ* – the ultimate stage, *samādhi*, in which the soul is completely separated from illusion; *mantraḥ* – prudent political counsel; *asmi* – I am;

vijigīṣatām – among those desiring victory; *ānvīkṣikī* – spiritual science, by which one can distinguish between matter and spirit; *kauśalānām* – among all processes of expert discrimination; *vikalpaḥ* – diversity of perception; *khyāti-vādinām* – among the speculative philosophers.

TRANSLATION

Among the eight progressive states of yoga I am the final stage, samādhi, in which the soul is completely separated from illusion. Among those desiring victory I am prudent political counsel, and among processes of expert discrimination I am the science of the soul, by which one distinguishes spirit from matter. Among all speculative philosophers I am diversity of perception.

PURPORT

Any science is based on the faculty of expert discrimination. By skillful definition of isolated and interactive components one becomes expert in any field. Ultimately the most intelligent person can isolate the spirit soul from matter and describe the properties of matter and spirit as both isolated and interactive components of reality. The proliferation of innumerable philosophical speculations is due to differing modes of perception within the material world. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15), *sarvasya cāham hṛdi sanniviṣṭo mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanam ca*: the Supreme Personality of Godhead is situated in everyone’s heart and awards a particular degree of knowledge or ignorance according to one’s desire and merit. Thus the Lord Himself is the basis of the mundane process of philosophical speculation, for He creates differing and alternating modes of perception within the conditioned souls. It is to be understood that one can acquire perfect knowledge only by hearing directly from Lord Kṛṣṇa and not by hearing from conditioned philosophers who imperfectly perceive the creation of the Lord through the screen of their personal desires.

TEXT 16.25

*strīṇām tu śatarūpāham
puṁsām svāyambhuvo manuḥ
nārāyaṇo munīnām ca
kumāro brahmacāriṇām*

strīṇām – among ladies; *tu* – indeed; *śatarūpā* – Śatarūpā; *aham* – I am; *puṁsām* – among male personalities; *svāyambhuvaḥ manuḥ* – the great *prajāpati* Svāyambhuva Manu; *nārāyaṇaḥ* – the sage Nārāyaṇa; *munīnām* – among saintly sages; *ca* – also; *kumāraḥ* – Sanat-kumāra; *brahmacāriṇām* – among *brahmacārīs*.

TRANSLATION

Among ladies I am Śatarūpā, and among male personalities I am her husband, Svāyambhuva Manu. I am Nārāyaṇa among the sages and Sanat-kumāra among brahmacārīs.

TEXT 16.26

*dharmāṇām asmi sannyāsaḥ
kṣemāṇām abahir-matiḥ
guhyānām su-nṛtaṁ maunam
mithunānām ajas tv aham*

dharmāṇām – among religious principles; *asmi* – I am; *sannyāsaḥ* – renunciation; *kṣemāṇām* – among all types of security; *abahiḥ-matiḥ* – awareness within (of the eternal soul); *guhyānām* – of secrets; *sunṛtam* – pleasant speech; *maunam* – silence; *mithunānām* – of sexual pairs; *ajaḥ* – Brahmā, the original *prajāpati*; *tu* – indeed; *aham* – I am.

TRANSLATION

Among religious principles I am renunciation, and of all types of security I am consciousness of the eternal soul within. Of secrets I am pleasant speech and silence, and among sexual pairs I am Brahmā.

PURPORT

One who realizes the eternal soul within no longer fears any material situation and thus is qualified to accept the renounced order of life, *sannyāsa*. Certainly fear is one of the great miseries of material life; therefore the gift of fearlessness is very valuable and represents Lord Kṛṣṇa. Both in ordinary pleasant speech and silence, very few confidential things are revealed, and thus diplomacy and silence are both aids to secrecy. Lord Brahmā is prominent among sexual pairs because the original beautiful couple, Svāyambhuva Manu and Śatarūpā, emerged from Lord Brahmā's body, as explained in Chapter Twelve of the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 16.27

*saṁvatsaro'smy animiṣām
ṛtūnām madhu-mādhavau
māsānām mārگاśīrṣo'haṁ
nakṣatrāṇām tathābhijit*

saṁvatsaraḥ – the year; *asmi* – I am; *animiṣām* – among the vigilant cycles of time; *ṛtūnām* – among seasons; *madhu-mādhavau* – spring; *māsānām* – among months; *mārگاśīrṣaḥ* – Mārگاśīrṣa (November–December); *aham* – I am; *nakṣatrāṇām* – among asterisms; *tathā* – similarly; *abhijit* – Abhijit.

TRANSLATION

Among the vigilant cycles of time I am the year, and among seasons I am spring. Among months I am Mārگاśīrṣa, and among lunar houses I am the auspicious Abhijit.

TEXT 16.28

*aham yugānām ca kṛtaṁ
dhīrāṇām devalo'sitaḥ
dvaipāyano'smi vyāsānām
kavīnām kāvya ātmavān*

aham – I am; *yugānām* – among ages; *ca* – also; *kṛtam* – Satya-yuga; *dhīrāṇām* – among steady sages; *devalaḥ* – Devala; *asitaḥ* – Asita; *dvaipāyanaḥ* – Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana; *asmi* – I am; *vyāsānām* – among the editors of the *Vedas*; *kavīnām* – among learned scholars; *kāvyaḥ* – Śukrācārya; *ātma-vān* – learned in spiritual science.

TRANSLATION

Among ages I am the Satya-yuga, the age of truth, and among steady sages I am Devala and Asita. Among those who have divided the Vedas I am Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa, and among learned scholars I am Śukrācārya, the knower of spiritual science.

TEXT 16.29

*vāsudevo bhagavatām
tvam tu bhāgavateṣv aham
kimpuruṣānām hanumān
vidyādhṛāṇām sudarśanaḥ*

vāsudevaḥ – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhagavatām* – of those entitled to the name Bhagavān; *tvam* – you; *tu* – indeed; *bhāgavateṣu* – among My devotees; *aham* – I am; *kimpuruṣānām* – among the Kimpuruṣas; *hanumān* – Hanumān; *vidyādhṛāṇām* – among the Vidyādharas; *sudarśanaḥ* – Sudarśana.

TRANSLATION

Among those entitled to the name Bhagavān I am Vāsudeva, and indeed, you, Uddhava, represent Me among the devotees. I am Hanumān among the Kimpuruṣas, and among the Vidyādharas I am Sudarśana.

PURPORT

The Vedic literatures state that one who possesses perfect knowledge of the creation and destruction of all entities and who is completely situated in omniscience is to be known as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Bhagavān. Although many great personalities are sometimes called Bhagavān, ultimately Bhagavān is the one supreme entity who possesses unlimited opulences. Throughout history, many important personalities have been addressed as “lord,” but ultimately there is only one Supreme Lord. In the Lord’s *catur-vyūha*, or quadruple expansion, the first manifestation is Vāsudeva, who here represents all of the Lord’s expansions in the *viṣṇu-tattva* category.

TEXT 16.30

*ratnānām padma-rāgo’smi
padma-kośaḥ su-peśasām
kuśo’smi darbha-jātīnām
gavyam ājyam haviṣv aham*

ratnānām – of jewels; *padma-rāgaḥ* – the ruby; *asmi* – I am; *padma-kośaḥ* – the lotus cup; *su-peśasām* – among beautiful things; *kuśaḥ* – the sacred *kuśa*

grass; *asmi* – I am; *darbha-jātīnām* – among all types of grass; *gavyam* – cow products; *ājyam* – offering of ghee; *haviḥṣu* – among oblations; *aham* – I am.

TRANSLATION

Among jewels I am the ruby, and among beautiful things I am the lotus cup. Among all types of grass I am the sacred kuśa, and of oblations I am ghee and other ingredients obtained from the cow.

PURPORT

Pañca-gavya refers to five sacrificial ingredients obtained from the cow, namely milk, ghee, yogurt, dung and urine. The cow is so valuable that even its dung and urine are antiseptic and fit for sacrificial offering. *Kuśa* grass is also used for religious occasions. Mahārāja Parīkṣit constructed a sitting place from *kuśa* grass during the last week of his life. Among beautiful things the lotus cup formed by lotus petals represents Lord Kṛṣṇa, and among jewels the ruby, which is similar to Lord Kṛṣṇa’s own Kaustubha gem, symbolizes the potency of the Lord.

TEXT 16.31

*vyavasāyinām ahaṁ lakṣmīḥ
kitavānām chala-grahaḥ
titikṣāsmi titikṣūṇām
sattvaṁ sattvavatām aham*

vyavasāyinām – of the enterprising; *aham* – I am; *lakṣmīḥ* – fortune; *kitavānām* – of cheaters; *chala-grahaḥ* – the gambling; *titikṣā* – the forgiveness; *asmi* – I am; *titikṣūṇām* – among the tolerant; *sattvam* – the goodness; *sattva-vatām* – among those in the mode of goodness; *aham* – I am.

TRANSLATION

Among the enterprising I am fortune, and among the cheaters I am gambling. I am the forgiveness of the tolerant and the good qualities of those in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 16.32

*ojaḥ saho balavatām
karmāhaṁ viddhi sātvatām
sātvatām nava-mūrtīnām
ādi-mūrtir ahaṁ parā*

ojaḥ – the sensory strength; *sahaḥ* – and mental strength; *balavatām* – of the strong; *karma* – the devotional activities; *aham* – I am; *viddhi* – please know; *sātvatām* – among the devotees; *sātvatām* – among those devotees; *nava-mūrtīnām* – who worship Me in nine forms; *ādi-mūrtiḥ* – the original form, Vāsudeva; *aham* – I am; *parā* – the Supreme.

TRANSLATION

Of the powerful I am bodily and mental strength, and I am the devotional activities of My devotees. My devotees worship Me in

nine different forms, among which I am the original and primary Vāsudeva.

PURPORT

Generally, the Vaiṣṇavas worship the Personality of Godhead as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Nārāyaṇa, Hayagrīva, Varāha, Nṛsimha and Brahmā. It is understood that when a suitable living entity is not available to fill the post of Brahmā, the Lord Himself assumes the position; therefore Lord Brahmā is mentioned in the list. Lord Viṣṇu sometimes appears as Indra and sometimes as Brahmā, and it is Viṣṇu appearing as Brahmā who is indicated in this connection.

TEXT 16.33

*viśvāvasuḥ pūrvacittir
gandharvāpsarasām aham
bhūdharāṇām aham sthairyam
gandha-mātram aham bhuvaḥ*

viśvāvasuḥ – Viśvāvasu; *pūrvacittir* – Pūrvacitti; *gandharva-apsarasām* – among the Gandharvas and Apsarās; *aham* – I am; *bhūdharāṇām* – of the mountains; *aham* – I am; *sthairyam* – the steadiness; *gandha-mātram* – the perception of aroma; *aham* – I am; *bhuvah* – of the earth.

TRANSLATION

Among the Gandharvas I am Viśvāvasu, and I am Pūrvacitti among the heavenly Apsaras. I am the steadiness of mountains and the fragrant aroma of the earth.

PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.9) Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *puṇyo gandhaḥ pṛthivyām ca*: “I am the fragrance of the earth.” The original fragrance of the earth is very pleasing and represents Lord Kṛṣṇa. Although unpleasant aromas may be artificially produced, they do not represent the Lord.

TEXT 16.34

*apām rasaś ca paramas
tejiṣṭhānām vibhāvasuḥ
prabhā sūryendu-tārāṇām
śabdaḥ aham nabhasaḥ paraḥ*

apām – of water; *rasaḥ* – the taste; *ca* – also; *paramaḥ* – excellent; *tejiṣṭhānām* – among most brilliant things; *vibhāvasuḥ* – the sun; *prabhā* – the effulgence; *sūrya* – of the sun; *indu* – the moon; *tārāṇām* – and the stars; *śabdaḥ* – the sound vibration; *aham* – I am; *nabhasaḥ* – of the sky; *paraḥ* – transcendental.

TRANSLATION

I am the sweet taste of water, and among brilliant things I am the sun. I am the effulgence of the sun, moon and stars, and I am the transcendental sound that vibrates in the sky.

TEXT 16.35

*brahmaṇyānām balir ahaṁ
vīraṇām aham arjunaḥ
bhūtānām sthitiḥ utpattiḥ
ahaṁ vai pratisaṅkramaḥ*

brahmaṇyānām - of those dedicated to brahminical culture; *balir* - Bali Mahārāja, the son of Virocana; *ahaṁ* - I am; *vīraṇām* - of heroes; *ahaṁ* - I am; *arjunaḥ* - Arjuna; *bhūtānām* - of all living beings; *sthitiḥ* - the maintenance; *utpattiḥ* - the creation; *ahaṁ* - I am; *vai* - indeed; *pratisaṅkramaḥ* - the annihilation.

TRANSLATION

Among those dedicated to brahminical culture I am Bali Mahārāja, the son of Virocana, and I am Arjuna among heroes. Indeed, I am the creation, maintenance and annihilation of all living entities.

TEXT 16.36

*gaty-ukty-utsargopādānam
ānanda-sparśa-lakṣaṇam
āsvāda-śruty-avaghrāṇam
ahaṁ sarvendriyendriyam*

gati - movement of the legs (walking, running, etc.); *ukti* - speech; *utsarga* - evacuation; *opādānam* - accepting with the hands; *ānanda* - the material pleasure of the sex organs; *sparśa* - touch; *lakṣaṇam* - sight; *āsvāda* - taste; *śruti* - hearing; *avaghrāṇam* - smell; *ahaṁ* - I am; *sarva-indriya* - of all the senses; *indriyam* - the potency to experience their objects.

TRANSLATION

I am the functions of the five working senses - the legs, speech, anus, hands and sex organs - as well as those of the five knowledge-acquiring senses - touch, sight, taste, hearing and smell. I am also the potency by which each of the senses experiences its particular sense object.

TEXT 16.37

*pṛthivī vāyur ākāśa
āpo jyotir ahaṁ mahān
vikāraḥ puruṣo'vyaktam
rajaḥ sattvaṁ tamaḥ param
ahaṁ etat prasaṅkhyānam
jñānam tattva-viniścayaḥ*

pṛthivī - the subtle form of earth, aroma; *vāyuḥ* - the subtle form of air, touch; *ākāśaḥ* - the subtle form of sky, sound; *āpaḥ* - the subtle form of water, taste; *jyotiḥ* - the subtle form of fire, form; *ahaṁ* - false ego; *mahān* -

the *mahat-tattva*; *vikārah* – the sixteen elements (earth, water, fire, air and sky, the five working senses, the five knowledge-acquiring senses and the mind); *puruṣaḥ* – the living entity; *avyaktam* – material nature, *prakṛti*; *rajaḥ* – the mode of passion; *sattvam* – the mode of goodness; *tamaḥ* – the mode of ignorance; *param* – the Supreme Lord; *aham* – I am; *etat* – this; *prasaṅkhyānam* – all that has been enumerated; *jñānam* – knowledge of the above-mentioned elements by individual symptoms; *tattva-viniścayaḥ* – steady conviction, which is the fruit of knowledge.

TRANSLATION

I am form, taste, aroma, touch and sound; false ego; the mahat-tattva; earth, water, fire, air and sky; the living entity; material nature; the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance; and the transcendental Lord. All these items, along with knowledge of their individual symptoms and the steady conviction that results from this knowledge, represent Me.

PURPORT

Having given a brief but detailed synopsis of His personal opulences within this world, the Lord now briefly summarizes the opulences that expand from His bodily effulgence. It is stated in *Brahma-saṁhitā* that all of the material universes with their infinite varieties, transformations and opulences rest on the bodily effulgence of the Lord. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has elaborately explained this point in his commentary on this verse.

TEXT 16.38

*mayeśvareṇa jīvena
guṇena guṇinā vinā
sarvātmanāpi sarveṇa
na bhāvo vidyate kvacit*

mayā – Me; *īśvareṇa* – the Supreme Lord; *jīvena* – the living entity; *guṇena* – the modes of nature; *guṇinā* – the *mahat-tattva*; *vinā* – without; *sarvātmanā* – the soul of all that exists; *api* – indeed; *sarveṇa* – everything; *na* – not; *bhāvaḥ* – existence; *vidyate* – there is; *kvacit* – whatsoever.

TRANSLATION

As the Supreme Lord I am the basis of the living entity, of the modes of nature and of the mahat-tattva. Thus I am everything, and nothing whatsoever can exist without Me.

PURPORT

Without the manifestation of the *mahat-tattva*, or total material existence, and the *jīva*, or living entity, nothing can exist within the material world. Everything we experience is a combination of the living entity and matter, in its various subtle and gross categories. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the entire basis of the existence of both the living entity and matter. Nothing can possibly exist even for a moment without the mercy of the Supreme Lord. One should not foolishly conclude that the Lord is therefore material. As has been clearly explained in this canto of the *Bhāgavatam*,

both the living entity and the Supreme Lord are completely transcendental to material nature. The living entity, however, has the propensity to dream that he is material, whereas the Lord constantly remembers the transcendental position of both Himself and the conditioned dreaming entity. As the Lord is transcendental, His abode is also far beyond the reach of the modes of nature. The actual purpose of life is to understand by mature conviction the transcendental Lord, His transcendental abode, our own transcendental position and the process by which we may go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 16.39

*saṅkhyānaṁ paramāṇūnāṁ
kālena kriyate mayā
na tathā me vibhūtīnāṁ
srjato'ṇḍāni koṭīśaḥ*

saṅkhyānam – counting; *parama-aṇūnām* – of the atoms; *kālena* – after some time; *kriyate* – is done; *mayā* – by Me; *na* – not; *tathā* – in the same way; *me* – of Me; *vibhūtīnām* – of the opulences; *srjataḥ* – who am creating; *aṇḍāni* – universes; *koṭīśaḥ* – by the innumerable millions.

TRANSLATION

Even though over a period of time I might count all the atoms of the universe, I could not count all of My opulences which I manifest within innumerable universes.

PURPORT

The Lord here explains that Uddhava should not expect a complete catalog of the Lord's opulences, since even the Lord Himself finds no limit to such opulences. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, *kālena* indicates that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is within every atom and can therefore easily calculate the total number of atoms. However, although the Lord is certainly omniscient, even He Himself cannot supply a finite number for His opulences, because they are infinite.

TEXT 16.40

*tejaḥ śrīḥ kīrtir aiśvaryaṁ
hrīḥ tyāgaḥ saubhagaṁ bhagaḥ
vīryaṁ titikṣā vijñānaṁ
yatra yatra sa me'ṁśakaḥ*

tejaḥ – power; *śrīḥ* – beautiful, valuable things; *kīrtiḥ* – fame; *aiśvaryaṁ* – opulence; *hrīḥ* – humility; *tyāgaḥ* – renunciation; *saubhagaṁ* – that which pleases the mind and senses; *bhagaḥ* – good fortune; *vīryaṁ* – strength; *titikṣā* – tolerance; *vijñānaṁ* – spiritual knowledge; *yatra yatra* – wherever; *saḥ* – this; *me* – My; *amśakaḥ* – expansion.

TRANSLATION

Whatever power, beauty, fame, opulence, humility, renunciation, mental pleasure, fortune, strength, tolerance or spiritual knowledge there may be is simply an expansion of My opulence.

PURPORT

Although the Lord stated in the previous verse that His opulences are innumerable, the Lord here gives a specific resume and demonstration of His opulences.

TEXT 16.41

*etās te kīrtitāḥ sarvāḥ
saṅkṣepeṇa vibhūtayaḥ
mano-vikārā evaite
yathā vācābhidhīyate*

etāḥ – these; *te* – to you; *kīrtitāḥ* – described; *sarvāḥ* – all; *saṅkṣepeṇa* – briefly; *vibhūtayaḥ* – spiritual opulences; *manaḥ* – of the mind; *vikārāḥ* – transformations; *eva* – indeed; *ete* – these; *yathā* – accordingly; *vācā* – by words; *abhidhīyate* – each is described.

TRANSLATION

I have briefly described to you all My spiritual opulences and also the extraordinary material features of My creation, which are perceived by the mind and defined in different ways according to circumstances.

PURPORT

According to Sanskrit grammar, and as confirmed by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the words *etāḥ* and *ete* describe two distinct sets of the Lord’s opulences. The Lord has described His opulent plenary expansions, such as Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, the Supersoul, etc., and further the Lord has described the outstanding features of the material creation, which are also included among the glories of the Personality of Godhead. The plenary manifestations of the Lord, such as Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, etc., are all eternal, unchanging transcendental features of the Lord and are indicated by the term *etāḥ*. The extraordinary aspects of material creation, however, are circumstantial and dependent on individual perception, and they are therefore described here by the words *mano-vikārā evaite yathā vācābhidhīyate*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that by consistent logical application of synonyms, *etāḥ* refers to the Lord’s eternal spiritual manifestations, beyond the perception of the material senses, whereas *ete* refers to those opulences that can be perceived by conditioned souls. He gives the example that the paraphernalia and intimate associates of a king are all considered to be part and parcel of the king and are therefore granted royal status. Similarly, the opulent features of material creation are reflected expansions of the Lord’s personal opulences and thus may be considered nondifferent from Him. One should not, however, wrongly assume that such insignificant material opulences occupy the same status as the Lord’s plenary features as the Personality of Godhead, which are qualitatively and quantitatively equal to the Lord. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments as follows on this verse. “The Lord’s external opulences are called *mano-vikārāḥ*, or ‘related to mental transformation,’ because ordinary people perceive extraordinary features of

the material world according to their personal state of mind. Thus the word *vācābhidhīyate* indicates that conditioned souls describe the Lord's material creation according to specific material circumstances. Because of the circumstantial relative definitions of material opulence, such opulence is never to be considered a direct plenary manifestation of the Lord's personal form. When one's state of mind is transformed into a favorable or affectionate state, one defines a manifestation of the Lord's energy as 'my son,' 'my father,' 'my husband,' 'my uncle,' 'the son of my brother,' 'my friend,' and so on. One forgets that every living entity is actually part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that whatever opulences, talents or outstanding features one may exhibit are actually the potencies of the Lord. Similarly, when the mind is transformed into a negative or inimical state, one thinks, 'This person will be the ruin of me,' 'This person must be finished by me,' 'He is my enemy' or 'I am his enemy,' 'He is a killer' or 'He should be killed.' The negative state of mind is also expressed when one is attracted to the extraordinary material aspects of particular persons or objects but forgets that they are manifestations of the potency of the Personality of Godhead. Even the demigod Indra, who is quite obviously a manifestation of the Lord's material opulences, is misunderstood by others. For example, Indra's wife, Śacī, thinks that Indra is 'my husband,' whereas Aditi thinks that he is 'my son.' Jayanta thinks that he is 'my father,' Bṛhaspati thinks that he is 'my disciple,' whereas the demons feel that Indra is their personal enemy. Thus different personalities define him according to their mental state. The Lord's material opulences, being relatively perceived, are therefore called *mano-vikāra*, which means they are dependent on mental states. This relative perception is material because it does not recognize the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the actual source of the particular opulence. If one sees Lord Kṛṣṇa as the source of all opulences and gives up all desires to enjoy or possess the Lord's opulences, then one can see the spiritual nature of these opulences. At that time, even though one may continue to perceive the variety and distinctions of the material world, one will become perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One should not conclude, as do the voidist philosophers, that the Lord's spiritual manifestations in the *viṣṇu-tattva* and liberated *jīva* categories are also products of relative perception and mental states. This useless idea is contrary to the entire body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's teachings to Śrī Uddhava." According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the word *vācā* also indicates the various Vedic literatures that describe the particular processes by which the Lord manifests His spiritual and material opulences, and in this context *yathā* indicates the specific procedures of manifestation and creation.

TEXT 16.42

*vācaṁ yaccha mano yaccha
prāṇān yacchedriyāṇi ca*

*ātmānam ātmanā yaccha
na bhūyaḥ kalpase'dhvane*

vācam - speech; *yaccha* - control; *manaḥ* - the mind; *yaccha* - control; *prāṇān* - your breathing; *yaccha* - control; *indriyāṇi* - the senses; *ca* - also; *ātmānam* - the intelligence; *ātmanā* - by purified intelligence; *yaccha* - control; *na* - never; *bhūyaḥ* - again; *kalpase* - you will fall; *adhvane* - on the path of material existence.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, control your speaking, subdue the mind, conquer the life air, regulate the senses and through purified intelligence bring your rational faculties under control. In this way you will never again fall onto the path of material existence.

PURPORT

One should see all things as expansions of the Supreme Lord's potency, and thus with speech, mind and senses one should offer respect to all things, without minimizing any living entity or material object. Since everything belongs to the Lord, everything ultimately should be engaged in the Lord's service with great care. A self-realized devotee tolerates personal insult and does not become envious of any living entity, nor does he see anyone as his enemy. This is practical enlightenment. Although a pure devotee may criticize those who obstruct the Lord's mission, such criticism is never personally motivated nor is it ever based on enviousness. An advanced devotee of the Lord may chastise his followers or criticize the demoniac, but only to carry out the mission of the Supreme Lord and never out of personal enmity or enviousness. For one who completely gives up the material concept of life there is no possibility of entering again onto the path of birth and death.

TEXT 16.43

*yo vai vāṅ-manasī saṁyag
asaṁyacchan dhiyā yatiḥ
tasya vratam tapo dānam
sravaty āma-ghaṭāmbu-vat*

yaḥ - one who; *vai* - certainly; *vāṅ-manasī* - the speech and mind; *saṁyag* - completely; *asaṁyacchan* - not controlling; *dhiyā* - by intelligence; *yatiḥ* - a transcendentalist; *tasya* - his; *vratam* - vows; *tapaḥ* - austerities; *dānam* - charity; *sravati* - run out; *āma* - unbaked; *ghaṭa* - in a pot; *ambu-vat* - like water.

TRANSLATION

A transcendentalist who does not completely control his words and mind by superior intelligence will find that his spiritual vows, austerities and charity flow away just as water flows out of an unbaked clay pot.

PURPORT

When a clay pot is properly baked it holds any liquid substance without leakage. If a clay pot is not properly baked, however, water or any other liquid within it will seep out and be lost. Similarly, a transcendentalist who does not control his speech and mind will find that his spiritual discipline and austerity gradually seep away and are lost. *Dāna*, or “charity,” refers to work performed for the welfare of others. Those who are trying to give the highest charity by preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not engage in speaking cleverly for the satisfaction of beautiful women, nor should they attempt to become artificially intellectual simply for the sake of mundane academic prestige. One should not even think of intimate sexual relationships, nor should one daydream of acquiring a prestigious position. Otherwise, one’s determination to strictly practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be lost, as described here. One must control the mind, senses and speech by higher intelligence so that one’s life will be successful.

TEXT 16.44

*tasmād vaco manaḥ prāṇān
niyacchen mat-parāyaṇaḥ
mad-bhakti-yuktayā buddhyā
tataḥ parisamāpyate*

tasmāt – therefore; *vacaḥ* – words; *manaḥ* – the mind; *prāṇān* – the life airs; *niyacchet* – one should control; *mat-parāyaṇaḥ* – who is devoted to Me; *mat* – unto Me; *bhakti* – with devotion; *yuktayā* – endowed; *buddhyā* – by such intelligence; *tataḥ* – thus; *parisamāpyate* – one fulfills the mission of life.

TRANSLATION

Being surrendered to Me, one should control the speech, mind and life air, and then through loving devotional intelligence one will completely fulfill the mission of life.

PURPORT

One can develop loving devotional intelligence by perfectly chanting the Brahma-gāyatrī *mantra* awarded at the moment of *brāhmaṇa* initiation. By clear intelligence, one becomes naturally and spontaneously disinterested in the rewards offered by mental speculation and fruitive activities and takes full shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Sixteenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Lord’s Opulence.”

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Description of the Varṇāśrama System

Previously, the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, had assumed the form of Haṁsa and glorified the duties of the *brahmacārī* and *gṛhastha* orders. In this present chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa further describes these matters to Uddhava. After Uddhava inquires from Śrī Kṛṣṇa about the duties of the social and religious orders of the *varṇāśrama* society, the Lord replies that in the first age, Satya-yuga, there was only one social order, called *haṁsa*. In that age men were automatically dedicated to pure devotional service from their very birth, and since everyone was perfect in all respects, the age was called Kṛta-yuga. The *Vedas* were then manifest in the form of the sacred syllable *om*, and the Supreme Lord was perceived within the mind in the form of the four-legged bull of religion. There were no formalized processes of sacrifice, and the sinless people, who were naturally inclined to austerity, simply engaged in meditation on the personal form of the Lord. In the following age, Tretā-yuga, there became manifest from the heart of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the three *Vedas*, and from them the three forms of the sacrificial fire. At that time the system of four *varṇas* and four *āśramas*, which prescribes material and spiritual duties for the different members of society, appeared from the bodily limbs of the Lord. According to how the social divisions took birth from higher and lower features of the Lord's body, they became endowed with higher and lower qualities. After this description, Lord Kṛṣṇa explains the natures of persons in each of the four *varṇas* and of those who are outside the limits of the *varṇas*. He also describes those qualities that pertain to humanity in general.

Members of the higher orders are qualified to accept second birth. After receiving the sacred thread initiation, they should go to live in the *gurukula*, the home of the spiritual master. With a pacified mind, the student (*brahmacārī*) should absorb himself in study of the *Vedas*. He should keep matted hair and is forbidden to wash his teeth, prepare a nice seat for himself, talk when bathing or evacuating, cut his hair and nails or at any time pass semen. He must regularly perform worship at the three junctures of the day and must render devotional service to his spiritual master in a spirit free from envy. The *brahmacārī* must offer to the *guru* whatever food and other things he obtains by begging. He accepts for his maintenance whatever remnants of the Lord he is granted. He should render menial service to the spiritual master by massaging his feet and worshiping him and should avoid all sense gratification and strictly maintain the vow of celibacy. With his mind, body and words, he should worship the Supreme Lord in the form of the Supersoul in the way prescribed for him. For *brahmacārīs*, seeing or touching women, and conversations or sports in the company of women, are absolutely disallowed. Cleanliness and ritual purification by water should be observed by members of all the spiritual orders of society. Everyone is also advised to always remember that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Supreme Soul dwelling within the hearts of all.

After studying all the different aspects of the *Vedas*, a *brāhmaṇa* who has material desires may take permission from his spiritual master and enter

family life. Otherwise, if he has no material desire, he may become a *vānaprastha* or *sannyāsī*. The proper order of succession should be followed in changing from one spiritual order to the next. One who wishes to enter the household order should accept a wife who is of the same social class, who is not objectionable, and who is somewhat younger in age than he. The obligatory duties of the three classes who are twice-born – the *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* – are worship of the Lord, study of the *Vedas* and giving charity. The occupational duties of accepting charity, teaching others and performing sacrifice for others are the privilege of the *brāhmaṇas* alone. If a *brāhmaṇa* considers that his consciousness is contaminated by engaging in these occupations, he may sustain his existence by collecting grains from the fields. If he is disturbed by poverty, the *brāhmaṇa* may out of necessity accept the business of a *kṣatriya* or *vaiśya*, but he should never take the occupation of a *śūdra*. In a similar situation, a *kṣatriya* may take the occupation of a *vaiśya*, and a *vaiśya* that of a *śūdra*. But when the emergency has passed, it is not fitting to continue earning one’s living by a lower occupation. A *brāhmaṇa* who is properly fixed in his personal duty rejects all insignificant material desires, always serves the Vaiṣṇavas and is under the protection of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The householder should study the *Vedas* every day and maintain his wards with money honestly earned by his own occupation. As far as possible, he should execute worship of the Lord by ritual sacrifices. Remaining unattached to material life and fixed in devotion to the Supreme Lord, the householder may finally take the order of *vānaprastha*, so that he can fully involve himself in the Lord’s worship. If he has a grown son, he may directly take the renounced order of *sannyāsa*. But persons who are excessively lusty after women, who have no proper discrimination, and who are extremely attached to wealth and possessions remain perpetually in anxiety over the welfare of their family members and are doomed to take their next birth in a lower species of life.

TEXTS 17.1-2

śrī-uddhava uvāca
yas tvayābhihitaḥ pūrvam
dharmas tvad-bhakti-lakṣaṇaḥ
varṇāśramācārvatām
sarveṣām dvi-padām api
yathānuṣṭhīyamānena
tvayi bhaktir nṛṇām bhavet
sva-dharmeṇāravindākṣa
tan mamākhyātum arhasi

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *yaḥ* – which; *tvayā* – by You; *abhihitaḥ* – described; *pūrvam* – previously; *dharmaḥ* – religious principles; *tvad-bhakti-lakṣaṇaḥ* – characterized by devotional service to Your Lordship; *varṇa-āśrama* – of the *varṇāśrama* system; *ācārvatām* – of the faithful

followers; *sarveṣām* – of all; *dvi-padām* – of ordinary human beings (who do not follow the *varṇāśrama* system); *api* – even; *yathā* – according to; *anuṣṭhīyamānena* – the process being executed; *tvayi* – in You; *bhaktiḥ* – loving service; *nṛṇām* – of human beings; *bhavet* – may be; *sva-dharmaṇa* – by one’s own occupational duty; *aravinda-akṣa* – O lotus-eyed one; *tat* – that; *mama* – to me; *ākhyātum* – to explain; *arhasi* – You ought.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, previously You described the principles of devotional service that are to be practiced by followers of the varṇāśrama system and even ordinary, unregulated human beings. My dear lotus-eyed Lord, now please explain to me how all human beings can achieve loving service unto You by the execution of their prescribed duties.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa has already elaborately explained the process of *jñāna-yoga*, *bhakti-yoga* and *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. Now Uddhava inquires how those inclined toward *karma-yoga* can achieve the perfection of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.13) Lord Kṛṣṇa describes that He is personally the creator of the *varṇāśrama* system. *Cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ*. Therefore the ultimate goal of the *varṇāśrama* system is to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In other words, one should become a devotee of the Lord and learn the process of pure devotional service. The easiest method of achieving pure devotional service is by the association of pure devotees of the Lord. If one submissively and faithfully associates with pure devotees, one can immediately achieve the perfection of life. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person is not required to execute all the formalities of the *varṇāśrama* system, because a Kṛṣṇa conscious person, absorbed in love of Godhead, automatically gives up all sense gratification and mental speculation. Those human beings who do not follow the *varṇāśrama* system are here referred to as *dvi-padām*, or two-legged. In other words, one who does not follow the religious path of life is known to be human only by the possession of two legs. Even ordinary animals and insects are eagerly engaged in eating, sleeping, mating and defending; the human being, however, is distinguished from such lower forms of life by his capacity to become religious and, ultimately, to love God in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXTS 17.3-4

*purā kila mahā-bāho
dharmam paramakam prabho
yat tena haṁsa-rūpeṇa
brahmaṇe'bhyāttha mādharma
sa idānīm su-mahatā
kālenāmitra-karśana
na prāyo bhavitā martya-
loke prāg anuśāsitaḥ*

purā – previously; *kila* – indeed; *mahā-bāho* – O mighty-armed one; *dharmam* – religious principles; *paramakam* – bringing the greatest happiness; *prabho* – my Lord; *yat* – which; *tena* – by that; *haṁsa-rūpeṇa* – in the form of Lord Haṁsa; *brahmaṇe* – unto Lord Brahmā; *abhyāttha* – You spoke; *mādhava* – my dear Mādhava; *saḥ* – that (knowledge of religious principles); *idānīm* – presently; *su-mahatā* – after very long; *kālena* – time; *amitra-karśana* – O subduer of the enemy; *na* – not; *prāyaḥ* – generally; *bhavitā* – will exist; *martya-loke* – in human society; *prāk* – previously; *anuśāsitaḥ* – instructed.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, O mighty-armed one, previously in Your form of Lord Haṁsa You spoke to Lord Brahmā those religious principles that bring supreme happiness to the practitioner. My dear Mādhava, now much time has passed, and that which You previously instructed will soon practically cease to exist, O subduer of the enemy.

TEXTS 17.5-6

*vaktā kartāvitā nānyo
dharmasyācyuta te bhuvi
sabhāyām api vairiñcyām
yatra mūrti-dharāḥ kalāḥ
kartrāvitṛā pravaktrā ca
bhavatā madhusūdana
tyakte mahī-tale deva
vinaṣṭam kaḥ pravakṣyati*

vaktā – speaker; *kartā* – creator; *avitā* – protector; *na* – not; *anyaḥ* – any other; *dharmasya* – of supreme religious principles; *acyuta* – my dear Acyuta; *te* – than You; *bhuvi* – on the earth; *sabhāyām* – in the assembly; *api* – even; *vairiñcyām* – of Lord Brahmā; *yatra* – wherein; *mūrti-dharāḥ* – in the personified form; *kalāḥ* – the Vedas; *kartrā* – by the creator; *avitrā* – by the protector; *pravaktrā* – by the speaker; *ca* – also; *bhavatā* – by Your Lordship; *madhusūdana* – my dear Madhusūdana; *tyakte* – when it is abandoned; *mahī-tale* – the earth; *deva* – my dear Lord; *vinaṣṭam* – those lost principles of religion; *kaḥ* – who; *pravakṣyati* – will speak.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord Acyuta, there is no speaker, creator and protector of supreme religious principles other than Your Lordship, either on the earth or even in the assembly of Lord Brahmā, where the personified Vedas reside. Thus, my dear Lord Madhusūdana, when You, who are the very creator, protector and speaker of spiritual knowledge, abandon the earth, who will again speak this lost knowledge?

TEXT 17.7

*tat tvam̐ naḥ sarva-dharma-jña
dharmas tvad-bhakti-lakṣaṇaḥ
yathā yasya vidhīyeta
tathā varṇaya me prabho*

tat – therefore; *tvam* – You; *naḥ* – among us (human beings); *sarva-dharma-jña* – O supreme knower of religious principles; *dharmas* – the spiritual path; *tvad-bhakti* – by loving service to You; *lakṣaṇaḥ* – characterized; *yathā* – in which way; *yasya* – of whom; *vidhīyeta* – may be executed; *tathā* – in that way; *varṇaya* – please describe; *me* – unto me; *prabho* – my Lord.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, my Lord, since You are the knower of all religious principles, please describe to me the human beings who may execute the path of loving service to You and how such service is to be rendered.

TEXT 17.8

*śrī-śuka uvāca
ittham̐ sva-bhṛtya-mukhyena
pṛṣṭaḥ sa bhagavān hariḥ
pṛītaḥ kṣemāya martyānām
dharmān āha sanātānān*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *ittham* – thus; *sva-bhṛtya-mukhyena* – by the best of His devotees; *pṛṣṭaḥ* – questioned; *saḥ* – He; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *hariḥ* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *pṛītaḥ* – being pleased; *kṣemāya* – for the highest welfare; *martyānām* – of all conditioned souls; *dharmān* – religious principles; *āha* – spoke; *sanātānān* – eternal.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Śrī Uddhava, the best of devotees, thus inquired from the Lord. Hearing his question, the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was pleased and for the welfare of all conditioned souls spoke those religious principles that are eternal.

TEXT 17.9

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
dharmya eṣa tava praśno
naiḥśreyasa-karo nṛṇām
varṇāśramācāravatām
tam uddhava nibodha me*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *dharmyaḥ* – faithful to religious principles; *eṣaḥ* – this; *tava* – your; *praśnaḥ* – question; *naiḥśreyasa-karaḥ* – the cause of pure devotional service; *nṛṇām* – for ordinary human beings; *varṇa-āśrama* – the *varṇāśrama* system; *ācāravatām* – for those who faithfully follow; *tam* – those highest religious

principles; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *nibodha* – please learn; *me* – from Me.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, your question is faithful to religious principles and thus gives rise to the highest perfection in life, pure devotional service, for both ordinary human beings and the followers of the varṇāśrama system. Now please learn from Me those supreme religious principles.

PURPORT

The word *naiḥśreyasa-kara* indicates that which awards the highest perfection of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which the Lord is explaining to Śrī Uddhava. When considering religious principles, ordinary human beings remain bogged down in sectarian mundane considerations. The process that awards the highest perfection of life should be considered the most auspicious for human beings. The *varṇāśrama* system is the most scientific presentation of religiosity on the earth, and those who are most perfect in that system come to the point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or dedicating everything for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 17.10

*ādau kṛta-yuge varṇo
nṛṇām haṁsa iti smṛtaḥ
kṛta-kṛtyāḥ prajā jātyā
tasmāt kṛta-yugam viduḥ*

ādau – in the beginning (of the millennium); *kṛta-yuge* – in the Satya-yuga, or age of truth; *varṇaḥ* – the social class; *nṛṇām* – of human beings; *haṁsaḥ* – named *haṁsa*; *iti* – thus; *smṛtaḥ* – well known; *kṛta-kṛtyāḥ* – perfect in the execution of duties by complete surrender to the Supreme Lord; *prajāḥ* – the citizens; *jātyā* – automatically by birth; *tasmāt* – therefore; *kṛta-yugam* – Kṛta-yuga, or the age in which all duties are fulfilled; *viduḥ* – was thus known by the learned.

TRANSLATION

In the beginning, in Satya-yuga, there is only one social class, called haṁsa, to which all human beings belong. In that age all people are unalloyed devotees of the Lord from birth, and thus learned scholars call this first age Kṛta-yuga, or the age in which all religious duties are perfectly fulfilled.

PURPORT

It is understood from this verse that the supreme religious principle is unalloyed surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In Satya-yuga there is no influence of the lower modes of nature, and therefore all human beings belong to the highest social order, called *haṁsa*, in which one comes under the direct supervision of the Personality of Godhead. In the modern age people are crying out for social equality, but unless all human beings are situated in the mode of goodness, which is the position of purity and

unalloyed devotion, social equality is not possible. As the lower modes of nature become prominent, secondary religious principles arise, by which people may be gradually elevated to the pure stage of unalloyed surrender to God. In Satya-yuga there are no inferior human beings, and thus there is no need of secondary religious principles. Everyone directly takes to the unalloyed service of the Lord, fulfilling perfectly all religious obligations. In Sanskrit, one who perfectly executes all duties is called *kṛta-kṛtya*, as mentioned in this verse. Therefore Satya-yuga is called Kṛta-yuga, or the age of perfect religious action. According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the word *ādau* (“in the beginning”) refers to the moment of universal creation. In other words, the *varṇāśrama* system is not a recent concoction but naturally arises at the time of creation and should therefore be accepted by all intelligent human beings.

TEXT 17.11

*vedaḥ praṇava evāgre
dharmo'ham vṛṣa-rūpa-dhṛk
upāsate tapo-niṣṭhā
haṁsam mām mukta-kilbiṣāḥ*

vedaḥ – the *Veda*; *praṇavaḥ* – the sacred syllable *om*; *eva* – indeed; *agre* – in Satya-yuga; *dharmo* – the object of mental activities; *aham* – I; *vṛṣa-rūpa-dhṛk* – bearing the form of the bull of religion; *upāsate* – they worship; *tapo-niṣṭhāḥ* – fixed in austerity; *haṁsam* – Lord Haṁsa; *mām* – Me; *mukta* – freed from; *kilbiṣāḥ* – all sins.

TRANSLATION

In Satya-yuga the undivided Veda is expressed by the syllable om, and I am the only object of mental activities. I become manifest as the four-legged bull of religion, and thus the inhabitants of Satya-yuga, fixed in austerity and free from all sins, worship Me as Lord Haṁsa.

PURPORT

The bull of religion is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.17.24): *tapāḥ śaucam dayā satyam iti pādāḥ kṛte kṛtāḥ*. “In the age of Satya [truthfulness], your four legs were established by the four principles of austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness.” Śrī Vyāsadeva divided the one *Veda* into four – the *Ṛg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharva Vedas* – at the end of *Dvāpara-yuga*, but in *Satya-yuga* the whole of Vedic knowledge is easily understood by everyone simply by vibrating the syllable *om*. In this age there are no ritualistic or pious activities such as sacrifice, since everyone is sinless, austere and fully engaged in worshiping the Personality of Godhead, Lord Haṁsa, through the process of meditation.

TEXT 17.12

*tretā-mukhe mahā-bhāga
prāṇān me hṛdayāt trayī*

*vidyā prādurabhūt tasyā
aham āsam tri-vṛṇ makhaḥ*

tretā-mukhe - at the beginning of Tretā-yuga; *mahā-bhāga* - O greatly fortunate one; *prāṇāt* - from the abode of *prāṇa*, or the life air; *me* - My; *hṛdayāt* - from the heart; *trayī* - the threefold; *vidyā* - Vedic knowledge; *prādurabhūt* - appeared; *tasyāḥ* - from that knowledge; *aham* - I; *āsam* - appeared; *tri-vṛt* - in three divisions; *makhaḥ* - sacrifice.

TRANSLATION

O greatly fortunate one, at the beginning of Tretā-yuga Vedic knowledge appeared from My heart, which is the abode of the air of life, in three divisions - as Ṛg, Sāma and Yajur. Then from that knowledge I appeared as threefold sacrifice.

PURPORT

In Tretā-yuga, the bull of religion loses one leg, and only seventy-five percent of religious principles are manifested, represented by the three principal *Vedas* - *Ṛg*, *Sāma* and *Yajur*. The Lord appears in the process of threefold Vedic sacrifice. The three divisions are understood as follows. The *hotā* priest offers oblations into the fire and chants the *Ṛg Veda*; the *udgātā* priest chants the *Sāma Veda*; and the *adhvaryu* priest, who arranges the sacrificial ground, altar, etc., chants the *Yajur Veda*. In Tretā-yuga such sacrifice is the authorized process for spiritual perfection. The word *prāṇāt* in this verse refers to the universal form of the Personality of Godhead. This form is further described in the following verses.

TEXT 17.13

*vipra-kṣatriya-viṭ-sūdrā
mukha-bāhūru-pāda-jāḥ
vairājāt puruṣāj jātā
ya ātmācāra-lakṣaṇāḥ*

vipra - *brāhmaṇas*; *kṣatriya* - *kṣatriyas*, the martial class; *viṭ* - *vaiśyas*, mercantile men; *sūdrāḥ* - *sūdras*, workers; *mukha* - from the mouth; *bāhu* - arms; *ūru* - thighs; *pāda* - and legs; *jāḥ* - born; *vairājāt* - from the universal form; *puruṣāt* - from the Personality of Godhead; *jātāḥ* - generated; *ye* - who; *ātma* - personal; *ācāra* - by activities; *lakṣaṇāḥ* - recognized.

TRANSLATION

In Tretā-yuga the four social orders were manifested from the universal form of the Personality of Godhead. The brāhmaṇas appeared from the Lord's face, the kṣatriyas from the Lord's arms, the vaiśyas from the Lord's thighs and the sūdras from the legs of that mighty form. Each social division was recognized by its particular duties and behavior.

TEXT 17.14

*gṛhāśramo jaghanato
brahmacaryaṁ hṛdo mama*

*vakṣaḥ-sthalād vane-vāsaḥ
sannyāsaḥ śirasi sthitaḥ*

gr̥ha-āśramaḥ – married life; *jaghanataḥ* – from the loins; *brahmacaryam* – celibate student life; *hṛdaḥ* – from the heart; *mama* – My; *vakṣaḥ-sthalāt* – from the chest; *vane* – in the forest; *vāsaḥ* – dwelling; *sannyāsaḥ* – the renounced order of life; *śirasi* – in the head; *sthitaḥ* – situated.

TRANSLATION

The married order of life appeared from the loins of My universal form, and the celibate students came from My heart. The forest-dwelling retired order of life appeared from My chest, and the renounced order of life was situated within the head of My universal form.

PURPORT

There are two classes of *brahmacārī* life. The *naiṣṭhiki-brahmacārī* remains celibate throughout life, whereas the *upakurvāṇa-brahmacārī* marries upon finishing his student life. One who remains perpetually celibate is situated within the heart of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but those *brahmacārīs* who eventually marry are situated within the loins of the universal form of the Lord. The word *vane-vāsaḥ* refers to *vānaprastha*, or the retired order of life, which is situated on the chest of the Lord.

TEXT 17.15

*varṇānām āśramāṇām ca
janma-bhūmy-anusāriṇīḥ
āsan prakṛtayo nṛnām
nīcair nīcottamottamāḥ*

varṇānām – of the occupational divisions; *āśramāṇām* – of the social divisions; *ca* – also; *janma* – of birth; *bhūmi* – the situation; *anusāriṇīḥ* – according to; *āsan* – appeared; *prakṛtayaḥ* – the natures; *nṛnām* – of human beings; *nīcaīḥ* – by inferior background; *nīca* – inferior nature; *uttama* – by superior background; *uttamāḥ* – superior natures.

TRANSLATION

The various occupational and social divisions of human society appeared according to inferior and superior natures manifest in the situation of the individual's birth.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the *brāhmaṇas* and *sannyāsīs*, being situated on the head of the universal form of the Lord, are considered to be the most qualified, whereas the *sūdras* and *gr̥hasthas*, being on the legs or loins of the Personality of Godhead, are considered to be in the lowest position. A living entity is born with a certain amount of intelligence, beauty and social opportunity, and he is therefore situated in a particular occupational and social position within the *varṇāśrama* system. Ultimately, such positions are external designations, but since the majority of human beings are conditioned by the external energy of the Lord, they

should act according to the scientific *varṇāśrama* divisions until they reach the stage of *jīvan-mukta*, or liberated life.

TEXT 17.16

*śamo damas tapaḥ śaucam
santoṣaḥ kṣāntir ārjavam
mad-bhaktiś ca dayā satyam
brahma-prakṛtayas tv imāḥ*

śamaḥ – peacefulness; *damaḥ* – sense control; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *śaucam* – cleanliness; *santoṣaḥ* – full satisfaction; *kṣāntiḥ* – forgiveness; *ārjavam* – simplicity and straightforwardness; *mat-bhaktiḥ* – devotional service unto Me; *ca* – also; *dayā* – mercy; *satyam* – truth; *brahma* – of the *brāhmaṇas*; *prakṛtayaḥ* – the natural qualities; *tu* – indeed; *imāḥ* – these.

TRANSLATION

Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, cleanliness, satisfaction, tolerance, simple straightforwardness, devotion to Me, mercy and truthfulness are the natural qualities of the brāhmaṇas.

TEXT 17.17

*tejo balaṁ dhṛtiḥ śauryam
titikṣaudāryam udyamaḥ
sthairyam brahmanyam aiśvaryam
kṣatra-prakṛtayas tv imāḥ*

tejaḥ – dynamic power; *balaṁ* – bodily strength; *dhṛtiḥ* – determination; *śauryam* – heroism; *titikṣā* – tolerance; *audāryam* – generosity; *udyamaḥ* – endeavor; *sthairyam* – steadiness; *brahmanyam* – being always eager to serve the *brāhmaṇas*; *aiśvaryam* – leadership; *kṣatra* – of the *kṣatriyas*; *prakṛtayaḥ* – the natural qualities; *tu* – indeed; *imāḥ* – these.

TRANSLATION

Dynamic power, bodily strength, determination, heroism, tolerance, generosity, great endeavor, steadiness, devotion to the brāhmaṇas and leadership are the natural qualities of the kṣatriyas.

TEXT 17.18

*āstikyaṁ dāna-niṣṭhā ca
adambho brahma-sevanam
atuṣṭir arthopacayair
vaiśya-prakṛtayas tv imāḥ*

āstikyaṁ – faith in Vedic civilization; *dāna-niṣṭhā* – dedicated to charity; *ca* – also; *adambhaḥ* – being without hypocrisy; *brahma-sevanam* – service to the *brāhmaṇas*; *atuṣṭiḥ* – remaining dissatisfied; *artha* – of money; *upacayaiḥ* – by the accumulation; *vaiśya* – of the *vaiśyas*; *prakṛtayaḥ* – the natural qualities; *tu* – indeed; *imāḥ* – these.

TRANSLATION

Faith in Vedic civilization, dedication to charity, freedom from hypocrisy, service to the brāhmaṇas and perpetually desiring to accumulate more money are the natural qualities of the vaiśyas.

PURPORT

Atuṣṭir arthopacayaiḥ indicates that a *vaiśya* is never satisfied with any amount of wealth and always wants to accumulate more. On the other hand, he is *dāna-niṣṭha*, or dedicated to charitable work; *brahmasevī*, always engaged in assisting the *brāhmaṇas*; and *adambha*, free from hypocrisy. This is due to *āstikyam*, or complete faith in the Vedic way of life, and confidence that one will be rewarded or punished in the next life for one's present activities. The fervent desire of the *vaiśyas* to accumulate wealth is not the same as ordinary material greed, because it is purified and tempered by the superior qualities mentioned in this verse.

TEXT 17.19

*śuśrūṣaṇam dvija-gavām
devānām cāpy amāyayā
tatra labdhena santoṣaḥ
śūdra-prakṛtayaḥ tv imāḥ*

śuśrūṣaṇam – service; *dvija* – of the *brāhmaṇas*; *gavām* – of the cows; *devānām* – of worshipable personalities such as the demigods and the spiritual master; *ca* – also; *api* – indeed; *amāyayā* – without duplicity; *tatra* – in such service; *labdhena* – with that which is obtained; *santoṣaḥ* – complete satisfaction; *śūdra* – of the *śūdras*; *prakṛtayaḥ* – the natural qualities; *tu* – indeed; *imāḥ* – these.

TRANSLATION

Service without duplicity to the brāhmaṇas, cows, demigods and other worshipable personalities, and complete satisfaction with whatever income is obtained in such service, are the natural qualities of śūdras.

PURPORT

When the entire social order is functioning properly according to Vedic standards, everyone is happy and satisfied. Although the *śūdras* are to be satisfied with whatever income they obtain through their service, they never lack the necessities of life, because the other orders of society, such as *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas*, are required to be abundantly generous, and the *brāhmaṇas* are well known for being the most merciful of all. Therefore, if all social classes obey the Vedic injunctions there will be a new and blissful life for the entire human society under the guidance of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 17.20

*aśaucam anṛtaṁ steyaṁ
nāstikyam śuṣka-vigrahaḥ*

*kāmaḥ krodhaś ca tarṣaś ca
sa bhāvo'ntyāvasāyinām*

aśaucam - dirtiness; *anṛtam* - dishonesty; *steyam* - thievery; *nāstikyam* - faithlessness; *śuṣka-vigrahaḥ* - useless quarreling; *kāmaḥ* - lust; *krodhaḥ* - anger; *ca* - also; *tarṣaḥ* - hankering; *ca* - also; *saḥ* - this; *bhāvaḥ* - the nature; *antya* - in the lowest position; *avasāyinām* - of those residing.

TRANSLATION

Dirtiness, dishonesty, thievery, faithlessness, useless quarrel, lust, anger and hankering constitute the nature of those in the lowest position outside the varṇāśrama system.

PURPORT

Here the Lord describes those who reside outside the scientific social system called *varṇāśrama*. In Europe and America, we have practically observed that the standards of cleanliness are abominable even among so-called educated persons. Going without bathing and the use of indecent language are common. In the modern age people whimsically speak whatever they like, dispensing with all authority, and there is therefore very little truthfulness or true wisdom. Similarly, in both the capitalistic and communistic countries, everyone is busily engaged in stealing and robbing from everyone else in the name of business, taxation or outright crime. People are not confident of the kingdom of God nor of their own eternal nature, and thus their faith is very weak. Moreover, since modern human beings are not very interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness they constantly quarrel, bicker and fight over completely insignificant issues relating to the material body. Thus at the slightest provocation there are huge wars and massacres. Lust, anger and hankering have become practically unlimited in Kali-yuga. The symptoms and characteristics mentioned here can be abundantly observed throughout the world, wherever people have fallen away from the *varṇāśrama* system. Because of sinful habits such as animal killing, illicit sex, intoxication and gambling, the great majority of human beings have become *caṇḍālas*, or untouchables.

TEXT 17.21

*ahimsā satyam asteyam
akāma-krodha-lobhatā
bhūta-priya-hitehā ca
dharmo'yaṁ sārva-varṇikaḥ*

ahimsā - nonviolence; *satyam* - truthfulness; *asteyam* - honesty; *a-kāma-krodha-lobhatā* - being free from lust, anger and greed; *bhūta* - of all living entities; *priya* - the happiness; *hita* - and welfare; *īhā* - desiring; *ca* - also; *dharmaḥ* - duty; *ayaṁ* - this; *sārva-varṇikaḥ* - for all members of society.

TRANSLATION

Nonviolence, truthfulness, honesty, desire for the happiness and welfare of all others and freedom from lust, anger and greed constitute duties for all members of society.

PURPORT

The word *sārva-varṇika* indicates that the above-mentioned principles constitute general piety, which should be observed by all members of society, even those outside the *varṇāśrama* system. We practically find that even in societies that have fallen away from the *varṇāśrama* system, the above-mentioned principles are honored and encouraged. Such principles do not constitute a specific path of liberation but are perennial virtues in human society.

TEXT 17.22

*dvitīyaṁ prāpyānupūrvyāj
janmopanayanaṁ dvijaḥ
vasan gurukule dānto
brahmādhīyīta cāhūtaḥ*

dvitīyam - second; *prāpya* - achieving; *ānupūrvyāt* - by the gradual process of purificatory ceremonies; *janma* - birth; *upanayanam* - Gāyatrī initiation; *dvijaḥ* - a twice-born member of society; *vasan* - residing; *gurukule* - in the *āśrama* of the spiritual master; *dāntaḥ* - self-controlled; *brahma* - the Vedic literatures; *adhīyīta* - should study; *ca* - and also understand; *āhūtaḥ* - being summoned by the spiritual master.

TRANSLATION

The twice-born member of society achieves second birth through the sequence of purificatory ceremonies culminating in Gāyatrī initiation. Being summoned by the spiritual master, he should reside within the guru's āśrama and with a self-controlled mind carefully study the Vedic literature.

PURPORT

The term *dvija*, or “twice-born,” here indicates the three superior classes, namely *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas*, who all receive the Gāyatrī *mantra*, which signifies their second birth through spiritual initiation. One's first birth is biological, or seminal, and does not necessarily indicate that one is intelligent or enlightened. A young *brāhmaṇa* boy, if qualified, may be initiated with Gāyatrī *mantra* at the age of twelve, and *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* a few years later. In order to become enlightened with spiritual knowledge, the boy resides within the *gurukula*, or *āśrama* of the spiritual master. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has established similar *gurukulas* all over the world and is issuing a great call to civilized human beings to arrange for the proper education of their children. Every young boy and girl should learn to be self-controlled and should become enlightened through study of authorized Vedic literatures. In this way, unlike ordinary animals, insects, fish and birds, etc., an enlightened human being may take birth twice and thus become perfect in the knowledge that leads to ultimate liberation. The word *ānupūrvyāt* in this verse indicates the system of *saṁskāras*, or purificatory rites, beginning with *garbhādhāna-saṁskāra*, or the purification of the sexual act. Generally, *śūdras* and those who do not

follow the Vedic system are not attracted to such purificatory ceremonies; therefore they remain ignorant of spiritual life and envious of the bona fide spiritual master. Those whose character has been civilized by a systematic cleansing process give up the tendency to be argumentative and whimsical and instead become submissive and eager to learn in the presence of a bona fide spiritual master.

TEXT 17.23

*mekhalājina-daṇḍākṣa-
brahma-sūtra-kamaṇḍalūn
jaṭilo'dhauta-dad-vāso
'rakta-pīṭhaḥ kuśān dadhat*

mekhalā – belt; *ajina* – deerskin; *daṇḍa* – staff; *akṣa* – bead necklace; *brahma-sūtra* – *brāhmaṇa* thread; *kamaṇḍalūn* – and waterpot; *jaṭilaḥ* – with matted, unruly hair; *adhauta* – without polishing, bleaching or ironing; *dat-vāsaḥ* – the teeth and clothes; *arakta-pīṭhaḥ* – without accepting a luxurious or sensuous seat; *kuśān* – *kuśa* grass; *dadhat* – carrying in his hand.

TRANSLATION

The brahmacārī should regularly dress with a belt of straw and deerskin garments. He should wear matted hair, carry a rod and waterpot and be decorated with akṣa beads and a sacred thread. Carrying pure kuśa grass in his hand, he should never accept a luxurious or sensuous sitting place. He should not unnecessarily polish his teeth, nor should he bleach and iron his clothes.

PURPORT

The word *adhauta-dad-vāsa* indicates that a renounced *brahmacārī* is not concerned with a glistening smile to attract the opposite sex, nor does he pay much attention to his outer garments. *Brahmacārī* life is meant for austerity and obedience to the spiritual master so that later in life, when one becomes a businessman, politician or intellectual *brāhmaṇa*, one will be able to call upon resources of character, discipline, self-control, austerity and humility. Student life, as described here, is far different from the mindless hedonism known as modern education. Of course, in the modern age, Kṛṣṇa conscious *brahmacārīs* cannot artificially adopt the ancient dress and ritualistic duties described here; but the essential values of self-control, purity and obedience to a bona fide spiritual master are just as necessary today as they were in Vedic times.

TEXT 17.24

*snāna-bhojana-homeṣu
japoccare ca vāg-yataḥ
na cchindyān nakha-romāṇi
kaṣṭhastha-gatāny api*

snāna – while bathing; *bhojana* – while eating; *homeṣu* – and while attending sacrificial performances; *japa* – while chanting *mantras* to oneself; *uccāre* –

while passing stool or urine; *ca* – also; *vāk-yataḥ* – remaining silent; *na* – not; *chindyāt* – should cut; *nakha* – the nails; *romāṇi* – or hairs; *kakṣa* – in the armpits; *upastha* – pubic; *gatāni* – including; *api* – even.

TRANSLATION

A brahmacārī should always remain silent while bathing, eating, attending sacrificial performances, chanting japa or passing stool and urine. He should not cut his nails and hair, including the armpit and pubic hair.

PURPORT

Nārada Muni gives a similar technical description of Vedic *brahmacārī* life in Canto Seven, Chapter Twelve, of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 17.25

*reto nāvakirej jātu
brahma-vrata-dharaḥ svayam
avakīrṇe'vagāhyāpsu
yatāsus tri-padām japet*

retaḥ – semen; *na* – not; *avakiret* – should spill out; *jātu* – ever; *brahma-vrata-dharaḥ* – one who is maintaining the vow of celibacy, or *brahmacarya*; *svayam* – by itself; *avakīrṇe* – having flowed out; *avagāhya* – bathing; *apsu* – in water; *yata-asuḥ* – controlling the breathing by *prāṇāyāma*; *tri-padām* – the *Gāyatrī mantra*; *japet* – he should chant.

TRANSLATION

One observing the vow of celibate brahmacārī life should never pass semen. If the semen by chance spills out by itself, the brahmacārī should immediately take bath in water, control his breath by prāṇāyāma and chant the Gāyatrī mantra.

TEXT 17.26

*agny-arkācārya-go-vipra-
guru-vṛddha-surāñ śuciḥ
samāhita upāsīta
sandhye dve yata-vāg japan*

agni – the fire-god; *arka* – the sun; *ācārya* – the *ācārya*; *go* – the cows; *vipra* – the *brāhmaṇas*; *guru* – the spiritual master; *vṛddha* – elder respectable persons; *surān* – the demigods; *śuciḥ* – purified; *samāhitaḥ* – with fixed consciousness; *upāsīta* – he should worship; *sandhye* – in the junctions of time; *dve* – two; *yata-vāk* – observing silence; *japan* – silently chanting or murmuring the proper *mantras*.

TRANSLATION

Purified and fixed in consciousness, the brahmacārī should worship the fire-god, sun, ācārya, cows, brāhmaṇas, guru, elderly respectable persons and demigods. He should perform such worship at sunrise and sunset, without speaking but by silently chanting or murmuring the appropriate mantras.

TEXT 17.27

*ācāryam mām vijānīyān
navamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāsūyeta
sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ*

ācāryam – the spiritual master; *mām* – Myself; *vijānīyāt* – one should know; *na avamanyeta* – one should never disrespect; *karhicit* – at any time; *na* – never; *martya-buddhyā* – with the idea of his being an ordinary man; *asūyeta* – one should be envious; *sarva-deva* – of all demigods; *mayaḥ* – representative; *guruḥ* – the spiritual master.

TRANSLATION

One should know the ācārya as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.

PURPORT

This verse appears in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 1.46). His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda has commented on this verse as follows. “This is a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27) spoken by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa when He was questioned by Uddhava regarding the four social and spiritual orders of society. He was specifically instructing how a *brahmacārī* should behave under the care of a spiritual master. A spiritual master is not an enjoyer of facilities offered by his disciples. He is like a parent. Without the attentive service of his parents, a child cannot grow to manhood; similarly, without the care of the spiritual master one cannot rise to the plane of transcendental service.

“The spiritual master is also called *ācārya*, or a transcendental professor of spiritual science. *Manu-saṁhitā* (2.140) explains the duties of an *ācārya*, describing that a bona fide spiritual master accepts charge of disciples, teaches them the Vedic knowledge with all its intricacies, and gives them their second birth. The ceremony performed to initiate a disciple into the study of spiritual science is called *upanīti*, or the function that brings one nearer to the spiritual master. One who cannot be brought nearer to a spiritual master cannot have a sacred thread, and thus he is indicated to be a *śūdra*. The sacred thread worn on the body of a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya* or *vaiśya* is a symbol of initiation by the spiritual master; it is worth nothing if worn merely to boast of high parentage. The duty of the spiritual master is to initiate a disciple with the sacred thread ceremony, and after this *saṁskāra*, or purificatory process, the spiritual master actually begins to teach the disciple about the *Vedas*. A person born a *śūdra* is not barred from such spiritual initiation, provided he is approved by the spiritual master, who is duly authorized to award a disciple the right to be a *brāhmaṇa* if he finds him

perfectly qualified. In the *Vāyu Purāṇa* an *ācārya* is defined as one who knows the import of all the Vedic literatures, explains the purpose of the *Vedas*, abides by their rules and regulations, and teaches his disciples to act in the same way.

“Only out of His immense compassion does the Personality of Godhead reveal Himself as the spiritual master. Therefore in the dealings of an *ācārya* there are no activities but those of transcendental loving service to the Lord. He is the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead. It is worthwhile to take shelter of such a steady devotee, who is called *āśraya-vigraha*, or the manifestation or form of the Lord of whom one must take shelter.

“If one poses himself as an *ācārya* but does not have an attitude of servitorship to the Lord, he must be considered an offender, and this offensive attitude disqualifies him from being an *ācārya*. The bona fide spiritual master always engages in unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By this test he is known to be a direct manifestation of the Lord and a genuine representative of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. Such a spiritual master is known as *ācāryadeva*. Influenced by an envious temperament and dissatisfied because of an attitude of sense gratification, mundaners criticize a real *ācārya*. In fact, however, a bona fide *ācārya* is nondifferent from the Personality of Godhead, and therefore to envy such an *ācārya* is to envy the Personality of Godhead Himself. This will produce an effect subversive to transcendental realization.

“As mentioned previously, a disciple should always respect the spiritual master as a manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but at the same time one should always remember that a spiritual master is never authorized to imitate the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. False spiritual masters pose themselves as identical with Śrī Kṛṣṇa in every respect, to exploit the sentiments of their disciples, but such impersonalists can only mislead their disciples, for their ultimate aim is to become one with the Lord. This is against the principles of the devotional cult.

“The real Vedic philosophy is *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, which establishes everything to be simultaneously one with and different from the Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī confirms that this is the real position of a bona fide spiritual master and says that one should always think of the spiritual master in terms of his intimate relationship with Mukunda (Śrī Kṛṣṇa). Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, in his *Bhakti-sandarbha* (213), has clearly defined that a pure devotee’s observation of the spiritual master and Lord Śiva as one with the Personality of Godhead exists in terms of their being very dear to the Lord, not identical with Him in all respects. Following in the footsteps of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, later *ācāryas* like Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura have confirmed the same truths. In his prayers to the spiritual master, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura confirms that all the revealed scriptures accept the spiritual master to be identical with the Personality of Godhead because he is a very dear and confidential servant of the Lord. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas therefore worship Śrīla Gurudeva

(the spiritual master) in the light of his being the servitor of the Personality of Godhead. In all the ancient literatures of devotional service and in the more recent songs of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and other unalloyed Vaiṣṇavas, the spiritual master is always considered to be either one of the confidential associates of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī or a manifested representation of Śrīla Nityānanda Prabhu.”

TEXT 17.28

*sāyam prātar upānīya
bhaikṣyaṁ tasmai nivedayet
yac cānyad apy anujñātam
upayuñjīta saṁyataḥ*

sāyam - in the evening; *prātaḥ* - in the morning; *upānīya* - bringing; *bhaikṣyam* - food that is collected by begging; *tasmai* - unto him (the *ācārya*); *nivedayet* - one should deliver; *yac* - that which; *ca* - also; *anyat* - other things; *api* - indeed; *anujñātam* - that which is permitted; *upayuñjīta* - one should accept; *saṁyataḥ* - being fully controlled.

TRANSLATION

In the morning and evening one should collect foodstuffs and other articles and deliver them to the spiritual master. Then, being self-controlled, one should accept for oneself that which is allotted by the ācārya.

PURPORT

One who desires to receive the mercy of a bona fide spiritual master should not be eager to accumulate the paraphernalia of sense gratification; rather, whatever one is able to collect one should offer at the lotus feet of the *ācārya*. Being self-controlled, one should humbly accept that which is allotted by the bona fide spiritual master. Every living entity must ultimately be trained to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but until one has become expert in the techniques of spiritual service one should offer everything to the spiritual master, who is completely realized in the process of worshipping the Lord. When the spiritual master sees that the disciple is advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he then engages the disciple in directly worshipping the Personality of Godhead. A bona fide spiritual master does not use anything for his personal sense gratification and entrusts to his disciple only as much material opulence as the disciple can properly offer to the lotus feet of the Lord. The example may be given that when an ordinary father tries to train his son in business and other material activities, he entrusts to the son only as much wealth as the son can intelligently engage in profitable enterprises without foolishly wasting the father’s hard-earned money. Similarly, the bona fide spiritual master teaches his disciple to worship the Lord, and an immature disciple must simply deliver everything to the lotus feet of the *guru*, just as an immature child does not keep a personal bank account but rather receives his maintenance from the father, who trains the son to be responsible. If one cheats oneself by defying the order of a bona

fide spiritual master or Kṛṣṇa, one certainly becomes a nondevotee, or sense enjoyer, and falls from the spiritual path. Therefore, one should be trained to serve a bona fide spiritual master and thus become mature in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 17.29

*śuśrūṣamāṇa ācāryam
sadopāsīta nīca-vat
yāna-śayyāsana-sthānair
nāti-dūre kṛtāñjaliḥ*

śuśrūṣamāṇaḥ – engaged in serving; *ācāryam* – the bona fide spiritual master; *sadā* – always; *upāsīta* – one should worship; *nīca-vat* – as a humble servant; *yāna* – by humbly following behind the *guru* when he is walking; *śayyā* – by taking rest with the spiritual master; *āsana* – sitting near the *guru* to render service; *sthānaiḥ* – by standing and humbly waiting upon the *guru*; *na* – not; *ati* – very; *dūre* – far away; *kṛta-añjaliḥ* – with folded hands.

TRANSLATION

While engaged in serving the spiritual master one should remain as a humble servant, and thus when the guru is walking the servant should humbly walk behind. When the guru lies down to sleep, the servant should also lie down nearby, and when the guru has awakened, the servant should sit near him, massaging his lotus feet and rendering other, similar services. When the guru is sitting down on his āsana, the servant should stand nearby with folded hands, awaiting the guru’s order. In this way one should always worship the spiritual master.

TEXT 17.30

*evam-vṛtto gurukule
vased bhoga-vivarjitaḥ
vidyā samāpyate yāvad
bibhrat vratam akhaṇḍitam*

evam – thus; *vṛttaḥ* – engaged; *gurukule* – in the *āśrama* of the spiritual master; *vaset* – he should live; *bhoga* – sense gratification; *vivarjitaḥ* – freed from; *vidyā* – Vedic education; *samāpyate* – is completed; *yāvat* – until; *bibhrat* – maintaining; *vratam* – the vow (of *brahmacarya*); *akhaṇḍitam* – unbroken.

TRANSLATION

Until the student has completed his Vedic education he should remain engaged in the āśrama of the spiritual master, should remain completely free of material sense gratification and should not break his vow of celibacy [brahmacarya].

PURPORT

This verse describes the *upakurvāṇa-brahmacārī*, who enters *gṛhastha-āśrama*, or family life, after completing his Vedic education. The word *evam-*

vr̥ttaḥ indicates that although one may eventually marry and become prominent in society as an intellectual, politician or businessman, during student life one must remain without false prestige as a humble servant of the bona fide spiritual master. The *naiṣṭhiki-brahmacārī*, who never marries, is described in the following verse.

TEXT 17.31

*yady asau chandasām lokam
ārokṣyan brahma-viṣṭapam
gurave vinyased deham
svādhyāyārtham bṛhad-vrataḥ*

yadi – if; *asau* – that student; *chandasām lokam* – the Maharloka planet; *ārokṣyan* – desiring to ascend to; *brahma-viṣṭapam* – Brahmaloaka; *gurave* – unto the *guru*; *vinyaset* – he should offer; *deham* – his body; *sva-adhyāya* – of superior Vedic studies; *artham* – for the purpose; *bṛhat-vrataḥ* – observing the powerful vow of perpetual celibacy.

TRANSLATION

If the brahmacārī student desires to ascend to the Maharloka or Brahmaloaka planets, then he should completely surrender his activities to the spiritual master and, observing the powerful vow of perpetual celibacy, dedicate himself to superior Vedic studies.

PURPORT

One who desires the supreme perfection of life must engage his body, mind and words in the service of a bona fide spiritual master. One desiring elevation to superior planets such as Brahmaloaka and Maharloka must fully engage in the spiritual master’s service. We can thus imagine the sincerity of purpose and service required to achieve the Kṛṣṇaloaka planet, which lies far beyond the material universe.

TEXT 17.32

*agnau gurāv ātmani ca
sarva-bhūteṣu mām param
apṛthag-dhīḥ
brahma-varcasvy akalmaṣaḥ*

agnau – in fire; *gurau* – in the spiritual master; *ātmani* – in oneself; *ca* – also; *sarva-bhūteṣu* – in all living entities; *mām* – Me; *param* – the Supreme; *apṛthag-dhīḥ* – without any concept of duality; *upāsīta* – one should worship; *brahma-varcasvī* – possessing Vedic enlightenment; *akalmaṣaḥ* – sinless.

TRANSLATION

Thus enlightened in Vedic knowledge by service to the spiritual master, freed from all sins and duality, one should worship Me as the Supersoul, as I appear within fire, the spiritual master, one’s own self and all living entities.

PURPORT

One becomes glorious and enlightened by faithfully serving a bona fide spiritual master, who is expert in the Vedic way of life. Thus purified, one never engages in sinful activities, which immediately extinguish the fire of spiritual enlightenment; nor does one become foolish and small-minded, trying to exploit material nature for personal sense gratification. A purified human being is *apṛthag-dhī*, or without consciousness of duality, because he has been trained to observe the Supreme Personality of Godhead within all things. Such sublime consciousness should be systematically taught throughout the world so that human society will become peaceful and sublime.

TEXT 17.33

*strīṅām nirīkṣaṇa-sparśa-
samlāpa-kṣvelanādikam
prāṇino mithunī-bhūtān
agrastho'gratas tyajet*

strīṅām – in relation to women; *nirīkṣaṇa* – glancing; *sparśa* – touching; *samlāpa* – conversing; *kṣvelana* – joking or sporting; *ādikam* – and so on; *prāṇinaḥ* – living entities; *mithunī-bhūtān* – engaged in sex; *agrasthaḥ* – a *sannyāsī*, *vānaprastha* or *brahmacārī*; *agrataḥ* – first of all; *tyajet* – should give up.

TRANSLATION

Those who are not married – sannyāsīs, vānaprasthas and brahmacārīs – should never associate with women by glancing, touching, conversing, joking or sporting. Neither should they ever associate with any living entity engaged in sexual activities.

PURPORT

Prāṇinaḥ indicates all living entities, whether birds, bees or human beings. Among most species of life, sexual intercourse is preceded by diverse mating rituals. In human society, all types of entertainment (books, music, films) and all places of amusement (restaurants, shopping centers, resorts) are designed to stimulate the sexual urge and create an aura of “romance.” One who is not married – a *sannyāsī*, *brahmacārī* or *vānaprastha* – should rigidly avoid anything related to sex and of course should never see any living entity, whether bird, insect or human, engaging in the various phases of sexual intercourse. When a man jokes with a woman, an intimate, sexually charged atmosphere is immediately created, and this should also be avoided for those aspiring to practice celibacy. Even a householder who becomes attached to such activities will also fall down into the darkness of ignorance.

TEXTS 17.34-35

*śaucam ācamanaṁ snānaṁ
sandhyopāstir mamārcanam*

*tīrtha-sevā japo'spṛśyā-
bhakṣyāsambhāṣya-varjanam
sarvāśrama-prayukto'yaṁ
niyamaḥ kula-nandana
mat-bhāvaḥ sarva-bhūteṣu
mano-vāk-kāya-saṁyamaḥ*

śaucam – cleanliness; *ācamanam* – purifying the hands with water; *snānam* – bathing; *sandhyā* – at sunrise, noon and sunset; *upāstih* – religious services; *mama* – of Me; *arcanam* – worship; *tīrtha-sevā* – going to holy places; *japaḥ* – chanting the holy names of the Lord; *aspṛśya* – which are untouchable; *abhakṣya* – uneatable; *asambhāṣya* – or not to be discussed; *varjanam* – avoidance of things; *sarva* – for all; *āśrama* – orders of life; *prayuktaḥ* – enjoined; *ayaṁ* – this; *niyamaḥ* – rule; *kula-nandana* – My dear Uddhava; *mat-bhāvaḥ* – perceiving My existence; *sarva-bhūteṣu* – in all living entities; *manaḥ* – of the mind; *vāk* – of words; *kāya* – of the body; *saṁyamaḥ* – regulation.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, general cleanliness, washing the hands, bathing, performing religious services at sunrise, noon and sunset, worshiping Me, visiting holy places, chanting japa, avoiding that which is untouchable, uneatable or not to be discussed, and remembering My existence within all living entities as the Supersoul – these principles should be followed by all members of society through regulation of the mind, words and body.

TEXT 17.36

*evam bṛhad-vrata-dharo
brāhmaṇo'gnir iva jvalan
mat-bhaktas tīvra-tapasā
dagdha-karmāśayo'malaḥ*

evam – thus; *bṛhat-vrata* – that great vow of perpetual celibacy; *dharo* – maintaining; *brāhmaṇaḥ* – a *brāhmaṇa*; *agniḥ* – fire; *iva* – like; *jvalan* – becoming bright; *mat-bhaktaḥ* – My devotee; *tīvra-tapasā* – by intense austerities; *dagdha* – burned; *karma* – of fruitive activities; *āśayaḥ* – the propensity or mentality; *amalaḥ* – without contamination of material desire.

TRANSLATION

A brāhmaṇa observing the great vow of celibacy becomes brilliant like fire and by serious austerity burns to ashes the propensity to perform material activities. Free from the contamination of material desire, he becomes My devotee.

PURPORT

The process of liberation is described in this verse. Once when Śrīla Prabhupāda was traveling by airplane, a fellow passenger, who happened to be a priest, told him that he had seen his disciples and found them “bright-faced.” Śrīla Prabhupāda was fond of relating this incident. The spirit soul is

more brilliant than the sun, and as the process of spiritual purification gradually takes effect, even the external form of a devotee becomes effulgent. The glowing fire of spiritual knowledge burns to ashes the mentality of sense gratification, and one naturally becomes austere and disinterested in mundane enjoyment. Among all austerities, the best is celibacy, by which the shackles of material life immediately become slackened. One who is *amala*, free from material desire, is known as a pure devotee of the Lord. On the paths of *jñāna*, *karma* and *yoga* the mind retains the concept of personal interest, but on the path of pure devotion the mind is trained to see only the interests of the Personality of Godhead. Thus a pure devotee of the Lord is *amala*, completely pure.

TEXT 17.37

*athānantaram āvekṣyan
yathā-jijñāsītāgamaḥ
gurave dakṣiṇām dattvā
snāyād gurv-anumoditaḥ*

atha – thus; *anantaram* – after that; *āvekṣyan* – desiring to enter family life; *yathā* – properly; *jijñāsita* – having studied; *āgamaḥ* – the Vedic literature; *gurave* – to the spiritual master; *dakṣiṇām* – remuneration; *dattvā* – giving; *snāyāt* – the *brahmacārī* should cleanse himself, comb his hair, put on nice clothes, etc.; *guru* – by the spiritual master; *anumoditaḥ* – permitted.

TRANSLATION

A brahmacārī who has completed his Vedic education and desires to enter household life should offer proper remuneration to the spiritual master, bathe, cut his hair, put on proper clothes, and so on. Then, taking permission from the guru, he should go back to his home.

PURPORT

This verse describes the process called *samāvartana*, or returning to one’s home after finishing Vedic education in the *āśrama* of the spiritual master. One who cannot concentrate all of his desires in the devotional service of the Lord is attracted to householder life, and if this attraction is not regulated, one will fall down. Being covered by the ignorance of fruitive activities and mental speculation, a living entity seeks enjoyment outside the devotional service of the Supreme Lord and becomes a nondevotee. One who takes to family life must rigidly follow the Vedic rules and regulations in order to avoid the collapse of his spiritual determination. One who enjoys intimate sense gratification with women must become duplicitous in his dealings with others and consequently falls down from the platform of simple, pure life. When the mind is disturbed by lust, one begins to resent the principle of submission to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His pure devotee, and the dark clouds of one’s offensive mentality completely cover the light of spiritual knowledge. One should dovetail his propensity to love someone by serving the lotus feet of a pure devotee. As stated in Vedic literature, “One

who worships Govinda, Lord Kṛṣṇa, but does not worship His devotees is not to be considered an advanced Vaiṣṇava; rather, he is to be considered a proud hypocrite.”

TEXT 17.38

*gṛhaṁ vanam vopaviśet
pravrajed vā dvijottamaḥ
āśramād āśramaṁ gacchen
nānyathāmat-paraś caret*

gṛham – the family home; *vanam* – the forest; *vā* – either; *upaviśet* – one should enter; *pravrajat* – one should renounce; *vā* – or; *dvija-uttamaḥ* – a *brāhmaṇa*; *āśramāt* – from one authorized status of life; *āśramam* – to another authorized status; *gacchet* – one should go; *na* – not; *anyathā* – otherwise; *amat-paraḥ* – one who is not surrendered to Me; *caret* – should act.

TRANSLATION

A brahmacārī desiring to fulfill his material desires should live at home with his family, and a householder who is eager to purify his consciousness should enter the forest, whereas a purified brāhmaṇa should accept the renounced order of life. One who is not surrendered to Me should move progressively from one āśrama to another, never acting otherwise.

PURPORT

Those who are not surrendered devotees of the Lord must rigidly observe the regulations governing one’s authorized social status. There are four social divisions of life, namely *brahmacarya*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*. One who wants to fulfill material desires should become an ordinary householder (*gṛhastha*), establish a comfortable residence and maintain his family. One desiring to accelerate the process of purification may give up his home and business and live in a sacred place with his wife, as indicated here by the word *vanam*, or “forest.” There are many sacred forests in India meant for this purpose, such as Vṛndāvana and Māyāpur. The word *dvijottama* indicates the *brāhmaṇas*. *Brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* are all *dvija*, or initiated in the Gāyatrī *mantra*, but the *brāhmaṇa* is *dvijottama*, or the highest among those who have received second birth by spiritual initiation. It is recommended that a purified *brāhmaṇa* take to the renounced order of life (*sannyāsa*), giving up further contact with his so-called wife. The *brāhmaṇa* is specifically mentioned here, since *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* are not to take the renounced order of life. Even so, there are many stories in the *Bhāgavatam* wherein great kings retire with their aristocratic wives to the forest to practice the austerities of *vānaprastha* and thus accelerate the process of purification. The *brāhmaṇas*, however, may directly accept the renounced order of life.

The words *āśramād āśramaṁ gacchet* indicate that one may progressively move from *brahmacārī* life to *gṛhastha* life to *vānaprastha* life and then to

sannyāsa. The words *āśramād āśramam* emphasize that one should never remain without an authorized social status, nor should one go backward, falling down from a higher position. Those who are not surrendered devotees of the Lord must rigidly observe such injunctions, for otherwise they will quickly become degraded, and their sins will place them outside the bounds of authorized human civilization.

Lord Kṛṣṇa emphasizes here that a nondevotee must rigidly observe the rituals and regulations of Vedic social divisions, whereas the Lord's pure devotee, engaged twenty-four hours a day in Lord Kṛṣṇa's mission, is transcendental to such divisions. If, however, one performs illicit activities on the strength of being transcendental to Vedic social divisions, one is revealed to be a materialistic neophyte and not an advanced devotee of the Lord. An advanced devotee, who remains aloof from material sense gratification, is not bound by the Vedic social divisions; thus even a householder may live very austerely, traveling and preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness away from home, and even a *sannyāsī* may sometimes engage women in the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The most advanced devotees cannot be restricted by the rituals and regulations of the *varṇāśrama* system, and they move freely around the world distributing love of Godhead. *Mat-para* indicates a pure devotee of the Lord who always keeps the Lord fixed in his heart and consciousness. One who falls down to become a victim of sense gratification is not fully established on the platform of *mat-para* and should rigidly observe the social divisions and regulations to remain steady on the platform of pious human life.

TEXT 17.39

*gṛhārthī sadṛśīm bhāryām
udvahed ajugupsitām
yavīyasīm tu vayasā
yām sa-varṇām anu kramāt*

gṛha – household; *arthī* – one who desires; *sadṛśīm* – possessing similar characteristics; *bhāryām* – a wife; *udvahet* – one should marry; *ajugupsitām* – beyond reproach; *yavīyasīm* – younger; *tu* – indeed; *vayasā* – by age; *yām* – another wife; *sa-varṇām* – the first wife who is of the same caste; *anu* – after; *kramāt* – in succession.

TRANSLATION

One who desires to establish family life should marry a wife of his own caste, who is beyond reproach and younger in age. If one desires to accept many wives he must marry them after the first marriage, and each wife should be of a successively lower caste.

PURPORT

As stated in the Vedic literature,

*tisro varṇānupūrvyeṇa
dve tathāikā yathā-kramam*

*brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśāṃ
bhāryāḥ svāḥ śūdra-janmanah*

The purport of this verse is that one's first wife must always be *sadrśīm*, or similar to oneself. In other words, an intellectual man should marry an intellectual wife, a heroic man should marry a heroic wife, a business minded man should marry a woman who can encourage him in such activities, and a *śūdra* should marry a less intelligent woman. The wife must be beyond reproach in terms of her background and character and should always be younger than oneself, ideally five to ten years younger. If one desires to marry a second wife, then, as stated in this verse by the word *varṇānupūrvyeṇa* and in the verse spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa by the word *anukramāt*, one must wait until the first marriage is established and then select a second wife from the next-lower caste. If one marries a third time the wife must be, again, from the next-lower caste. For example, a *brāhmaṇa*'s first wife will be a *brāhmaṇī*, his second wife will be from the *kṣatriya* community, his third wife from the *vaiśya* community and fourth wife from the *śūdra* community. A *kṣatriya* may first marry a *kṣatriya* lady and then *vaiśya* and *śūdra* ladies. A *vaiśya* can accept wives from two classes, and a *śūdra* will accept a wife only from the *śūdra* class. By this progression of marriages there will be relative peace in the family. These Vedic marriage injunctions, as mentioned in the previous verse, are especially for those who are not pure devotees of the Lord.

TEXT 17.40

*ijyādhyayana-dānāni
sarveṣāṃ ca dvi-janmanām
pratigraho'dhyāpanam ca
brāhmaṇasyaiva yājanam*

ijyā – sacrifice; *adhyayana* – Vedic study; *dānāni* – charity; *sarveṣāṃ* – of all; *ca* – also; *dvi-janmanām* – those who are twice-born; *pratigrahaḥ* – acceptance of charity; *adhyāpanam* – teaching Vedic knowledge; *ca* – also; *brāhmaṇasya* – of the *brāhmaṇa*; *eva* – only; *yājanam* – performing sacrifices for others.

TRANSLATION

All twice-born men - brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas and vaiśyas - must perform sacrifice, study the Vedic literature and give charity. Only the brāhmaṇas, however, accept charity, teach the Vedic knowledge and perform sacrifice on behalf of others.

PURPORT

All civilized men must participate in sacrificial performances, give charity and study the Vedic literature. The best of the twice-born, namely the *brāhmaṇas*, are specifically empowered to lead sacrificial performances on behalf of all members of society, teach everyone Vedic knowledge and receive everyone's charity. Without the assistance or participation of qualified *brāhmaṇas*, the lower classes cannot properly study the Vedic

literature, perform sacrifices or give in charity, because they do not have the required intelligence to perfectly execute such functions. When *kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas* take shelter of bona fide *brāhmaṇas*, they are able to properly execute their respective duties, and society functions smoothly and efficiently.

TEXT 17.41

*pratigrahaṁ manyamānas
tapas-tejo-yaśo-nudam
anyābhyām eva jīveta
śilair vā doṣa-dṛk tayoh*

pratigrahaṁ – accepting charity; *manyamānaḥ* – considering; *tapah* – of one’s austerity; *tejaḥ* – spiritual influence; *yaśaḥ* – and fame; *nudam* – destruction; *anyābhyām* – by the other two (teaching Vedic knowledge and performing sacrifice); *eva* – indeed; *jīveta* – a *brāhmaṇa* should live; *śilaiḥ* – by collecting rejected grains in the field; *vā* – or; *doṣa* – the discrepancy; *dṛk* – seeing; *tayoh* – of those two.

TRANSLATION

A brāhmaṇa who considers that accepting charity from others will destroy his austerity, spiritual influence and fame should maintain himself by the other two brahminical occupations, namely teaching Vedic knowledge and performing sacrifice. If the brāhmaṇa considers that those two occupations also compromise his spiritual position, then he should collect rejected grains in agricultural fields and live without any dependence on others.

PURPORT

A pure devotee of the Lord should always remember that the Supreme Personality of Godhead will personally take care of him. As the Lord states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.22):

*ananyāś cintayanto mām
ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānām
yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*

“But those who worship Me with devotion, meditating on My transcendental form – to them I carry what they lack and preserve what they have.”

A *brāhmaṇa* should not become a professional beggar for his personal maintenance. In India there are many so-called *brāhmaṇas* who sit at the gates of important temples and beg from everyone who comes and goes. If someone does not give a donation they become angry and chase that person. Similarly, in America there are many big preachers who collect huge amounts of money by begging on television and radio. If a *brāhmaṇa* or Vaiṣṇava considers that being a professional beggar is weakening his austerity, destroying his spiritual influence and giving him a bad reputation, then he should give up that process. One may beg everyone to contribute to the cause of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but one will be diminished

in austerity, influence and reputation by begging for one's personal livelihood. A *brāhmaṇa* may then take up the task of teaching Vedic knowledge and performing sacrifice. But even such occupations do not bring one to the highest platform of trust in God. A *brāhmaṇa* who teaches as a means of livelihood may often be curbed in his teaching, and one who performs sacrifice may be manipulated by materialistic worshipers. In this way, a *brāhmaṇa* may be placed in an embarrassing and compromised position. Therefore a high-class *brāhmaṇa* or Vaiṣṇava ultimately will depend completely on the mercy of the Lord for his maintenance. The Lord promises to maintain His devotee, and an advanced Vaiṣṇava never doubts the word of the Lord.

TEXT 17.42

*brāhmaṇasya hi deho'yaṁ
kṣudra-kāmāya neṣyate
kṛcchrāya tapase ceḥa
pretyānanta-sukhāya ca*

brāhmaṇasya - of a *brāhmaṇa*; *hi* - certainly; *dehaḥ* - body; *ayaṁ* - this; *kṣudra* - insignificant; *kāmāya* - for sense gratification; *na* - not; *iṣyate* - is meant; *kṛcchrāya* - for difficult; *tapase* - austerities; *ca* - also; *iha* - in this world; *pretya* - after death; *ananta* - unlimited; *sukhāya* - happiness; *ca* - also.

TRANSLATION

The body of a brāhmaṇa is not intended to enjoy insignificant material sense gratification; rather, by accepting difficult austerities in his life, a brāhmaṇa will enjoy unlimited happiness after death.

PURPORT

One may ask why a *brāhmaṇa* should voluntarily accept inconvenience in keeping his body and soul together. In this verse the Lord explains that advanced human life is meant for serious austerity and not for insignificant sense gratification. By spiritual advancement one is fixed in transcendental bliss on the spiritual platform and gives up useless absorption in the temporary material body. One should remain detached from the material body, accepting only the bare necessities of life. The *brāhmaṇas*, by accepting a troublesome form of livelihood, never forget that the material body is destined to grow old, become diseased and die in misery. Thus remaining alert and transcendental, an advanced *brāhmaṇa*, at the end of this life, goes back home, back to Godhead, where he enjoys unlimited spiritual bliss. Without such higher awareness, how can one be considered a qualified *brāhmaṇa*?

Those devotees engaged twenty-four hours a day in spreading the mission of Lord Kṛṣṇa are beyond the platform of renunciation or sense gratification because they engage everything in Lord Kṛṣṇa's service. A pure devotee of the Lord eats only to get strength for serving the Lord and does not accept either sumptuous or meager food simply for the body's sake. However,

everything may be accepted for the Lord, even sumptuous meals. A *brāhmaṇa* who is not working day and night to spread the glories of the Lord should feel embarrassed to eat sumptuously for his personal sense gratification, but a renounced Vaiṣṇava preacher may accept invitations from all classes of pious people, and just to bless their homes he will eat the opulent foods they offer to him. Similarly, he sometimes eats sumptuously to get strength for defeating atheists and impersonalists. As stated in Vedic literature, one cannot be a highly qualified *brāhmaṇa* unless one becomes a devotee of the Lord. And among the devotees, those who are preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness are the best, as confirmed by the Lord Himself in the Eighteenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 17.43

*śiloñcha-vṛttyā parituṣṭa-citto
dharmam mahāntam virajam juṣāṇaḥ
mayy arpitātmā gṛha eva tiṣṭhan
nāti-prasaktaḥ samupaiti śāntim*

śila-uñcha – of gleaning grains; *vṛttyā* – by the occupation; *parituṣṭa* – fully satisfied; *cittaḥ* – whose consciousness; *dharmam* – religious principles; *mahāntam* – magnanimous and hospitable; *virajam* – purified of material desire; *juṣāṇaḥ* – cultivating; *mayi* – in Me; *arpita* – dedicated; *ātmā* – whose mind; *gṛhe* – at home; *eva* – even; *tiṣṭhan* – remaining; *na* – not; *ati* – very; *prasaktaḥ* – attached; *samupaiti* – achieves; *śāntim* – liberation.

TRANSLATION

A brāhmaṇa householder should remain satisfied in mind by gleaning rejected grains from agricultural fields and marketplaces. Keeping himself free of personal desire, he should practice magnanimous religious principles, with consciousness absorbed in Me. In this way a brāhmaṇa may stay at home as a householder without very much attachment and thus achieve liberation.

PURPORT

Mahāntam refers to magnanimous religious principles such as very hospitably receiving guests, even those who are uninvited and unexpected. Householders must always be magnanimous and charitable to others, being alert to curb unnecessary affection and attachment in family life. In the past, very renounced *brāhmaṇa* householders would collect grains that had fallen on the ground in the marketplace or those that had been left behind in the fields after harvesting. The most important item here is *mayy arpitātmā*, or fixing the mind in Lord Kṛṣṇa. Despite his material situation, anyone who constantly meditates upon the Lord can become a liberated soul. As stated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.187):

*īhā yasya harer dāsyē
karmaṇā manasā girā
nikhilāsv api avasthāsu
jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate*

“A person acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness [or, in other words, in the service of Kṛṣṇa] with his body, mind, intelligence and words is a liberated person, even within the material world, although he may be engaged in many so-called material activities.”

TEXT 17.44

*samuddharanti ye vipram
sīdantam mat-parāyaṇam
tān uddhariṣye na cirād
āpadbhyo naur ivārṇavāt*

samuddharanti – uplift; *ye* – those who; *vipram* – a *brāhmaṇa* or devotee; *sīdantam* – suffering (from poverty); *mat-parāyaṇam* – surrendered to Me; *tān* – those who have uplifted; *uddhariṣye* – I will uplift; *na cirāt* – in the near future; *āpadbhyaḥ* – from all miseries; *nauḥ* – a boat; *iva* – like; *arṇavāt* – from the ocean.

TRANSLATION

Just as a ship rescues those who have fallen into the ocean, similarly, I very quickly rescue from all calamities those persons who uplift brāhmaṇas and devotees suffering in a poverty-stricken condition.

PURPORT

The Lord has described how *brāhmaṇas* and devotees achieve the perfection of life, and now a similar perfection is offered to those who utilize their materialistic wealth to relieve the poverty-stricken condition of devotees and *brāhmaṇas*. Although one may neglect the devotional service of the Lord to pursue a material life of sense gratification, one can rectify one’s position by dedicating one’s hard-earned money to the service of the Lord. Seeing the difficult austerities accepted by saintly persons, a pious person should make arrangements for their comfort. Just as a boat saves hopeless people who have fallen into the ocean, similarly, the Lord uplifts persons who have hopelessly fallen into the ocean of material attachment if they have been charitable to the *brāhmaṇas* and devotees.

TEXT 17.45

*sarvāḥ samuddharet rājā
piteva vyasanāt prajāḥ
ātmānam ātmanā dhīro
yathā gaja-patir gajān*

sarvāḥ – all; *samuddharet* – must uplift; *rājā* – the king; *pitā* – a father; *iva* – like; *vyasanāt* – from difficulties; *prajāḥ* – the citizens; *ātmānam* – himself; *ātmana* – by himself; *dhīraḥ* – fearless; *yathā* – just as; *gaja-patiḥ* – a bull elephant; *gajān* – the other elephants.

TRANSLATION

Just as the chief bull elephant protects all other elephants in his herd and defends himself as well, similarly, a fearless king, just like

a father, must save all of the citizens from difficulty and also protect himself.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa, having concluded His discussion of brahminical duties, now describes the character and activities of a king. Protecting all of the citizens from difficulty is an essential duty for the king.

TEXT 17.46

*evam-vidho nara-patir
vimānenārka-varcasā
vidhūyehāśubhaṁ kṛtsnam
indreṇa saha modate*

evam-vidhaḥ – thus (protecting himself and the citizens); *nara-patiḥ* – the king; *vimānena* – with an airplane; *arka-varcasā* – as brilliant as the sun; *vidhūya* – removing; *iha* – on the earth; *aśubham* – sins; *kṛtsnam* – all; *indreṇa* – Lord Indra; *saha* – with; *modate* – he enjoys.

TRANSLATION

An earthly king who protects himself and all citizens by removing all sins from his kingdom will certainly enjoy with Lord Indra in airplanes as brilliant as the sun.

TEXT 17.47

*sīdan vipro vaṇig-vṛttyā
paṇyair evāpadaṁ taret
khaḍgena vāpadākrānto
na śva-vṛttyā kathañcana*

sīdan – suffering; *vipraḥ* – a *brāhmaṇa*; *vaṇik* – of a merchant; *vṛttyā* – by the occupation; *paṇyaiḥ* – by doing business; *eva* – indeed; *āpadam* – suffering; *taret* – should overcome; *khaḍgena* – with sword; *vā* – or; *āpadā* – by suffering; *ākrāntaḥ* – afflicted; *na* – not; *śva* – of the dog; *vṛttyā* – by the occupation; *kathañcana* – by any means.

TRANSLATION

If a brāhmaṇa cannot support himself through his regular duties and is thus suffering, he may adopt the occupation of a merchant and overcome his destitute condition by buying and selling material things. If he continues to suffer extreme poverty even as a merchant, then he may adopt the occupation of a kṣatriya, taking sword in hand. But he cannot in any circumstances become like a dog, accepting an ordinary master.

PURPORT

Śva-vṛttyā, or “a dog’s profession,” refers to the *sūdras*, who cannot live without accepting a master. A destitute *brāhmaṇa* who is suffering intolerably may become a merchant and then a *kṣatriya* but may never take the position of a *sūdra* by working in a company or accepting a master. Although a *kṣatriya* is ordinarily considered more elevated than a *vaiśya*, the

Lord here recommends that distressed *brāhmaṇas* first accept the *vaiśya* occupation, since it is not violent.

TEXT 17.48

*vaiśya-vṛtṭyā tu rājanyo
jīven mṛgayayāpadi
caret vā vipra-rūpeṇa
na śva-vṛtṭyā kathañcana*

vaiśya - of the mercantile class; *vṛtṭyā* - by the occupation; *tu* - indeed; *rājanyaḥ* - a king; *jīvet* - may maintain himself; *mṛgayayā* - by hunting; *āpadi* - in an emergency or disastrous situation; *caret* - may act; *vā* - or; *vipra-rūpeṇa* - in the form of a *brāhmaṇa*; *na* - never; *śva* - of the dog; *vṛtṭyā* - by the profession; *kathañcana* - in any circumstance.

TRANSLATION

A king or other member of the royal order who cannot maintain himself by his normal occupation may act as a *vaiśya*, may live by hunting or may act as a *brāhmaṇa* by teaching others Vedic knowledge. But he may not under any circumstances adopt the profession of a *sūdra*.

TEXT 17.49

*sūdra-vṛttim bhajed vaiśyaḥ
sūdraḥ kāru-kaṭa-kriyām
kṛcchrān mukto na garhyeṇa
vṛttim lipseta karmaṇā*

sūdra - of the *sūdras*; *vṛttim* - occupation; *bhajet* - may accept; *vaiśyaḥ* - a *vaiśya*; *sūdraḥ* - a *sūdra*; *kāru* - of the artisan; *kaṭa* - straw baskets and mats; *kriyām* - making; *kṛcchrāt* - from the difficult situation; *muktaḥ* - freed; *na* - not; *garhyeṇa* - by that which is inferior; *vṛttim* - livelihood; *lipseta* - one should desire; *karmaṇā* - by work.

TRANSLATION

A *vaiśya*, or mercantile man, who cannot maintain himself may adopt the occupation of a *sūdra*, and a *sūdra* who cannot find a master can engage in simple activities like making baskets and mats of straw. However, all members of society who have adopted inferior occupations in emergency situations must give up those substitute occupations when the difficulties have passed.

TEXT 17.50

*vedādhyāya-svadhā-svāhā-
baly-annādyair yathodayam
devarṣi-pitṛ-bhūtāni
mad-rūpāṇy anv-aham yajet*

veda-adhyāya - by study of Vedic knowledge; *svadhā* - by offering the *mantra svadhā*; *svāhā* - by offering the *mantra svāhā*; *bali* - by token

offerings of food; *anna-ādyaiḥ* – by offering grains, water, etc.; *yathā* – according to; *udayam* – one’s prosperity; *deva* – the demigods; *ṛṣi* – sages; *pitṛ* – the forefathers; *bhūtāni* – and all living entities; *mat-rūpāṇi* – manifestations of My potency; *anu-aham* – daily; *yajet* – one should worship.

TRANSLATION

One in the gr̥hastha order of life should daily worship the sages by Vedic study, the forefathers by offering the mantra svadhā, the demigods by chanting svāhā, all living entities by offering shares of one’s meals, and human beings by offering grains and water. Thus considering the demigods, sages, forefathers, living entities and human beings to be manifestations of My potency, one should daily perform these five sacrifices.

PURPORT

The Lord again discusses the duties of those in the household order of life. Obviously, the five ritualistic daily sacrifices mentioned here are meant for those who are not pure devotees of the Lord and who thus have to counteract their exploitation of material nature by the abovementioned sacrifices. The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) is training householders, *sannyāsīs*, *brahmacārīs* and *vānaprasthas* to engage twenty-four hours a day in the loving service of the Lord. Those who are full-time missionary workers in ISKCON have no further obligations or sacrifices to perform, as confirmed in the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.41):

*devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam*

“Anyone who has taken shelter at the lotus feet of Mukunda, the giver of liberation, giving up all kinds of obligation, and has taken to the path in all seriousness, owes neither duties nor obligations to the demigods, sages, general living entities, family members, humankind or forefathers.”

TEXT 17.51

*yadṛcchayopapannena
śuklenopārjitena vā
dhanenāpīḍayan bhṛtyān
nyāyenaivāharet kratūn*

yadṛcchayā – without endeavor; *upapannena* – which is acquired; *śuklena* – by one’s honest occupation; *upārjitena* – acquired; *vā* – or; *dhanena* – with money; *apīḍayan* – not subjecting to discomfort; *bhṛtyān* – dependents; *nyāyena* – properly; *eva* – indeed; *āharet* – one should perform; *kratūn* – sacrifices and other religious ceremonies.

TRANSLATION

A householder should comfortably maintain his dependents either with money that comes of its own accord or with that gathered by

honest execution of one's duties. According to one's means, one should perform sacrifices and other religious ceremonies.

PURPORT

The Lord here describes the religious duties that are to be performed as far as possible, according to one's means, and when there is opportunity.

TEXT 17.52

*kuṭumbeṣu na sajjeta
na pramādyet kuṭumby api
vipaścin naśvaram paśyed
adrṣtam api drṣṭa-vat*

kuṭumbeṣu - to the family members; *na* - not; *sajjeta* - one should be attached; *na* - not; *pramādyet* - should become crazy; *kuṭumbī* - having many dependent family members; *api* - although; *vipaścit* - a wise person; *naśvaram* - temporary; *paśyet* - should see; *adrṣtam* - future rewards such as residence in heaven; *api* - indeed; *drṣṭa-vat* - just like that which is already experienced.

TRANSLATION

A householder taking care of many dependent family members should not become materially attached to them, nor should he become mentally unbalanced, considering himself to be the lord. An intelligent householder should see that all possible future happiness, just like that which he has already experienced, is temporary.

PURPORT

A family man often acts like a lord, protecting his wife, ordering his children, maintaining servants, grandchildren, domestic animals, and so forth. The words *na pramādyet kuṭumby api* indicate that although one acts like a little lord, surrounded by his family, servants and friends, one should not, through false pride, become mentally unbalanced, considering oneself to be the actual lord. The word *vipaścit* indicates that one should remain sober and intelligent, never forgetting oneself to be the eternal servant of the Supreme Lord.

Householders of the upper, middle and lower classes become attached to different types of sense gratification. In any economic or social class, however, one should remember that all material enjoyment, either here or in the next life, is temporary and ultimately useless. A responsible householder should guide his family members and other dependents back home, back to Godhead, for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge. One should not become a false and puffed-up lord for a brief span of time, for then one will remain bound up, along with his family members, in the cycle of repeated birth and death.

TEXT 17.53

*putra-dārāpta-bandhūnām
saṅgamaḥ pāntha-saṅgamaḥ
anu-deham viyanti ete
svapno nidrānugo yathā*

putra - of children; *dāra* - wife; *āpta* - relatives; *bandhūnām* - and friends; *saṅgamaḥ* - the association, living together; *pāntha* - of travelers; *saṅgamaḥ* - association; *anu-deham* - with each change of body; *viyanti* - they are separated; *ete* - all these; *svapnaḥ* - a dream; *nidrā* - in sleep; *anugaḥ* - occurring; *yathā* - just as.

TRANSLATION

The association of children, wife, relatives and friends is just like the brief meeting of travelers. With each change of body one is separated from all such associates, just as one loses the objects one possesses in a dream when the dream is over.

PURPORT

Pāntha-saṅgama indicates the momentary association of travelers at hotels, restaurants, tourist spots or, in more traditional cultures, freshwater wells and walking paths. We are now associated with many relatives, friends and well-wishers, but as soon as we change our material body we will immediately be separated from all these associates, just as upon awakening we are immediately separated from the imaginary situation of a dream. One becomes attached to the sense gratification of one's dream, and similarly, under the spell of the illusory concepts of "I" and "mine," we become attached to so-called relatives and friends who gratify our sense of false ego. Unfortunately, such fleeting egoistic association covers our real knowledge of the self and the Supreme, and we remain hovering in material illusion, futilely endeavoring for permanent sense gratification. One who remains attached to the bodily concept of family and friends cannot possibly give up the false egoism of "I" and "mine," or "I am everything and everything is mine."

Without giving up material sense gratification we cannot become steady on the transcendental platform of devotional service, and therefore we cannot relish the actual flavor of eternal happiness. Unless one becomes a pure devotee of the Lord, accepting Lord Kṛṣṇa as one's only friend, one cannot give up the hankering for temporary and superficial material relationships. A traveler far away from his home and loved ones may strike up superficial conversations with other travelers, but such relationships have no ultimate meaning. One should therefore revive one's lost relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa. We are constitutionally part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the reservoir of all spiritual pleasure, and our original relationship with Him is full of love and happiness. But because of our desire to enjoy independently from Him, we fall down into the confusing, meaningless network of material relationships created by *māyā*. An intelligent person realizes there is no actual pleasure or satisfaction for the soul on either this planet or any other material planet. Therefore, like a weary traveler exhausted from his journey, he should go

back home, back to Godhead, for eternal peace as the faithful servant of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 17.54

*ittham parimṛśan mukto
grheṣv atithi-vad vasan
na grhair anubadhyeta
nirmamo nirahaṅkṛtaḥ*

ittham – thus; *parimṛśan* – deeply considering; *muktaḥ* – a liberated soul; *grheṣu* – at home; *atithi-vat* – just like a guest; *vasan* – living; *na* – not; *grhair* – by the domestic situation; *anubadhyeta* – should become bound; *nirmamaḥ* – without any sense of personal proprietorship; *nirahaṅkṛtaḥ* – without false ego.

TRANSLATION

Deeply considering the actual situation, a liberated soul should live at home just like a guest, without any sense of proprietorship or false ego. In this way he will not be bound or entangled by domestic affairs.

PURPORT

The word *mukta*, or “liberated,” refers to one freed from all material attachment. In this status, called *mukta-saṅga*, one no longer identifies oneself as a permanent resident of the material world. This liberated status may be attained even by one situated in family life. The only requirement is that one should take up a serious program of *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, which includes constant chanting of the holy names of the Lord, worship of the Deity and participation in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Without a serious program of *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* it is very difficult to give up the iron shackles of attachment to women and the byproducts of such attachment.

TEXT 17.55

*karmabhir grha-medhīyair
iṣṭvā mām eva bhaktimān
tiṣṭhet vanam vopaviśet
prajāvān vā parivrajat*

karmabhiḥ – by activities; *grha-medhīyaiḥ* – suitable for family life; *iṣṭvā* – worshiping; *mām* – Me; *eva* – indeed; *bhakti-mān* – being a devotee; *tiṣṭhet* – one may remain at home; *vanam* – the forest; *vā* – or; *upaviśet* – may enter; *prajāvān* – having responsible children; *vā* – or; *parivrajat* – may take *sannyāsa*.

TRANSLATION

A householder devotee who worships Me by execution of his family duties may remain at home, go to a holy place or, if he has a responsible son, take sannyāsa.

PURPORT

This verse describes the three alternatives for a householder. He may continue at home, or he may take *vānaprastha*, which involves going to a sacred place with one's wife. Or if he has a responsible son to take over his family duties, he may take *sannyāsa*, the renounced order, for a definitive solution to the problems of life. In all three *āśramas*, ultimate success depends on sincere surrender to the Supreme Lord; therefore, the most important qualification one can have is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 17.56

*yas tv āsakta-matir gehe
putra-vittaiṣaṇāturaḥ
straiṇaḥ kṛpaṇa-dhīr mūḍho
mamāham iti badhyate*

yaḥ - one who; *tu* - however; *āsakta* - attached; *matih* - whose consciousness; *gehe* - to his home; *putra* - for children; *vitta* - and money; *eṣaṇa* - by ardent desire; *āturaḥ* - disturbed; *straiṇaḥ* - lusty to enjoy women; *kṛpaṇa* - miserly; *dhīh* - whose mentality; *mūḍhaḥ* - unintelligent; *mama* - everything is mine; *aham* - I am everything; *iti* - thus thinking; *badhyate* - is bound.

TRANSLATION

But a householder whose mind is attached to his home and who is thus disturbed by ardent desires to enjoy his money and children, who is lusty after women, who is possessed of a miserly mentality and who unintelligently thinks, “Everything is mine and I am everything,” is certainly bound in illusion.

PURPORT

Although one may try by various analytical or psychological processes to detach the mind from illusory family attachment, one will inevitably be drawn back into the network of material attachment unless the heart is purified by Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A miserly householder thinks only of his own family or community, without mercy for outsiders. Being egoistic, lusty, attached and always disturbed by ardent desires to enjoy money and children, a materialistic householder is hopelessly bound in a web of anxiety.

TEXT 17.57

*aho me pitarau vṛddhau
bhāryā bālātmajātmajāḥ
anāthā mām ṛte dīnāḥ
katham jīvanti duḥkhitāḥ*

aho - alas; *me* - my; *pitarau* - parents; *vṛddhau* - elderly; *bhāryā* - wife; *bāla-ātma-jā* - having a mere infant in her arms; *ātmā-jāḥ* - and my other young children; *anāthāḥ* - with no one to protect them; *mām* - me; *ṛte* - without; *dīnāḥ* - wretched; *katham* - how in the world; *jīvanti* - can they live; *duḥkhitāḥ* - suffering greatly.

TRANSLATION

“O my poor elderly parents, and my wife with a mere infant in her arms, and my other young children! Without me they have absolutely no one to protect them and will suffer unbearably. How can my poor relatives possibly live without me?”

TEXT 17.58

*evam̐ grhāśayākṣipta-
hṛdayo mūḍha-dhīr ayam
atrptas tān anudhyāyan
mṛto'ndham̐ viśate tamaḥ*

evam - thus; *grha* - in his domestic situation; *āśaya* - by intense desire; *ākṣipta* - overwhelmed; *hṛdayaḥ* - his heart; *mūḍha* - unintelligent; *dhīḥ* - whose point of view; *ayam* - this person; *atrptaḥ* - unsatisfied; *tān* - them (family members); *anudhyāyan* - constantly thinking of; *mṛtaḥ* - he dies; *andham* - blindness; *viśate* - enters; *tamaḥ* - darkness.

TRANSLATION

Thus, because of his foolish mentality, a householder whose heart is overwhelmed by family attachment is never satisfied. Constantly meditating on his relatives, he dies and enters into the darkness of ignorance.

PURPORT

Andham̐ viśate tamaḥ indicates that in his next life an attached householder will certainly be degraded because of his primitive mentality of bodily attachment, which is called *mūḍha-dhī*. In other words, after enjoying the sense gratification of considering oneself the center of everything, one enters into a lower species of life. Somehow or other, we must fix our minds on Lord Kṛṣṇa and come out of the darkness of ignorance to our real life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Seventeenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Lord Kṛṣṇa’s Description of the Varṇāśrama System.”

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Description of Varṇāśrama- dharma

As related in this chapter, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa explained to Uddhava the duties of the *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa* orders and the religious practices proper to each of these levels of advancement.

One who is taking to the *vānaprastha* stage of life should leave his wife at home in the care of his sons, or else take her along, and with a peaceful mind spend the third quarter of his life in the forest. He should accept as his food whatever bulbs, fruits, roots and so on that grow in the forest, taking sometimes grains cooked by fire and sometimes fruits ripened by time. Furthermore, he should take as his garments tree bark, grass, leaves or the skin of a deer. It is prescribed that he should perform austerities by not cutting his hair, beard, or nails. Nor should he make any special attempt to remove dirt from his limbs. He should bathe three times daily in cold water and sleep upon the ground. During the hot season he should stand beneath the fearsome heat of the sun with fires blazing on four sides. During the rainy season he should stand in the midst of the downpour of rain, and during the cold winter he should submerge himself in water up to his neck. He is absolutely forbidden to clean his teeth, to store food that he has collected at one time to eat at another time, and to worship the Supreme Lord with the flesh of animals. If he can maintain those severe practices for the remainder of his life, the *vānaprastha* will achieve the Tapoloka planet. The fourth quarter of life is meant for *sannyāsa*. One should develop complete detachment from attaining residence on different planets, up to even Brahmaloaka. Such wishes for material elevation are due to desire for the fruits of material activity. When one recognizes that endeavors to achieve residence on the higher planets ultimately award only suffering, then it is enjoined that one should take to *sannyāsa* in a spirit of renunciation. The process of accepting *sannyāsa* involves worshipping the Lord with sacrifice, giving everything one possesses in charity to the priests and establishing within one's own heart the various sacrificial fires. For a *sannyāsī*, association with women or even the sight of women is more undesirable than taking poison. Except in emergencies, the *sannyāsī* should never wear more clothing than a loincloth or some simple covering over his loincloth. He should carry no more than his staff and waterpot. Giving up all violence to living creatures, he should become subdued in the functions of his body, mind and speech. He should remain detached and fixed on the self and travel alone to such pure places as the mountains, rivers and forests. Thus engaged, he should remember the Supreme Personality of Godhead and dwell in a place that is fearless and not heavily populated. He should take his alms each day at seven homes chosen at random from those of the members of the four social classes, avoiding only the homes of those who are cursed or fallen. With a pure heart he should offer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead whatever food he has collected and take the *mahā-prasādam* remnants. In this way he should always be mindful that hankering for sense gratification is bondage and that engaging the objects of the senses in the service of Lord Mādhava is liberation. If one lacks knowledge

and renunciation, or continues to be troubled by the unconquered six enemies headed by lust and the all-powerful senses, or if one accepts the *tridaṇḍa* renounced order simply for the purpose of carrying out a livelihood, then he will achieve as his result only the killing of his own soul.

A *paramahansa* is not under the control of injunctions and prohibitions. He is a devotee of the Supreme Lord, detached from external sense gratification and completely free from desire for even such subtle gratificatory goals as liberation. He is expert in discrimination and, just like a simple child, is free from concepts of pride and insult. Although actually competent, he wanders about like a dull person, and although most learned, he engages himself like an insane fool in incoherent speech. Although actually fixed in the *Vedas*, he behaves in an unordered fashion. He tolerates the evil words of others and never shows contempt for anyone else. He avoids acting as an enemy or vainly indulging in argument. He sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead in all creatures and also all living beings within the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In order to keep his body alive for performing worship of the Lord, he accepts whatever excellent or inferior food, clothing and bedding he can obtain without endeavor. Although he has to make some effort to find food for maintaining his body, he does not become joyful when he finds something, nor does he become depressed when not finding anything. The Supreme Lord Himself, although not at all subject to the Vedic orders and prohibitions, by His own free will executes various prescribed duties; similarly the *paramahansa*, even while on the platform of freedom from subjugation to Vedic rules and prohibitions, carries out various duties. Because his perception of dualities has become completely eradicated by transcendental knowledge, which is focused on the Supreme Lord, he obtains upon the demise of his material body the liberation known as *sārṣṭi*, in which one becomes equal in opulence with the Lord.

The person who desires his own best interest should take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. Filling his mind with faith, keeping free from enviousness and remaining fixed in devotion, the disciple should serve the spiritual master, whom he should regard as nondifferent from the Supreme Lord. For a *brahmacārī*, the primary duty is service to the spiritual master. The main duties for a householder are protection of living beings and sacrifice, for a *vānaprastha* austerities, and for a *sannyāsī* self-control and nonviolence. Celibacy (practiced by householders at all times except once a month when the wife is fertile), penance, cleanliness, self-satisfaction, friendship with all living beings and above all worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are duties meant for every *jīva* soul. One acquires firm devotion for the Supreme Lord by always rendering service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead through one's own particular prescribed duty, by not engaging in the worship of any other personalities, and also by thinking of all creatures as the place of residence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form as the Supersoul. The followers of the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas* can attain the planets of the forefathers and so on by

their ritualistic activities, but if they become endowed with devotion for the Supreme Lord, then by these same activities they can achieve the supreme stage of liberation.

TEXT 18.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
vanaṁ vivikṣuḥ putreṣu
bhāryām nyasya sahaiva vā
vana eva vases chāntas
tṛtīyaṁ bhāgam āyuṣaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *vanam* – the forest; *vivikṣuḥ* – desiring to enter; *putreṣu* – among the sons; *bhāryām* – wife; *nyasya* – entrusting; *saha* – together with; *eva* – indeed; *vā* – or; *vane* – in the forest; *eva* – certainly; *vaset* – one should dwell; *śāntaḥ* – with a peaceful mind; *tṛtīyam* – the third; *bhāgam* – division; *āyuṣaḥ* – of life.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: One who desires to adopt the third order of life, vānaprastha, should enter the forest with a peaceful mind, leaving his wife with his mature sons, or else taking her along with him.

PURPORT

In Kali-yuga a human being generally cannot live more than one hundred years, and even this is becoming most unusual. A man who has a reasonable expectation of living for one hundred years may adopt the *vānaprastha* order at the age of fifty, and then at the age of seventy-five he may take *sannyāsa* for complete renunciation. Since in Kali-yuga very few people live for one hundred years, one should adjust the schedule accordingly. *Vānaprastha* is intended as a gradual transition from materialistic family life to the stage of complete renunciation.

TEXT 18.2

*kanda-mūla-phalair vanyair
medhyair vṛttim prakalpayet
vasīta valkalam vāsas
tṛṇa-parṇājināni vā*

kanda – with bulbs; *mūla* – roots; *phalaiḥ* – and fruits; *vanyaiḥ* – growing in the forest; *medhyaiḥ* – pure; *vṛttim* – sustenance; *prakalpayet* – one should arrange; *vasīta* – one should put on; *valkalam* – tree bark; *vāsaḥ* – as clothes; *tṛṇa* – grass; *parṇa* – leaves; *ajināni* – animal skins; *vā* – or.

TRANSLATION

Having adopted the vānaprastha order of life, one should arrange one's sustenance by eating uncontaminated bulbs, roots and fruits that grow in the forest. One may dress oneself with tree bark, grass, leaves or animal skins.

PURPORT

A renounced sage in the forest does not kill animals, but rather acquires skins from animals who have suffered natural death. According to a passage from *Manu-saṁhitā*, quoted by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the word *medhyaiḥ*, or “pure,” indicates that while residing in the forest a sage may not accept honey-based liquors, animal flesh, fungus, mushrooms, horseradish or any hallucinogenic or intoxicating herbs, even those taken as so-called medicine.

TEXT 18.3

*keśa-roma-nakha-śmaśru-
malāni bibhṛyād dataḥ
na dhāved apsu majjeta
tri kālam sthaṇḍile-śayaḥ*

keśa - hair on the head; *roma* - bodily hair; *nakha* - fingernails and toenails; *śmaśru* - facial hair; *malāni* - bodily waste products; *bibhṛyāt* - one should tolerate; *dataḥ* - the teeth; *na dhāvet* - should not clean; *apsu* - in water; *majjeta* - should bathe; *tri-kālam* - three times a day; *sthaṇḍile* - on the earth; *śayaḥ* - lying down.

TRANSLATION

The vānaprastha should not groom the hair on his head, body or face, should not manicure his nails, should not pass stool and urine at irregular times and should not make a special endeavor for dental hygiene. He should be content to take bath in water three times daily and should sleep on the ground.

TEXT 18.4

*grīṣme tapyeta pañcāgnīn
varṣāsv āsāra-ṣāḍ jale
ākaṇṭha-magnaḥ śísira
evam vṛttas tapaś caret*

grīṣme - in the summer; *tapyeta* - one should accept as austerity; *pañcāgnīn* - five fires (the overhead sun and fires burning on four sides); *varṣāsu* - during the rainy season; *āsāra* - torrents of rain; *ṣāḍ* - tolerating; *jale* - in water; *ā-kaṇṭha* - up to the neck; *magnaḥ* - submerged; *śísira* - in the coldest part of winter; *evam* - thus; *vṛttaḥ* - engaged; *tapaḥ* - penance; *caret* - one should execute.

TRANSLATION

Thus engaged as a vānaprastha, one should execute penance during the hottest summer days by subjecting oneself to burning fires on four sides and the blazing sun overhead; during the rainy season one should remain outside, subjecting oneself to torrents of rain; and in the freezing winter one should remain submerged in water up to one’s neck.

PURPORT

One who engages in sense gratification must perform severe penances at the end of life to counteract his sinful, hedonistic activities. A devotee of the Lord, however, naturally develops Kṛṣṇa consciousness and need not subject himself to such radical penances. As stated in the *Pañcarātra*:

*ārādhito yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim
nārādhito yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim
antar bahir yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim
nāntar bahir yadi haris tapasā tataḥ kim*

“If one is worshiping the Lord properly, what is the use of severe penances? And if one is not properly worshiping the Lord, what is the use of severe penances? If Śrī Kṛṣṇa is realized within and without everything that exists, what is the use of severe penances? And if Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not seen within and without everything, then what is the use of severe penances?”

TEXT 18.5

*agni-pakvaṁ samaśnīyāt
kāla-pakvam athāpi vā
ulūkhalāśma-kuṭṭo vā
dantolūkhala eva vā*

agni - by fire; *pakvam* - made ready to eat; *samaśnīyāt* - one should eat; *kāla* - by time; *pakvam* - right for eating; *atha* - else; *api* - indeed; *vā* - or; *ulūkhala* - with grinding mortar; *aśma* - and stone; *kuṭṭaḥ* - pulverized, ground up; *vā* - or; *danta* - using the teeth; *ulūkhalaḥ* - as a grinding mortar; *eva* - indeed; *vā* - or, alternatively.

TRANSLATION

One may eat foodstuffs prepared with fire, such as grains, or fruits ripened by time. One may grind one’s food with mortar and stone or with one’s own teeth.

PURPORT

In Vedic civilization it is recommended that at the end of one’s life one should go to a holy place or forest for spiritual perfection. In sacred forests one does not find restaurants, supermarkets, fast-food chains and so on, and thus one must eat simply, reducing sense gratification.

Although in the Western countries people eat processed food, one living simply must himself separate and pulverize grains and other foods before eating. This is referred to here.

TEXT 18.6

*svayaṁ sañcinuyāt sarvaṁ
ātmano vṛtti-kāraṇam
deśa-kāla-balābhijño
nādaditānyadāhṛtam*

svayaṁ - himself; *sañcinuyāt* - should gather; *sarvaṁ* - everything; *ātmanaḥ* - his own; *vṛtti* - sustenance; *kāraṇam* - facilitating; *deśa* - the

particular place; *kāla* – the time; *bala* – and one’s strength; *abhijñāḥ* – understanding pragmatically; *na ādadīta* – should not take; *anyadā* – for another time; *āhṛtam* – provisions.

TRANSLATION

The vānaprastha should personally collect whatever he requires for his bodily maintenance, carefully considering the time, place and his own capacity. He should never collect provisions for the future.

PURPORT

According to Vedic regulations, one practicing austerity should collect only what he requires for immediate use, and upon receiving gifts of foodstuff he should immediately give up that which he has previously collected, so that there will be no surplus. This regulation is meant to keep one fixed in faithful dependence on the Supreme Lord. One should never stock food or other bodily necessities for future use. The term *deśa-kāla-balābhijña* indicates that in a particularly difficult place, or in time of emergency or personal incapacity, this strict rule need not be followed, as confirmed by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura points out that unless one is completely incapacitated, one should not depend on others for one’s personal maintenance, as this will create a debt that can only be repaid by taking another birth in the material world. This applies only to those endeavoring for personal purification and not to those engaged full time in devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. A pure devotee eats, dresses and speaks only for the service of the Lord, and thus whatever assistance he accepts from others is not for himself. He is fully surrendered to the mission of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, one not so surrendered will certainly have to take birth again in the material world to repay all of his debts to others.

TEXT 18.7

*vanyaiś caru-puroḍāśair
nirvapet kāla-coditān
na tu śrautena paśunā
mām yajeta vanāśramī*

vanyaiḥ – obtained in the forest; *caru* – with oblations of rice, barley and *dāl* beans; *puroḍāśaiḥ* – and sacrificial cakes prepared with wild rice; *nirvapet* – one should offer; *kāla-coditān* – ritualistic sacrifices, such as *āgrayaṇa*, offered according to seasons (*āgrayaṇa* is the offering of the first fruits that appear after the rainy season); *na* – never; *tu* – indeed; *śrautena* – mentioned in the *Vedas*; *paśunā* – with animal sacrifice; *mām* – Me; *yajeta* – may worship; *vana-āśramī* – one who has gone to the forest, taking the *vānaprastha* order of life.

TRANSLATION

One who has accepted the vānaprastha order of life should perform seasonal sacrifices by offering oblations of caru and sacrificial cakes

prepared from rice and other grains found in the forest. The vānaprastha, however, may never offer animal sacrifices to Me, even those sacrifices mentioned in the Vedas.

PURPORT

One who has taken the *vānaprastha* order of life should never perform animal sacrifices or eat meat.

TEXT 18.8

*agnihotram ca darśaś ca
paurṇamāsaś ca pūrva-vat
cāturmāsyaṇi ca muner
āmnātāni ca naigamaiḥ*

agni-hotram - the fire sacrifice; *ca* - also; *darśaḥ* - the sacrifice performed on the new moon day; *ca* - also; *paurṇa-māsaḥ* - full moon sacrifice; *ca* - also; *pūrva-vat* - as previously, in the *gṛhastha-āśrama*; *cātuḥ-māsyaṇi* - the vows and sacrifices of *cāturmāsya*; *ca* - also; *muner* - of the *vānaprastha*; *āmnātāni* - enjoined; *ca* - also; *naigamaiḥ* - by expert knowers of the *Vedas*.

TRANSLATION

The vānaprastha should perform the agnihotra, darśa and paurṇamāsa sacrifices, as he did while in the gṛhastha-āśrama. He should also perform the vows and sacrifices of cāturmāsya, since all of these rituals are enjoined for the vānaprastha-āśrama by expert knowers of the Vedas.

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has given a detailed explanation of the four rituals mentioned here, namely *agnihotra*, *darśa*, *paurṇamāsa* and *cāturmāsya*. The conclusion is that everyone should simply chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare and avoid the difficult entanglement of Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. If one neither chants Hare Kṛṣṇa nor performs such rituals, one certainly becomes a *pāṣaṇḍī*, an atheistic fool.

TEXT 18.9

*evam cīrṇena tapasā
munir dhamani-santataḥ
mām tapo-mayam ārādhya
ṛṣi-lokād upaiti mām*

evam - thus; *cīrṇena* - by the practice; *tapasā* - of austerity; *munir* - the saintly *vānaprastha*; *dhamani-santataḥ* - emaciated so much that the veins are visible throughout his body; *mām* - Me; *tapo-mayam* - the goal of all penance; *ārādhya* - worshiping; *ṛṣi-lokāt* - beyond Maharloka; *upaiti* - achieves; *mām* - Me.

TRANSLATION

The saintly vānaprastha, practicing severe penances and accepting only the bare necessities of life, becomes so emaciated that he

appears to be mere skin and bones. Thus worshiping Me through severe penances, he goes to the Maharloka planet and then directly achieves Me.

PURPORT

A *vānaprastha* who develops pure devotional service achieves the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, while in the *vānaprastha* stage of life. One who does not become completely Kṛṣṇa conscious, however, first goes to the planet Maharloka, or Ṛṣiloka, and from there directly achieves Lord Kṛṣṇa.

One achieves Maharloka, or Ṛṣiloka, through strict observance of positive and negative regulations. However, without developing a taste for chanting and hearing the glories of the Lord (*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*), it is not possible to achieve the perfect liberation of going back home, back to Godhead. Therefore, on the Maharloka planet the unsuccessful sage gives more attention to chanting and hearing, and thus he gradually develops pure love of Godhead.

TEXT 18.10

*yas tv etat kṛcchrataś cīrṇam
tapo niḥśreyasam mahat
kāmayālpīyase yuñjyāt
bāliśaḥ ko'paras tataḥ*

yaḥ – one who; *tu* – indeed; *etat* – this; *kṛcchrataḥ* – with great penance; *cīrṇam* – for a long time; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *niḥśreyasam* – awarding ultimate liberation; *mahat* – glorious; *kāmāya* – for sense gratification; *alpīyase* – insignificant; *yuñjyāt* – practices; *bāliśaḥ* – such a fool; *kaḥ* – who; *aparaḥ* – else; *tataḥ* – besides him.

TRANSLATION

One who with long endeavor executes this painful but exalted penance, which awards ultimate liberation, simply to achieve insignificant sense gratification must be considered the greatest fool.

PURPORT

Although the process of *vānaprastha* described by Lord Kṛṣṇa is so glorious that even the consolation prize is promotion to Maharloka, one who consciously performs this process for such promotion to heaven is certainly the greatest fool. The Lord does not want this process to be abused or exploited by materialistic rascals, for the ultimate goal is love of Godhead.

TEXT 18.11

*yadāsau niyame'kalpo
jarayā jāta-vepathuḥ
ātmany agnīn samāropya
mac-citto'gnim samāviśet*

yadā – when; *asau* – the saintly *vānaprastha*; *niyame* – in his prescribed duties; *akalpaḥ* – unable to carry on; *jarayā* – due to old age; *jāta* – arisen;

vepathuḥ – trembling of the body; *ātmani* – within his heart; *agnīn* – the sacrificial fires; *samāropya* – placing; *mat-cittaḥ* – his mind fixed in Me; *agnim* – the fire; *samāviśet* – should enter.

TRANSLATION

If the vānaprastha is overtaken by old age and because of his trembling body is no longer able to execute his prescribed duties, he should place the sacrificial fire within his heart by meditation. Then, fixing his mind on Me, he should enter into the fire and give up his body.

PURPORT

Since the process of *vānaprastha* is recommended for those nearing the end of life, there is always the likelihood that one will prematurely succumb to the symptoms of old age and be unable to reach the final stage of *sannyāsa*. If one simply cannot carry on his religious duties due to old age, it is here advised that he fix the mind in Lord Kṛṣṇa and enter into the sacrificial fire. Although this may not be possible in the modern age, we can appreciate the absolute seriousness of going back home, back to Godhead, as evidenced in this verse.

TEXT 18.12

*yadā karma-vipākeṣu
lokeṣu nirayātmasu
virāgo jāyate samyañ
nyastāgniḥ pravrajat tataḥ*

yadā – when; *karma* – by fruitive activities; *vipākeṣu* – in all that which is obtained; *lokeṣu* – including promotion to all the planets of the universe up to Brahmaloḥka; *niraya-ātmasu* – planets that are actually hellish, being material; *virāgaḥ* – detachment; *jāyate* – is born; *samyak* – completely; *nyasta* – giving up; *agniḥ* – the sacrificial fire of *vānaprastha*; *pravrajat* – one should take *sannyāsa*; *tataḥ* – at that point.

TRANSLATION

If the vānaprastha, understanding that even promotion to Brahmaloḥka is a miserable situation, develops complete detachment from all possible results of fruitive activities, then he may take the sannyāsa order of life.

TEXT 18.13

*iṣṭvā yathopadeśam mām
dattvā sarva-svam ṛtvije
agnīn sva-prāṇa āveśya
nirapekṣaḥ parivrajat*

iṣṭvā – having worshiped; *yathā* – according to; *upadeśam* – scriptural injunctions; *mām* – Me; *dattvā* – having given; *sarva-svam* – all one possesses; *ṛtvije* – to the priest; *agnīn* – the sacrificial fire; *sva-prāṇe* – within

oneself; *āveśya* – placing; *nirapekṣaḥ* – without attachment; *parivrajat* – one should take *sannyāsa* and set off.

TRANSLATION

Having worshiped Me according to scriptural injunctions and having given all one’s property to the sacrificial priest, one should place the fire sacrifice within oneself. Thus, with the mind completely detached, one should enter the sannyāsa order of life.

PURPORT

One cannot maintain the *sannyāsa* order of life unless one gives up all materialistic association and engages exclusively in devotional service to the Supreme Lord. Any material desire will gradually prove to be a stumbling block in the prosecution of renounced life. Therefore, a liberated *sannyāsī* must vigilantly keep himself free from the weeds of material desires, which surface principally in the form of attachment to women, money and reputation. One may possess a beautiful garden filled with fruits and flowers, but without vigilant maintenance the garden will be overrun by weeds. Similarly, one who achieves a beautiful state of Kṛṣṇa consciousness takes the *sannyāsa* order of life, but if he does not vigilantly and painstakingly keep his heart clean, there is always the danger of a relapse into illusion.

TEXT 18.14

*viprasya vai sannyasato
devā dārādi-rūpiṇaḥ
vighnān kurvanty ayam hy asmān
ākramya samiyāt param*

viprasya – of the saintly person; *vai* – indeed; *sannyasataḥ* – taking *sannyāsa*; *devāḥ* – the demigods; *dāra-ādi-rūpiṇaḥ* – appearing in the form of his wife or other women and attractive objects; *vighnān* – stumbling blocks; *kurvanti* – create; *ayam* – the *sannyāsī*; *hi* – indeed; *asmān* – them, the demigods; *ākramya* – surpassing; *samiyāt* – should go; *param* – back home, back to Godhead.

TRANSLATION

“This man taking sannyāsa is going to surpass us and go back home, back to Godhead.” Thus thinking, the demigods create stumbling blocks on the path of the sannyāsī by appearing before him in the shape of his former wife or other women and attractive objects. But the sannyāsī should pay the demigods and their manifestations no heed.

PURPORT

The demigods are empowered with universal administration and by their potency may appear as the former wife of a *sannyāsī* or as other women, so that the *sannyāsī* gives up his strict vows and becomes entangled in sense gratification. Lord Kṛṣṇa here encourages all *sannyāsīs* by telling them, “Pay no attention to such illusory manifestations. Continue your duties and go back home, back to Godhead.”

TEXT 18.15

*bibhṛyāc cen munir vāsaḥ
kaupīnācchādanam param
tyaktam na daṇḍa-pātrābhyām
anyat kiñcid anāpadi*

bibhṛyāt – would wear; *cet* – if; *munih* – the *sannyāsī*; *vāsaḥ* – clothes; *kaupīna* – the thick belt and underwear worn by saintly persons; *ācchādanam* – covering; *param* – other; *tyaktam* – given up; *na* – never; *daṇḍa* – besides his staff; *pātrābhyām* – and waterpot; *anyat* – else; *kiñcit* – anything; *anāpadi* – when there is no emergency.

TRANSLATION

If the *sannyāsī* desires to wear something besides a mere *kaupīna*, he may use another cloth around his waist and hips to cover the *kaupīna*. Otherwise, if there is no emergency, he should not accept anything besides his *daṇḍa* and waterpot.

PURPORT

A *sannyāsī* attracted to material possessions will spoil his worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 18.16

*dṛṣṭi-pūtam nyaset pādām
vastra-pūtam pibej jalam
satya-pūtām vaded vācam
manaḥ-pūtam samācaret*

dṛṣṭi – by the sight; *pūtam* – ascertained as pure; *nyaset* – he should place; *pādām* – his foot; *vastra* – by his cloth; *pūtam* – filtered; *pibet* – he should drink; *jalam* – water; *satya* – by truthfulness; *pūtām* – pure; *vadet* – he should speak; *vācam* – words; *manaḥ* – ascertained by the mind; *pūtam* – to be pure; *samācaret* – he should perform.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person should step or place his foot on the ground only after verifying with his eyes that there are no living creatures, such as insects, who might be injured by his foot. He should drink water only after filtering it through a portion of his cloth, and he should speak only words that possess the purity of truth. Similarly, he should perform only those activities his mind has carefully ascertained to be pure.

PURPORT

While walking, a saintly person is careful not to kill any tiny creatures on the ground. Similarly, he filters his drinking water through cloth to avoid swallowing small creatures living within the water. Speaking untruths simply for sense gratification is detrimental to devotional service and should be

avoided. Speaking impersonal philosophy and glorifying the sense gratification of the material world, even that found in heavenly planets, contaminates the heart and must be avoided by those desiring perfection in the loving service of the Lord. By serious consideration one can understand that any activity other than devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa has no ultimate value; therefore one should exclusively engage in the purified activities of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 18.17

*maunānīhānilāyāmā
daṇḍā vāg-deha-cetasām
na hy ete yasya santi aṅga
veṇubhir na bhaved yatiḥ*

mauna – avoiding useless speech; *anīha* – giving up fruitive activities; *anilāyāmāḥ* – controlling the breathing process; *daṇḍāḥ* – strict disciplines; *vāk* – of the voice; *deha* – of the body; *cetasām* – of the mind; *na* – not; *hi* – indeed; *ete* – these disciplines; *yasya* – of whom; *santi* – exist; *aṅga* – My dear Uddhava; *veṇubhiḥ* – by bamboo rods; *na* – never; *bhaved* – is; *yatiḥ* – a real *sannyāsī*.

TRANSLATION

One who has not accepted the three internal disciplines of avoiding useless speech, avoiding useless activities and controlling the life air can never be considered a sannyāsī merely because of his carrying bamboo rods.

PURPORT

The word *daṇḍa* indicates the staff carried by those in the renounced order of life, and *daṇḍa* also indicates severe discipline. The Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsīs* accept a staff made of three bamboo rods, signifying dedication of the body, mind and words to the service of the Supreme Lord. Here Lord Kṛṣṇa says that one must first accept these three *daṇḍas*, or disciplines (namely control of the voice, body and mind), within oneself. The practice of *anilāyāma* (or *prāṇāyāma*, regulating the life air) is meant to control the mind, and one who always thinks of service to Lord Kṛṣṇa has certainly achieved the perfection of *prāṇāyāma*. Merely carrying the three external *daṇḍas* without assimilating the internal *daṇḍas* of bodily, mental and vocal discipline can never make one an actual Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī*, as explained here by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

In the *Haṁsa-gītā* section of *Mahābhārata* and in Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Upadeśāmṛta*, there are instructions regarding the *sannyāsa* order of life. A conditioned soul who adopts only the external ornaments of *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsa* will not actually be able to control the senses. One who takes *sannyāsa* for false prestige, making a show of saintliness without actual advancement in *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, will soon be vanquished by the external energy of the Lord.

TEXT 18.18

*bhikṣām caturṣu varṇeṣu
vigarhyān varjayaṁś caret
saptāgārān asaṅkṣiptāṁs
tuṣyel labdhena tāvatā*

bhikṣām – charity obtained by begging; *caturṣu* – among the four; *varṇeṣu* – occupational divisions of society; *vigarhyān* – abominable, impure; *varjayan* – rejecting; *caret* – one should approach; *sapta* – seven; *āgārān* – houses; *asaṅkṣiptān* – without calculation or desire; *tuṣyet* – one should be satisfied; *labdhena* – with that obtained; *tāvatā* – with just that amount.

TRANSLATION

Rejecting those houses that are polluted and untouchable, one should approach without previous calculation seven houses and be satisfied with that which is obtained there by begging. According to necessity, one may approach each of the four occupational orders of society.

PURPORT

Saintly persons in the renounced order of life may beg from strict followers of Vedic culture to obtain foodstuffs and other bodily necessities. According to Vedic injunction, a renounced saint should beg from the *brāhmaṇa* community, but if there is danger of his starving, he may beg from *kṣatriyas*, then *vaiśyas*, and even *sūdras* if they are not sinful, as expressed here by the word *vigarhyān*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that *asaṅkṣiptān* indicates that one should not approach certain houses, calculating, “In that place I can get first-class food. That house has a big reputation among beggars.” Without discriminating, one should go to seven houses and be satisfied with whatever may be obtained there. One should beg for one’s personal maintenance only from houses where the inhabitants, being sincere followers of the *varṇāśrama* culture, have earned their livelihood by honest means and are free from sinful activities. One may beg alms from such householders. One must not beg alms for one’s personal maintenance from those who oppose the Supreme Lord’s devotional service, for such service is the whole purpose of *varṇāśrama* culture.

Those who oppose Vedic culture pass laws to make begging by saintly persons a criminal act. They thus insult and persecute saintly beggars, considering them to be ordinary vagrants. A lazy person begging to avoid work is certainly abominable, but a saintly person dedicated to the service of the Lord and practicing the discipline of begging to develop full dependence on the Lord’s mercy should be given all facility in human society. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that there are three forms of collecting alms. *Mādhukara* is the process of imitating the bee, who collects a tiny amount of nectar from each flower. In this way, the saintly person

accepts a very small amount from each person, avoiding social conflict. The process mentioned here is *asaṅkṛpta*, by which one indiscriminately approaches seven houses, being satisfied with whatever may be obtained. *Prāk-praṇīta* is that process by which one establishes regular donors and collects one's maintenance from them. In this regard Śrīla Vīrarāghava Ācārya has described the initial stage of *sannyāsa*, called *kuṭīcaka*, as follows. A man accepting the initial stage of *sannyāsa* arranges for his children or other relatives and well-wishers to build him a *kuṭī*, or meditation cottage. He gives up worldly affairs and sits within the cottage, trying to remain free from lust, anger, greed, illusion and so on. According to the prescribed injunctions of regulated life, he accepts a *tridaṇḍa*, purifies himself with a waterpot, shaves his head (leaving a *śikhā*, or tuft), chants *Gāyatrī mantra* on the sacred thread and wears saffron garments. Bathing regularly, cleansing, performing *ācamana*, chanting *japa*, studying the *Vedas*, remaining celibate and meditating on the Lord, he receives regular supplies of food from his children, friends and relatives. Accepting only the bare necessities of life, he remains fixed in his cottage up to the moment of liberation.

TEXT 18.19

*bahir jalāśayaṁ gatvā
tatropasprśya vāg-yataḥ
vibhajya pāvitaṁ śeṣaṁ
bhuñjītāśeṣam āhṛtam*

bahiḥ – outside of urban areas, in a secluded place; *jala* – of water; *āśayam* – to a reservoir; *gatvā* – going; *tatra* – there; *upasprśya* – being purified by contact with water; *vāg-yataḥ* – without speaking; *vibhajya* – duly distributing; *pāvitaṁ* – purified; *śeṣam* – remnants; *bhuñjīta* – one should eat; *aśeṣam* – completely; *āhṛtam* – gathered by begging.

TRANSLATION

Taking the food gathered through begging, one should leave the populated areas and go to a reservoir of water in a secluded place. There, having taken a bath and washed one's hands thoroughly, one should distribute portions of the food to others who may request it. One should do this without speaking. Then, having thoroughly cleansed the remnants, one should eat everything on one's plate, leaving nothing for future consumption.

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that a saintly person should not argue or quarrel with materialistic persons who may request or demand part of his foodstuff. The word *vibhajya* indicates that one should give something to such persons to avoid disturbance, and then, offering the remnants to Lord Viṣṇu, one should eat everything on one's plate, without saving food for the future. The word *bahiḥ* indicates that one should not eat

in a public place, and *vāg-yata* indicates that one should eat silently, meditating upon the Lord's mercy.

TEXT 18.20

*ekaś caren mahīm etām
niḥsaṅgaḥ saṁyatendriyaḥ
ātma-kṛīḍa ātma-rata
ātma-vān sama-darśanaḥ*

ekaḥ – alone; *caret* – one should move about; *mahīm* – the earth; *etām* – this; *niḥsaṅgaḥ* – without any material attachment; *saṁyata-indriyaḥ* – completely controlling the senses; *ātma-kṛīḍaḥ* – enthusiastic by realization of the Supersoul; *ātma-rataḥ* – completely satisfied in spiritual understanding; *ātma-vān* – steady on the spiritual platform; *sama-darśanaḥ* – with equal vision everywhere.

TRANSLATION

Without any material attachment, with senses fully controlled, remaining enthusiastic, and satisfied in realization of the Supreme Lord and his own self, the saintly person should travel about the earth alone. Having equal vision everywhere, he should be steady on the spiritual platform.

PURPORT

One who remains attached to material sense gratification cannot be steady in the process of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. Being shackled by illusory desires, he is not able to fully control the senses. Actually, one should take shelter of devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours a day, for by such service one remains within the scope of spiritual reality. By chanting and hearing the holy names of the Lord along with the Lord's glories and pastimes, one naturally drifts away from the field of material sense gratification. Good association with Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees automatically vanquishes useless material association, and one is able to carry out the Vedic injunctions meant to lift the conditioned soul out of the material field and onto the liberated platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this regard, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states in his *Upadeśāmṛta* (4):

*dadāti pratigrhṇāti
guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhuñkte bhojayate caiva
ṣaḍ-vidham pṛīti-lakṣaṇam*

“Offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasādam* and offering *prasādam* are the six symptoms of love shared by one devotee and another.”

One who thus learns to associate with the Lord's devotees actually remains insulated from the contamination of material life. By pure association one gradually understands the name, form, qualities, associates, pastimes and devotional service of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and thus even in this lifetime one can

become a resident of the spiritual world. In the association of pure devotees there is no material contamination and no useless discussion, since all pure devotees are fully engaged twenty-four hours a day in the loving service of the Lord. By the influence of such devotees, one develops equal vision (*sama-darśana*) and sees the realized knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere. As one begins to understand his eternal relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa, he becomes *ātma-vān*, situated in his constitutional position. An advanced Vaiṣṇava, constantly enjoying the mellows of loving devotional service and carrying out the mission of the Lord on the earth, is *ātma-kṛīḍa*, one who enjoys life within the internal potency of the Supreme Lord. The advanced devotee remains constantly attracted to the Supreme Lord and His devotees and is therefore *ātma-rata*, fully satisfied by constant engagement in devotional service. One cannot possibly develop the exalted qualities mentioned here without becoming an unalloyed devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who is envious of the Lord and His devotees becomes attracted to bad association, gradually loses control of the senses and falls down into the network of impious life. The innumerable varieties of nondevotees are like branches sprouting from the single tree of enviousness of the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, and their association should be given up by all means. Without unalloyed devotional service to the Lord, one loses touch with the desire and mission of the Personality of Godhead and becomes attracted to worshipping the wonderful male and female creations of the Lord's illusory energy – demigods, demigoddesses, celebrities, politicians, prostitutes, etc. In this way, one foolishly considers something besides Lord Kṛṣṇa to be supremely wonderful. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa is the only true object of worship for those desiring to experience unlimited beauty and pleasure. By seriously taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can realize the transcendental position of Lord Kṛṣṇa and gradually develop all of the qualities mentioned in this verse.

TEXT 18.21

*vivikta-kṣema-śaraṇo
mad-bhāva-vimalāśayaḥ
ātmānam cintayed ekam
abhedena mayā muniḥ*

vivikta – solitary; *kṣema* – safe; *śaraṇaḥ* – his dwelling; *mat* – in Me; *bhāva* – by constant thought; *vimala* – purified; *āśayaḥ* – his consciousness; *ātmānam* – on the soul; *cintayet* – he should concentrate; *ekam* – alone; *abhedena* – not different; *mayā* – from Me; *muniḥ* – the sage.

TRANSLATION

Dwelling in a safe and solitary place, his mind purified by constant thought of Me, the sage should concentrate on the soul alone, realizing it to be nondifferent from Me.

PURPORT

One who is engaged exclusively in the devotional service of the Lord in one of the five principal relationships is to be known as a pure Vaiṣṇava. Because

of his advanced stage of love of Godhead, a pure devotee is able to constantly chant the glories of the Lord without material hindrance. He is not interested in anything except Lord Kṛṣṇa and never considers himself to be qualitatively different from the Lord. One who is still attracted by the gross material body and subtle material mind, which cover the eternal soul, continues to see himself as different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This misconception is due to false identification with matter. With senses purified of material contamination, one must serve the Lord, who is the master of all senses, and thus one's devotional service is considered free from discrepancy.

One who ignores the injunctions of Vedic literature uselessly wastes his sense activity in illusory material activities. He falsely considers himself to be different from Lord Kṛṣṇa and therefore imagines that he possesses an interest independent of the Lord's interest. There is no possibility that such a person can achieve steadiness in life, because the material field of action is constantly being shifted and transformed by the disturbing influence of time. If a devotee begins to cultivate an interest apart from the loving service of the Lord, his meditation on his oneness with the Lord will be disturbed and overturned. When the mind deviates from the lotus feet of the Lord, the duality of material nature again becomes prominent within the mind, and one resumes a work program based on the three modes of material nature. One who is not fixed in one's own relationship with the Supreme Lord cannot be fearless or steady and is deprived of the shelter of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore one should seriously contemplate, as described in this verse, one's identity as a small particle of consciousness not different from the supreme consciousness, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus one should remain steady in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 18.22

*anvīkṣetātmano bandham
mokṣam ca jñāna-niṣṭhayā
bandha indriya-vikṣepo
mokṣa eṣām ca saṁyamaḥ*

anvīkṣeta - one should see by careful study; *ātmanaḥ* - of the soul; *bandham* - the bondage; *mokṣam* - the liberation; *ca* - also; *jñāna* - in knowledge; *niṣṭhayā* - by steadiness; *bandhaḥ* - bondage; *indriya* - of the senses; *vikṣepaḥ* - deviation to sense gratification; *mokṣaḥ* - liberation; *eṣām* - of these senses; *ca* - and; *saṁyamaḥ* - complete control.

TRANSLATION

By steady knowledge a sage should clearly ascertain the nature of the soul's bondage and liberation. Bondage occurs when the senses are deviated to sense gratification, and complete control of the senses constitutes liberation.

PURPORT

By carefully understanding one's eternal nature, one will not again be bound up in the shackles of material energy, and by constant engagement in the service of the Absolute Truth, one is liberated. Then the flickering material senses can no longer drag one into the false consciousness of being a material enjoyer. Such steady sense control gives one relief from the harassment of material sense gratification.

TEXT 18.23

*tasmān niyamyā ṣaṭ-vargaṁ
mad-bhāvena caren muniḥ
viraktaḥ kṣudra-kāmebhyo
labdhvātmani sukhaṁ mahat*

tasmāt – therefore; *niyamyā* – completely controlling; *ṣaṭ-vargaṁ* – the six senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste and the mind); *mad-bhāvena* – by consciousness of Me; *caret* – should live; *muniḥ* – the sage; *viraktaḥ* – detached; *kṣudra* – insignificant; *kāmebhyaḥ* – from sense gratification; *labdhvā* – having experienced; *ātmani* – in the self; *sukham* – happiness; *mahat* – great.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, completely controlling the five senses and the mind by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, a sage, having experienced spiritual bliss within the self, should live detached from insignificant material sense gratification.

TEXT 18.24

*pura-grāma-vrajān sārthān
bhikṣārthaṁ praviśaṁś caret
puṇya-deśa-saric-chaila-
vanāśrama-vatīm mahīm*

pura – cities; *grāma* – towns; *vrajān* – and pasturing grounds; *sa-arthān* – those working for bodily maintenance; *bhikṣā-artham* – for begging alms; *praviśan* – entering; *caret* – he should travel; *puṇya* – pure; *deśa* – places; *saric* – with rivers; *śaila* – mountains; *vana* – and forests; *āśrama-vatīm* – possessing such residential places; *mahīm* – the earth.

TRANSLATION

The sage should travel in sanctified places, by flowing rivers and within the solitude of mountains and forests. He should enter the cities, towns and pasturing grounds and approach ordinary working men only to beg his bare sustenance.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *pura* refers to cities and towns with shopping centers, markets and other commercial enterprises, whereas *grāma* refers to smaller towns, lacking such facilities. The *vānaprastha* or *sannyāsī* trying to become free from material attachment should avoid those

who are working day and night for sense gratification, approaching them only to engage them in necessary acts of charity. Those who are preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world are understood to be liberated souls, and therefore they constantly approach the materialistic living entities to engage them in the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. However, even such preachers should strictly avoid contact with the materialistic world when not actually necessary for advancing the mission of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The injunction is that one should not deal unnecessarily with the materialistic world.

TEXT 18.25

*vānaprasthāśrama-padeṣv
abhīkṣṇam bhaikṣyam ācaret
saṁsidhyaty āśv asammohaḥ
śuddha-sattvaḥ śīlāndhasā*

vānaprastha-āśrama - of the *vānaprastha* order of life; *padeṣu* - in the position; *abhīkṣṇam* - always; *bhaikṣyam* - begging; *ācaret* - one should perform; *saṁsidhyati* - one becomes spiritually perfect; *āśu* - quickly; *asammohaḥ* - free from illusion; *śuddha* - purified; *sattvaḥ* - existence; *śīla* - obtained by begging or gleaning; *andhasā* - by food.

TRANSLATION

One in the *vānaprastha* order of life should always practice taking charity from others, for one is thereby freed from illusion and quickly becomes perfect in spiritual life. Indeed, one who subsists on food grains obtained in such a humble manner purifies his existence.

PURPORT

In the Western countries people are generally so dull that they cannot distinguish between a saintly beggar and an ordinary hobo or hippie. A saintly beggar is constantly engaged in authorized devotional service to the Supreme Lord and accepts only what he requires for his bare maintenance. The author of this book remembers entering the Kṛṣṇa consciousness society as an arrogant university student and being quickly humbled by the process of begging on the street on behalf of Kṛṣṇa. This process is not theoretical but actually purifies one's existence by forcing one to offer respect to all others. Unless one offers respect to others, one's begging will be fruitless. Also, by begging one will not often eat very sumptuously. This is good because when the tongue is controlled the other senses are quickly pacified. A *vānaprastha* should never give up the purifying process of begging for his food, and ordinary people should not foolishly equate a lazy bum living at the cost of others with a saintly beggar engaged in higher duties for the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 18.26

*naitad vastutayā paśyed
dṛśyamānaṃ vinaśyati
asakta-citto viramed
ihāmutra-cikīṣitāt*

na – never; *etat* – this; *vastutayā* – as ultimate reality; *paśyet* – one should see; *dṛśyamānam* – being observed by direct experience; *vinaśyati* – is destroyed; *asakta* – without attachment; *cittaḥ* – whose consciousness; *viramet* – one should be detached; *iha* – in this world; *amutra* – and in one’s future life; *cikīṣitāt* – from activities performed for material advancement.

TRANSLATION

One should never see as ultimate reality those material things which obviously will perish. With consciousness free from material attachment, one should retire from all activities meant for material progress in this life and the next.

PURPORT

One may doubt how a gentleman can retire from family life and live as a beggar, eating meager foodstuffs. The Lord here responds by stating that sumptuous or palatable foods – along with all other material objects, such as the body itself – should never be seen as ultimate reality, since they are obviously perishable items. One should retire from material programs destined to enhance the quality of one’s illusion both in this life and the next.

TEXT 18.27

*yad etad ātmani jagan
mano-vāk-prāṇa-saṃhatam
sarvaṃ māyeti tarkeṇa
sva-sthas tyaktvā na tat smaret*

yat – which; *etat* – this; *ātmani* – in the Supreme Lord; *jagat* – universe; *manaḥ* – of the mind; *vāk* – speech; *prāṇa* – and life air; *saṃhatam* – formed; *sarvam* – all; *māyā* – material illusion; *iti* – thus; *tarkeṇa* – by logic; *sva-sthaḥ* – fixed in the self; *tyaktvā* – giving up; *na* – never; *tat* – that; *smaret* – one should remember.

TRANSLATION

One should logically consider the universe, which is situated within the Lord, and one’s own material body, which is composed of mind, speech and life air, to be ultimately products of the Lord’s illusory energy. Thus situated in the self, one should give up one’s faith in these things and should never again make them the object of one’s meditation.

PURPORT

Every conditioned soul considers the material world to be the object of his personal sense gratification and therefore considers the material body to be his actual identity. The word *tyaktvā* indicates that one must give up one’s false identification with the material world and the material body, since both are merely products of the illusory potency of the Lord. One should never

again meditate on the material world and body as objects of sense gratification but rather should become situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Looking at things from the eternal point of view, this world is simply illusory. The material energy of the Lord is devoid of consciousness and thus cannot be the basis of actual happiness. The Supreme Lord Himself is the only absolutely conscious entity. He is absolutely self-sufficient, standing alone as Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead. Only Viṣṇu, and not the insignificant workings of material nature, can give us the actual perfection of life.

TEXT 18.28

*jñāna-niṣṭho virakto vā
mad-bhakto vānapekṣakaḥ
sa-liṅgān āśramāṁs tyaktvā
cared avidhi-gocaraḥ*

jñāna - to philosophical knowledge; *niṣṭhaḥ* - dedicated; *viraktaḥ* - detached from external manifestations; *vā* - either; *mat-bhaktaḥ* - My devotee; *vā* - or; *anapekṣakaḥ* - not desiring even liberation; *sa-liṅgān* - with their rituals and external regulations; *āśramān* - the duties pertaining to particular statuses of life; *tyaktvā* - giving up; *cared* - one should conduct oneself; *avidhi-gocaraḥ* - beyond the range of rules and regulations.

TRANSLATION

A learned transcendentalist dedicated to the cultivation of knowledge and thus detached from external objects, or My devotee who is detached even from desire for liberation - both neglect those duties based on external rituals or paraphernalia. Thus their conduct is beyond the range of rules and regulations.

PURPORT

This verse describes the *paramahansa* stage of life, in which there is no further need for rituals, external paraphernalia or rules and regulations. A completely realized *jñāna-yogī* pursuing liberation, or beyond that, a perfect devotee of the Lord who does not desire even liberation, has no further desire for material engagement. When one completely purifies the mind, there is no possibility of sinful behavior. Rules and regulations are meant for guiding those who have a tendency to act in ignorance or for personal gratification, but one who is perfect in spiritual consciousness can move freely, as described here by the Lord. One who tends to drive a car recklessly or who is unfamiliar with the local road conditions certainly needs the discipline of elaborate road signs and police enforcement of traffic laws. A perfectly safe driver, however, is thoroughly familiar with the local road conditions. He has no real need for the enforcement officials or the speed limits and caution signs meant for those unfamiliar with the road. A pure devotee of the Lord desires nothing except service to the Lord; he automatically fulfills the purport of all negative and positive injunctions, which is to always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him. One should not,

however, artificially imitate the exalted position of a *paramahansa* devotee, for such imitation will quickly ruin one's spiritual career.

In the previous verses the Lord has elaborately described various rituals, paraphernalia and disciplines for the various spiritual orders of life. The *sannyāsī*, for example, carries a *tridaṇḍa* and a waterpot and eats and lives in a particular way. A *paramahansa* devotee, having completely given up all attachment and interest in the material world, is no longer attracted by such external features of renunciation.

TEXT 18.29

*budho bālaka-vat krīdet
kuśalo jaḍa-vac caret
vaded unmatta-vad vidvān
go-caryām naigamaś caret*

budhaḥ – although intelligent; *bālaka-vat* – like a child (oblivious to honor and dishonor); *krīdet* – he should enjoy life; *kuśalaḥ* – although expert; *jaḍa-vat* – like a stunted person; *caret* – he should act; *vadet* – he should speak; *unmatta-vat* – like an insane person; *vidvān* – although most learned; *go-caryām* – unrestricted behavior; *naigamaḥ* – although expert in Vedic injunctions; *caret* – he should perform.

TRANSLATION

Although most wise, the paramahansa should enjoy life like a child, oblivious to honor and dishonor; although most expert, he should behave like a stunted, incompetent person; although most learned, he should speak like an insane person; and although a scholar learned in Vedic regulations, he should behave in an unrestricted manner.

PURPORT

A *paramahansa-sannyāsī*, fearing that his mind may be deviated by the tremendous prestige that people sometimes offer to a perfectly self-realized person, conceals his position as described in this verse. A self-realized person does not try to please the mass of people, nor does he desire social prestige, since the mission of his life is to remain detached from the material world and to always please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although neglecting ordinary rules and regulations, a *paramahansa* does not ever become sinful or immoral, but rather neglects ritualistic aspects of religious custom, such as dressing in a particular way, performing certain ceremonies or executing specific penances and austerities.

The pure devotees of the Lord who have dedicated their lives to propagating the Lord's holy name must very expertly present Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a way pleasing to the mass of people so that they will accept it. Those who are preaching should try to make Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa popular without trying to advance their personal prestige in the name of missionary progress. A *paramahansa* not engaged in distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, should have no attachment whatsoever to public opinion.

TEXT 18.30

*veda-vāda-rato na syān
na pāṣaṇḍī na haitukaḥ
śuṣka-vāda-vivāde na
kañcit pakṣam samāśrayet*

veda-vāda – in the *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas*; *rataḥ* – engaged; *na* – never; *syāt* – should be; *na* – nor; *pāṣaṇḍī* – atheistic, acting against Vedic injunctions; *na* – nor; *haitukaḥ* – a mere logician or skeptic; *śuṣka-vāda* – of useless topics; *vivāde* – in arguments; *na* – never; *kañcit* – any; *pakṣam* – side; *samāśrayet* – should take.

TRANSLATION

A devotee should never engage in the fruitive rituals mentioned in the karma-kāṇḍa section of the Vedas, nor should he become atheistic, acting or speaking in opposition to Vedic injunctions. Similarly, he should never speak like a mere logician or skeptic or take any side whatsoever in useless arguments.

PURPORT

Although a *paramahansa* devotee conceals his exalted position, certain activities are forbidden even for one trying to conceal himself. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that in the name of concealment one should not become a ghost. The word *pāṣaṇḍa* refers to atheistic philosophies opposing the *Vedas*, such as Buddhism, and *haituka* refers to those who accept only that which can be demonstrated by mundane logic or experimentation. Since the whole purpose of the *Vedas* is to understand that which is beyond material experience, a skeptic's so-called logic is irrelevant to spiritual progress. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī warns us in this regard that a devotee should not read atheistic literature, even with the purpose of refining arguments against atheism. Such literature should be entirely avoided. The above-mentioned prohibited activities are so detrimental to the advancement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that they should not be adopted even as a superficial show.

TEXT 18.31

*nodvijeta janād dhīro
janam codvejayen na tu
ati-vādāms titikṣeta
nāvamanyeta kañcana
deham uddīśya paśu-vad
vairam kuryān na kenacit*

na – never; *udvijeta* – should be disturbed or frightened; *janāt* – because of other people; *dhīraḥ* – a saintly person; *janam* – other people; *ca* – also; *udvejayet* – should frighten or disturb; *na* – never; *tu* – indeed; *ati-vādān* –

insulting or harsh words; *titikṣeta* – he should tolerate; *na* – never; *avamanyeta* – should belittle; *kañcana* – anyone; *deham* – the body; *uddiśya* – for the sake of; *paśu-vat* – like an animal; *vairam* – hostility; *kuryāt* – he should create; *na* – never; *kenacit* – with anyone.

TRANSLATION

A saintly person should never let others frighten or disturb him and, similarly, should never frighten or disturb other people. He should tolerate the insults of others and should never himself belittle anyone. He should never create hostility with anyone for the sake of the material body, for he would thus be no better than an animal.

PURPORT

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has stated:

*trṇād api su-nīcena
taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā māna-dena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

“One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige and ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.”

A Vaiṣṇava should never disturb any other living entity with his body, mind or words. He should always be tolerant and never belittle others. Although a Vaiṣṇava may act powerfully against the demons for Lord Kṛṣṇa’s sake – as did Arjuna, Hanumān and many other great devotees – a Vaiṣṇava becomes very meek and humble in regard to his own reputation.

TEXT 18.32

*eka eva paro hy ātmā
bhūteṣv ātmany avasthitaḥ
yathendur uda-pātreṣu
bhūtāny ekātmakāni ca*

ekaḥ – one; *eva* – indeed; *paraḥ* – Supreme; *hi* – certainly; *ātmā* – the Personality of Godhead; *bhūteṣu* – within all bodies; *ātmani* – within the living entity; *avasthitaḥ* – situated; *yathā* – just as; *induḥ* – the moon; *uda* – of water; *pātreṣu* – in different reservoirs; *bhūtāni* – all material bodies; *eka* – of the one Supreme Lord; *ātmakāni* – composed of the energy; *ca* – also.

TRANSLATION

The one Supreme Lord is situated within all material bodies and within everyone’s soul. Just as the moon is reflected in innumerable reservoirs of water, the Supreme Lord, although one, is present within everyone. Thus every material body is ultimately composed of the energy of the one Supreme Lord.

PURPORT

All material bodies are composed of the same material nature, which is ultimately the potency of the one Supreme Lord. Therefore, one cannot justify feelings of hostility toward any living entity. In carrying out the Lord's mission on earth, the bona fide representatives of God never become envious or hostile toward anyone, even when chastised by those who flagrantly violate the laws of God. Every living being is ultimately the son of God, and God is present within everyone's body. Therefore, saintly persons should be very careful even when dealing with the most insignificant person or creature.

TEXT 18.33

*alabdhvā na viṣīdeta
kāle kāle'śanam kvacit
labdhvā na hṛṣyed dhṛtimān
ubhayam daiva-tantritam*

alabdhvā – not obtaining; *na* – not; *viṣīdeta* – he should be depressed; *kāle kāle* – at different times; *aśanam* – food; *kvacit* – whatever; *labdhvā* – obtaining; *na* – not; *hṛṣyeta* – should rejoice; *dhṛti-mān* – fixed in determination; *ubhayam* – both (obtaining and not obtaining good food); *daiva* – of the supreme power of God; *tantritam* – under the control.

TRANSLATION

If at times one does not obtain proper food one should not be depressed, and when one obtains sumptuous food one should not rejoice. Being fixed in determination, one should understand both situations to be under the control of God.

PURPORT

Because we desire to enjoy the material body, the varieties of material experience bring us flickering happiness and inevitable suffering. We foolishly consider ourselves to be controllers and doers, and thus through false egotism we are subjected to the volatile feelings of the material body and mind.

TEXT 18.34

*āhārātham samīheta
yuktam tat-prāṇa-dhāraṇam
tattvam vimṛśyate tena
tad vijñāya vimucyate*

āhāra – to eat; *artham* – in order; *samīheta* – one should endeavor; *yuktam* – proper; *tat* – of the person; *prāṇa* – life force; *dhāraṇam* – sustaining; *tattvam* – spiritual truth; *vimṛśyate* – is contemplated; *tena* – by that strength of the mind, senses and life air; *tad* – that truth; *vijñāya* – understanding; *vimucyate* – one is liberated.

TRANSLATION

If required, one should endeavor to get sufficient foodstuffs, because it is always necessary and proper to maintain one's health. When the senses, mind and life air are fit, one can contemplate spiritual truth, and by understanding the truth one is liberated.

PURPORT

If foodstuffs do not come automatically or by token begging, then one should endeavor to keep body and soul together so that one's spiritual program will not be disturbed. Normally, those who are endeavoring in spiritual life cannot maintain steady concentration on the truth if their mind and body are weakened by undereating. On the other hand, extravagant consumption of food is a great impediment for spiritual advancement and should be given up. The word *āhārārtham* in this verse indicates eating only to keep oneself fit for spiritual advancement and does not justify unnecessary collecting or warehousing of so-called alms. If one collects more than necessary for one's spiritual program, the surplus becomes a heavy weight that drags one down to the material platform.

TEXT 18.35

*yadṛcchayopapannānnaṁ
adyāc chreṣṭham utāparam
tathā vāsaḥ tathā śayyām
prāptaṁ prāptaṁ bhajet muniḥ*

yadṛcchayā - of its own accord; *upapanna* - acquired; *annaṁ* - food; *adyāt* - he should eat; *śreṣṭham* - first class; *uta* - or; *aparam* - low class; *tathā* - similarly; *vāsaḥ* - clothing; *tathā* - similarly; *śayyām* - bedding; *prāptaṁ prāptaṁ* - whatever is automatically obtained; *bhajet* - should accept; *muniḥ* - the sage.

TRANSLATION

A sage should accept the food, clothing and bedding - be they of excellent or inferior quality - that come of their own accord.

PURPORT

Sometimes excellent, sumptuous food will come without endeavor, and at other times tasteless food appears. A sage should not become happily excited when a sumptuous plate is brought to him, nor should he angrily refuse ordinary food that comes of its own accord. If no food comes at all, as mentioned in the previous verse, one must endeavor to avoid starvation. From these verses it appears that even a saintly sage must have a good dose of common sense.

TEXT 18.36

*śaucam ācamaṇaṁ snānaṁ
na tu codanayā caret
anyāś ca niyamāñ jñānī
yathāhaṁ līlayeśvaraḥ*

śaucam – general cleanliness; *ācamanam* – purifying the hands with water; *snānam* – taking bath; *na* – not; *tu* – indeed; *codanayā* – by force; *caret* – one should perform; *anyān* – other; *ca* – also; *niyamān* – regular duties; *jñānī* – one who has realized knowledge of Me; *yathā* – just as; *aham* – I; *līlayā* – by My own desire; *īśvaraḥ* – the Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

Just as I, the Supreme Lord, execute regulative duties by My own free will, similarly, one who has realized knowledge of Me should maintain general cleanliness, purify his hands with water, take bath and execute other regulative duties not by force but by his own free will.

PURPORT

When the Supreme Personality of Godhead descends to the material world, He generally observes the Vedic regulative duties to set a proper example for mankind. The Lord acts by His own free will, since no one can oblige, force or impel the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, the *jñānī*, or self-realized soul, is fixed on the spiritual platform, beyond the material body, and should therefore execute the regulative duties in relation to the material body by his own free will and not as a servant of the rules and regulations. A self-realized soul is a servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa and not of rules and regulations. Nevertheless, a transcendentalist strictly complies with regular duties for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. In other words, one who is advanced in loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa spontaneously moves according to the will of the Supreme. One who is perfectly situated in spiritual realization cannot become a servant of the material body or of rules and regulations concerning the material body. However, this verse and other similar statements in Vedic scriptures should not be ignorantly misinterpreted to justify immoral, whimsical behavior. Lord Kṛṣṇa is discussing the *paramah̥ṁsa* stage of life, and those who are attached to the material body have nothing to do with this *paramah̥ṁsa* stage, nor should they exploit its unique privileges and status.

TEXT 18.37

*na hi tasya vikalpākhyā
yā ca mad-vīkṣayā hatā
ā-dehāntāt kvacit khyātis
tataḥ sampadyate mayā*

na – not; *hi* – certainly; *tasya* – for the realized person; *vikalpa* – of something separate from Kṛṣṇa; *ākhyā* – perception; *yā* – which perception; *ca* – also; *mat* – of Me; *vīkṣayā* – by realized knowledge; *hatā* – is destroyed; *ā* – until; *deha* – of the body; *antāt* – the death; *kvacit* – sometimes; *khyātiḥ* – such perception; *tataḥ* – then; *sampadyate* – achieves equal opulences; *mayā* – with Me.

TRANSLATION

A realized soul no longer sees anything as separate from Me, for his realized knowledge of Me has destroyed such illusory perception. Since the material body and mind were previously accustomed to this kind of perception, it may sometimes appear to recur; but at the time of death the self-realized soul achieves opulences equal to Mine.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa explained in verse 32 of this chapter that all material and spiritual objects are expansions of His potency. By realized knowledge of the Lord one gives up the illusion that anything, anywhere, at any time, can be separate from Lord Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa has also explained, however, that one must keep the material body and mind fit for executing devotional service; therefore even a self-realized soul may sometimes appear to accept or reject certain conditions or objects within this world. Such brief apparent duality of concentration upon something other than Kṛṣṇa does not change the liberated status of a self-realized soul, who achieves at the time of death the same opulences as Lord Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world. The function of illusion is to separate one from Lord Kṛṣṇa, but the brief and occasional appearance of duality in the behavior or mentality of a pure devotee never separates him from the Lord. It does not constitute actual illusion, for it lacks the essential function of illusion, namely, the separation of one from Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura describes the self-realized devotees as follows. The devotee of the Lord does not see anything as separate from Lord Kṛṣṇa and thus does not consider himself to be a permanent resident of the material world. At every moment the devotee is moved by his desire to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa. Just as those who are inclined to sense gratification pass their time making arrangements for their enjoyment, similarly the devotees are busy throughout the day arranging their devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore they have no time to act like materialistic sense enjoyers. To ordinary persons it may seem that a pure devotee is seeing something as separate from Kṛṣṇa, but a pure devotee is actually fixed in his status as a liberated soul and is guaranteed to achieve a spiritual body in the kingdom of God. Ordinary, materialistic persons cannot always understand the activities of a pure devotee of the Lord, and thus they may try to minimize his position, considering him to be the same as themselves. At the end of life, however, the results achieved by the devotees of the Lord and ordinary materialists are vastly different.

TEXT 18.38

*duḥkharkeṣu kāmeṣu
jāta-nirveda ātmavān
ajijñāsita-mad-dharmo
muniṁ gurum upavrajat*

duḥkha – unhappiness; *udarkeṣu* – in that which brings as its future result; *kāmeṣu* – in sense gratification; *jāta* – arisen; *nirvedaḥ* – detachment; *ātma-vān* – desiring spiritual perfection in life; *ajijñāsita* – one who has not seriously considered; *mat* – Me; *dharmah* – the process of obtaining; *munim* – a wise person; *gurum* – a spiritual master; *upavrajat* – he should approach.

TRANSLATION

One who is detached from sense gratification, knowing its result to be miserable, and who desires spiritual perfection, but who has not seriously analyzed the process for obtaining Me, should approach a bona fide and learned spiritual master.

PURPORT

In the previous verses Lord Kṛṣṇa described the duty of one who has developed perfect knowledge. Now Lord Kṛṣṇa discusses the situation of one who, desiring self-realization, has become detached from material life but lacks perfect knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Such a detached person desiring self-realization must approach the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and then he will quickly come to the standard of perfect understanding. One who is seriously inclined toward spiritual perfection should not hesitate to adopt the regular discipline necessary for achieving the highest perfection in life.

TEXT 18.39

*tāvat paricaret bhaktaḥ
śraddhāvān anasūyakaḥ
yāvad brahma vijānīyān
mām eva gurum ādṛtaḥ*

tāvat – that long; *paricaret* – should serve; *bhaktaḥ* – the devotee; *śraddhāvān* – with great faith; *anasūyakaḥ* – being without envy; *yāvat* – until; *brahma* – spiritual knowledge; *vijānīyāt* – he clearly realizes; *mām* – Me; *eva* – indeed; *gurum* – the spiritual master; *ādṛtaḥ* – with great respect.

TRANSLATION

Until a devotee has clearly realized spiritual knowledge, he should continue with great faith and respect and without envy to render personal service to the guru, who is nondifferent from Me.

PURPORT

As stated by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura in his *Gurv-aṣṭaka* prayers, *yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādaḥ*: one receives the mercy of the Supreme Lord through the mercy of the bona fide spiritual master. A devotee who has been blessed by his *guru* with spiritual knowledge becomes qualified to directly engage in the mission of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Prabhupāda always emphasized that service to the spiritual master in separation, pushing on the mission of the *guru*, is the highest form of devotional service. The word *paricaret* in this verse indicates waiting upon one's master by rendering personal service. In other words, one who has not clearly realized the teachings of his spiritual master should remain very close

to the *guru* to avoid falling down into illusion, but one who has acquired realized knowledge by the mercy of his spiritual master may expand the spiritual master's mission by traveling around the world to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXTS 18.40-41

*yas tv asaṁyata-ṣaḍ-vargaḥ
pracaṇḍendriya-sārathiḥ
jñāna-vairāgya-rahitas
tridaṇḍam upajīvati
surān ātmānam ātma-stham
nihnute mām ca dharma-hā
avipakva-kaṣāyo'smād
amuṣmāc ca vihīyate*

yaḥ – one who; *tu* – but; *asaṁyata* – having not controlled; *ṣaḍ* – the six; *vargaḥ* – items of contamination; *pracaṇḍa* – fierce; *indriya* – of the senses; *sārathiḥ* – the driver, intelligence; *jñāna* – of knowledge; *vairāgya* – and detachment; *rahitaḥ* – bereft; *tridaṇḍam* – the *sannyāsa* order of life; *upajīvati* – utilizing for one's bodily maintenance; *surān* – the worshipable demigods; *ātmānam* – his own self; *ātma-stham* – situated within himself; *nihnute* – denies; *mām* – Me; *ca* – also; *dharma-hā* – ruining religious principles; *avipakva* – not yet dissolved; *kaṣāyaḥ* – contamination; *asmāt* – from this world; *amuṣmāt* – from the next life; *ca* – also; *vihīyate* – he is lost, deviated.

TRANSLATION

One who has not controlled the six forms of illusion [lust, anger, greed, excitement, false pride and intoxication], whose intelligence, the leader of the senses, is extremely attached to material things, who is bereft of knowledge and detachment, who adopts the *sannyāsa* order of life to make a living, who denies the worshipable demigods, his own self and the Supreme Lord within himself, thus ruining all religious principles, and who is still infected by material contamination, is deviated and lost both in this life and the next.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa here condemns bogus personalities who adopt the *sannyāsa* order of life for sense gratification while still maintaining all of the symptoms of gross illusion. A false show of *sannyāsa* is never accepted by intelligent followers of Vedic principles. So-called *sannyāsīs* who ruin all Vedic religious principles sometimes become famous among foolish persons, but they are simply cheating themselves and their followers. These charlatan *sannyāsīs* are never actually engaged in the loving devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 18.42

*bhikṣor dharmāḥ śamo'himsā
tapa īkṣā vanaukaśaḥ*

*gṛhiṇo bhūta-rakṣejyā
dvijasyācārya-sevanam*

bhikṣoḥ – of a *sannyāsī*; *dharmah* – the main religious principle; *śamaḥ* – equanimity; *ahimsā* – nonviolence; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *īkṣā* – discrimination (between the body and the soul); *vana* – in the forest; *okasaḥ* – of one dwelling, a *vānaprastha*; *gṛhiṇaḥ* – of a householder; *bhūta-rakṣā* – offering shelter to all living entities; *ijyā* – performance of sacrifice; *dvi-jasya* – of a *brahmacārī*; *ācārya* – the spiritual master; *sevanam* – serving.

TRANSLATION

The main religious duties of a *sannyāsī* are equanimity and nonviolence, whereas for the *vānaprastha* austerity and philosophical understanding of the difference between the body and soul are prominent. The main duties of a householder are to give shelter to all living entities and perform sacrifices, and the *brahmacārī* is mainly engaged in serving the spiritual master.

PURPORT

The *brahmacārī* lives in the *āśrama* of the spiritual master and personally assists the *ācārya*. Householders generally are entrusted with the performance of sacrifice and Deity worship and should provide maintenance for all living entities. The *vānaprastha* must clearly understand the difference between body and soul in order to maintain his status of renunciation, and he should also perform austerities. The *sannyāsī* should fully absorb his body, mind and words in self-realization. Having thus achieved equanimity of mind, he is the best well-wisher of all living entities.

TEXT 18.43

*brahmacaryam tapaḥ śaucam
santoṣo bhūta-sauhṛdam
gṛhasthasyāpy ṛtau gantuḥ
sarveṣāṃ mad-upāsanam*

brahma-caryam – celibacy; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *śaucam* – purity of mind without attachment or repulsion; *santoṣaḥ* – full satisfaction; *bhūta* – toward all living entities; *sauhṛdam* – friendship; *gṛhasthasya* – of the householder; *api* – also; *ṛtau* – at the proper time; *gantuḥ* – approaching his wife; *sarveṣāṃ* – of all human beings; *mat* – of Me; *upāsanam* – worship.

TRANSLATION

A householder may approach his wife for sex only at the time prescribed for begetting children. Otherwise, the householder should practice celibacy, austerity, cleanliness of mind and body, satisfaction in his natural position, and friendship toward all living entities. Worship of Me is to be practiced by all human beings, regardless of social or occupational divisions.

PURPORT

Sarveṣāṃ mad-upāsanam indicates that all followers of the *varṇāśrama* system must worship Lord Kṛṣṇa or risk falling down from their position. As

stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.3), *na bhajanty avajānanti sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ*: even though one may be advanced in the performance of Vedic rituals and customs, without worshiping the Supreme Lord one will certainly fall down.

Those in the householder *āśrama* are not authorized to enjoy life like pigs and dogs, freely exercising their sexual potency. A religious householder should approach his wife at the prescribed time and place and beget a saintly child for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord. Otherwise, it is specifically mentioned here that a householder must practice celibacy along with all of the other members of advanced human civilization. The word *śaucam* indicates cleanliness of mind and body, or else freedom from attachment and repulsion. One who faithfully worships God as the supreme controller experiences *santoṣa*, full satisfaction in whatever situation the Lord arranges. By seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa within everyone, one becomes *bhūta-suhṛt*, the well-wishing friend of all.

TEXT 18.44

*iti mām yaḥ sva-dharmaṇa
bhajen nityam ananya-bhāk
sarva-bhūteṣu mad-bhāvo
mad-bhaktim vindate dṛḍhām*

iti – thus; *mām* – Me; *yaḥ* – one who; *sva-dharmaṇa* – by his prescribed duty; *bhajet* – worships; *nityam* – always; *ananya-bhāk* – with no other object of worship; *sarva-bhūteṣu* – in all living entities; *mat* – of Me; *bhāvaḥ* – being conscious; *mat-bhaktim* – devotional service unto Me; *vindate* – achieves; *dṛḍhām* – unflinching.

TRANSLATION

One who worships Me by his prescribed duty, having no other object of worship, and who remains conscious of Me as present in all living entities, achieves unflinching devotional service unto Me.

PURPORT

It is clearly explained in this verse that loving devotional service unto Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate goal of the entire *varṇāśrama* system, which the Lord has been elaborately explaining. In any social or occupational division of human society one must be a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and worship Him alone. The bona fide spiritual master is the representative of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and worship of the *ācārya* goes directly to the lotus feet of the Lord. Although ordinary householders are sometimes ordered by Vedic injunctions to worship particular demigods or forefathers, one should remember that Lord Kṛṣṇa is within all living entities. As stated here, *sarva-bhūteṣu mad-bhāvaḥ*. The pure devotees of the Lord worship the Lord alone, and those who cannot come to the standard of pure devotional service should at least meditate upon the Personality of Godhead within the demigods and all other living entities, understanding that all religious processes are ultimately meant for the pleasure of the Lord. In the course of

missionary work even pure devotees must deal with government leaders and other prominent members of society, sometimes praising such persons and complying with their orders. Yet because the devotees are always meditating on Lord Kṛṣṇa situated as the Supersoul within everyone, they are therefore acting for the Lord's pleasure and not for the pleasure of any ordinary human being. Those persons dealing with different demigods in the course of their *varṇāśrama* duties should similarly see the Lord as the basis of everything. They should concentrate on pleasing the Supreme Lord by all activities. This stage of life is called love of God, and it brings one to the point of actual liberation.

TEXT 18.45

*bhaktyoddhavānapāyinyā
sarva-loka-maheśvaram
sarvotpatty-apyayaṁ brahma
kāraṇaṁ mopayāti saḥ*

bhaktyā – by loving service; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *anapāyinyā* – unfailing; *sarva* – of all; *loka* – worlds; *mahā-īśvaram* – the Supreme Lord; *sarva* – of everything; *utpatti* – the cause of the creation; *apyayam* – and annihilation; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *kāraṇam* – the cause of the universe; *mā* – to Me; *upayāti* – comes; *saḥ* – he.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, I am the Supreme Lord of all worlds, and I create and destroy this universe, being its ultimate cause. I am thus the Absolute Truth, and one who worships Me with unfailing devotional service comes to Me.

PURPORT

As described in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11), Lord Kṛṣṇa is understood in three features – as impersonal Brahman, localized Paramātmā and ultimately the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the source of everything. Lord Kṛṣṇa absorbs the impersonal philosophers into the rays of His body, appears before the perfect *yogīs* as the Lord of the heart, and ultimately brings His pure devotees back to His own abode for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

TEXT 18.46

*iti sva-dharma-nirṇikta-
sattvo nirjñāta-mad-gatiḥ
jñāna-vijñāna-sampanno
na cirāt samupaiti mām*

iti – thus; *sva-dharma* – by performing his prescribed duty; *nirṇikta* – having purified; *sattvaḥ* – his existence; *nirjñāta* – completely understanding; *mat-gatiḥ* – My supreme position; *jñāna* – with knowledge of the scriptures; *vijñāna* – and realized knowledge of the soul; *sampannaḥ* – endowed; *na cirāt* – in the near future; *samupaiti* – completely achieves; *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

Thus, one who has purified his existence by execution of his prescribed duties, who fully understands My supreme position and who is endowed with scriptural and realized knowledge, very soon achieves Me.

TEXT 18.47

*varṇāśramavatām dharma
eṣa ācāra-lakṣaṇaḥ
sa eva mad-bhakti-yuto
niḥśreyasa-karaḥ paraḥ*

varṇāśrama-vatām – of the followers of the *varṇāśrama* system; *dharmaḥ* – religious principle; *eṣaḥ* – this; *ācāra* – by proper behavior according to the authorized tradition; *lakṣaṇaḥ* – characterized; *saḥ* – this; *eva* – indeed; *mat-bhakti* – with devotional service to Me; *yutaḥ* – conjoined; *niḥśreyasa* – the highest perfection of life; *karaḥ* – giving; *paraḥ* – supreme.

TRANSLATION

Those who are followers of this varṇāśrama system accept religious principles according to authorized traditions of proper conduct. When such varṇāśrama duties are dedicated to Me in loving service, they award the supreme perfection of life.

PURPORT

According to the *varṇāśrama* system, the members of different orders and statuses of life have many traditional duties, such as worshiping the forefathers to save them from possible sinful reactions. All such Vedic rituals, sacrifices, austerities and so forth should be offered to the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They then become the transcendental means for going back home, back to Godhead. In other words, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or loving service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the sum and substance of progressive human life.

TEXT 18.48

*etat te'bhihitam sādho
bhavān pṛcchati yac ca mām
yathā sva-dharma-saṁyukto
bhakto mām samiyāt param*

etat – this; *te* – unto you; *abhihitam* – described; *sādho* – O saintly Uddhava; *bhavān* – you; *pṛcchati* – have asked; *yac* – which; *ca* – and; *mām* – from Me; *yathā* – the means by which; *sva-dharma* – in one's prescribed duty; *saṁyuktaḥ* – perfectly engaged; *bhaktaḥ* – being a devotee; *mām* – to Me; *samiyāt* – one may come; *param* – the Supreme.

TRANSLATION

My dear saintly Uddhava, I have now described to you, just as you inquired, the means by which My devotee, perfectly engaged in his prescribed duty, can come back to Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Eighteenth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Description of Varṇāśrama-dharma.”

CHAPTER NINETEEN

The Perfection of Spiritual Knowledge

This chapter describes how those who practice speculative knowledge eventually give up their method, whereas the pure devotees remain engaged in devotional service eternally. Also described are the different practices of the *yogīs*, beginning with *yama*.

The Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, stated to Uddhava, “One who is actually wise, who knows the truth of the self and possesses transcendental insight, rejects this world of dualities and the so-called knowledge meant for facilitating enjoyment of it. He instead engages himself in trying to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of all. This is pure *bhakti-yoga*.

Transcendental knowledge is greater than such ordinary pious activities as chanting of *mantras*, but pure devotional service is greater than even knowledge.”

After this, Lord Kṛṣṇa, requested by Śrī Uddhava to describe in full detail pure transcendental knowledge and devotional service, related the same instructions that the greatest of Vaiṣṇavas, Bhīṣmadeva, gave on these topics to Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira on the occasion of the battle at Kurukṣetra.

Following this, after being asked about *yama* and the other practices of *yoga*, the Lord enumerated the twelve kinds of *yama* beginning with nonviolence, and the twelve kinds of *niyama*, beginning with bodily cleanliness.

TEXT 19.1

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
yo vidyā-śruta-sampannaḥ
ātmavān nānumānikaḥ
māyā-mātram idaṁ jñātvā
jñānaṁ ca mayi sannyaset

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *yaḥ* – one who; *vidyā* – with realized knowledge; *śruta* – and preliminary scriptural knowledge; *sampannaḥ* – endowed; *ātma-vān* – self-realized; *na* – not; *ānumānikaḥ* – engaged in impersonal speculation; *māyā* – illusion; *mātram* – only; *idaṁ* – this universe; *jñātvā* – knowing; *jñānaṁ* – such knowledge and the means of achieving it; *ca* – also; *mayi* – to Me; *sannyaset* – one should surrender.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: A self-realized person who has cultivated scriptural knowledge up to the point of enlightenment and who is free from impersonal speculation, understanding the material universe to be simply illusion, should surrender unto Me both that knowledge and the means by which he achieved it.

PURPORT

Māyā-mātram idaṁ jñātvā indicates knowledge that the eternal spirit soul and the eternal Personality of Godhead are completely separate from the temporary qualities of the material world. The word *vidyā-śruta-sampanna*

means that one should cultivate Vedic knowledge for the purpose of enlightenment and not to make a show of mysticism, intellectuality or impersonal speculation. Having neutralized the illusory effects of *māyā*, one should then transfer one's attention to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, surrendering the process of philosophical negation to the Lord Himself. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī gives the example that when there is danger the king may issue weapons to private citizens, but after military victory the individual citizens return the weapons to the king.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains this point of this verse as follows. Somehow or other the living entity has to free himself from material illusion, which has covered him since time immemorial. Cultivating desirelessness and renunciation by practice of the mystic *yoga* system, the living entity develops knowledge of illusion and may thus lift himself above the reach of material ignorance. However, once one is situated on the transcendental platform, both knowledge of illusion and the process of acquiring such knowledge have no further practical application. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives the example that a man may be haunted by the ghost of a snake or a tiger. As long as the man is possessed and thinks, "I am a snake" or "I am a tiger," attempts will be made to counteract the ghostly influence by application of jewels, *mantras* and herbs. But when the man is freed from possession by ghosts, he again thinks, "I am Mr. So-and-so, the son of Mr. So-and-so," and returns to his original nature. At that time the jewels, *mantras* and herbs have no further immediate application. The word *vidyā* in this verse thus indicates knowledge acquired through philosophical analysis, mystic *yoga*, austerities and renunciation. Such knowledge of the temporary, illusory nature of this world counteracts ignorance, and there are many Vedic scriptures that train the living entity in such knowledge. Gradually one gives up his false identification with the material body and mind and with those material objects that interact with the body and mind. Having realized such counteractive knowledge, one must engage in the loving service of the Personality of Godhead and become a pure devotee. When one is completely perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is naturally little interest in the innumerable details of illusion, and gradually one is transferred to the spiritual world.

TEXT 19.2

*jñāninas tv aham eveṣṭaḥ
svārtho hetuś ca sammataḥ
svargaś caivāpavargaś ca
nānyo'rtho mad-ṛte priyaḥ*

jñāninaḥ – of a learned self-realized philosopher; *tu* – indeed; *aham* – I; *eva* – alone; *iṣṭaḥ* – the object of worship; *sva-arthaḥ* – the desired goal of life; *hetuḥ* – the means for achieving the goal of life; *ca* – also; *sammataḥ* – the settled conclusion; *svargaḥ* – the cause of all happiness in elevation to heaven; *ca* – also; *eva* – indeed; *apavargaḥ* – freedom from all unhappiness;

ca – also; *na* – not; *anyaḥ* – any other; *arthaḥ* – purpose; *mat* – Me; *rte* – without; *priyaḥ* – dear object.

TRANSLATION

For learned, self-realized philosophers I am the only object of worship, the desired goal of life, the means for achieving that goal, and the settled conclusion of all knowledge. Indeed, because I am the cause of their happiness and their freedom from unhappiness, such learned souls have no effective purpose or dear object in life except Me.

PURPORT

In the previous verse Lord Kṛṣṇa stated that one should ultimately surrender unto Him that knowledge by which the material world is seen as illusion. Material attachments are certainly problems for the living entities, since they are diseases of the spirit soul. One who has contracted a skin disease that causes terrible itching gains only flickering relief by scratching the unbearable sores. If he does not scratch he suffers greatly, but by scratching, even though there is an instantaneous sensation of pleasure, unbearable misery follows as the itching increases. Real happiness is not found in scratching one's skin infections but rather in becoming free from such disease. Conditioned souls are harassed by many illusory desires, and in desperation they try to gratify their senses through the hopeless scratching processes of illicit sex, meat-eating, gambling and intoxication. They further try to gain relief through material society, friendship and love, but the result is unbearable suffering. Real happiness is to eliminate completely the itching disease of material desire. Since material desire is a disease of the soul, one must acquire knowledge to treat this disease and eliminate it. Such therapeutic knowledge is essential as long as one is diseased, but when one is fully healthy, such technical medical knowledge is no longer interesting to the healthy person, and he may leave such knowledge to the doctors. Similarly, in the advanced stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness one need not think continually of one's personal problems but may rather think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, with love and devotion. Lord Kṛṣṇa advises in the previous verse that one should eliminate one's personal problems through technical knowledge of illusion. After giving up constant meditation on such problems, one can then become a lover of God. Lord Kṛṣṇa certainly guides each and every sincere devotee internally within the heart and externally through the bona fide spiritual master. In this way, Lord Kṛṣṇa gradually trains His sincere devotees to give up their irrational attachment to dead matter. Once freedom has been achieved, a devotee begins to seriously cultivate his relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual sky.

One may falsely think that just as at a certain stage of advancement one ceases to concentrate on technical, analytic knowledge of illusion, so, at another stage one may give up loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. To nullify such speculation Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa here states in various ways that He is

the supreme eternal goal of all truly learned human beings. Indeed, the most prominent scholars within the universe are the sages, such as the four Kumāras, who accept Lord Kṛṣṇa as their only worshipable object. Because they have discovered that they are eternal fragmental portions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they are not interested in fruitive activities and mental speculation. Lord Kṛṣṇa awards celestial bliss and freedom from anxiety to His sincere followers, who have no purpose or beloved object in life other than the Lord.

TEXT 19.3

*jñāna-vijñāna-saṁsiddhāḥ
padam śreṣṭham vidur mama
jñānī priyatamo' to me
jñānenāsau bibharti mām*

jñāna – in scriptural knowledge; *vijñāna* – and realized spiritual understanding; *saṁsiddhāḥ* – completely perfected; *padam* – the lotus feet; *śreṣṭham* – the supreme object; *viduḥ* – they know; *mama* – My; *jñānī* – a learned transcendentalist; *priya-tamaḥ* – most dear; *ataḥ* – thus; *me* – to Me; *jñānena* – by spiritual knowledge; *asau* – that learned person; *bibharti* – maintains (in happiness); *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

Those who have achieved complete perfection through philosophical and realized knowledge recognize My lotus feet to be the supreme transcendental object. Thus the learned transcendentalist is most dear to Me, and by his perfect knowledge he maintains Me in happiness.

PURPORT

The words *padam śreṣṭham vidur mama* (“they recognize My lotus feet to be supreme”) certainly eliminate the impersonalist philosophers from the category of *saṁsiddhāḥ*, or completely perfected philosophers. Lord Kṛṣṇa here refers to such great transcendental scholars as the four Kumāras, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Śrī Vyāsadeva, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. The Lord similarly states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.17-18):

*teṣām jñānī nitya-yukta
eka-bhaktir viśiṣyate
priyo hi jñānino'ty-artham
ahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ*

“Of these, the wise one who is in full knowledge in union with Me through pure devotional service is the best. For I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me.”

*udārāḥ sarva evaite
jñānī tv ātmaiva me matam
āsthitaḥ sa hi yuktātmā
mām evānuttamām gatim*

“All these devotees are undoubtedly magnanimous souls, but he who is situated in knowledge of Me I consider verily to dwell in Me. Being engaged in My transcendental service, he attains Me.”

Jñāna refers to an authorized philosophical and analytic perception of reality, and when such knowledge is clearly realized through the sanctification of consciousness the resultant comprehensive experience is called *vijñāna*. Speculative, impersonal knowledge does not actually purify the heart of the living entity but rather merges him ever deeper into forgetfulness of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Just as a father is always proud of his son’s education, similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa becomes very happy to see the living entities acquiring a sound spiritual education and thus making progress on the way back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 19.4

*tapas tīrtham japo dānam
pavitrāṇītarāṇi ca
nālam kurvanti tām siddhim
yā jñāna-kalayā kṛtā*

tapah – austerity; *tīrtham* – visiting holy places; *japaḥ* – offering silent prayers; *dānam* – charity; *pavitrāṇi* – pious activities; *itarāṇi* – other; *ca* – also; *na* – not; *alam* – up to the same standard; *kurvanti* – they award; *tām* – this; *siddhim* – perfection; *yā* – which; *jñāna* – of spiritual knowledge; *kalayā* – by a fraction; *kṛtā* – is awarded.

TRANSLATION

That perfection which is produced by a small fraction of spiritual knowledge cannot be duplicated by performing austerities, visiting holy places, chanting silent prayers, giving in charity or engaging in other pious activities.

PURPORT

Jñāna here refers to a clear understanding of the Lord’s supreme dominion over all that be, and this realized knowledge is nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That the Lord is supreme is confirmed in the previous verse by the words *padam śreṣṭham vidur mama*. One may perform penances or visit holy places with a proud mentality or material motivation; similarly, one may chant prayers to God, give charity or perform other externally pious activities with many bizarre, hypocritical or even demoniac motivations. Realized knowledge of the supremacy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, however, is a solid connection with the spiritual world, and if one pursues this holy understanding one is gradually promoted to the highest level of conscious existence, called *Vaikuṅṭha*, or the kingdom of God.

TEXT 19.5

*tasmā j jñānena sahitam
jñātvā svātmānam uddhava*

*jñāna-vijñāna-sampanno
bhaja mām bhakti-bhāvataḥ*

tasmāt – therefore; *jñānena* – knowledge; *sahitam* – with; *jñātvā* – knowing; *sva-ātmānam* – your own self; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *jñāna* – in Vedic knowledge; *vijñāna* – and clear realization; *sampannaḥ* – accomplished; *bhaja* – worship; *mām* – Me; *bhakti* – of loving devotion; *bhāvataḥ* – in the mood.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, My dear Uddhava, through knowledge you should understand your actual self. Then, advancing by clear realization of Vedic knowledge, you should worship Me in the mood of loving devotion.

PURPORT

The word *vijñāna* indicates realized knowledge of one's original, spiritual form. Every living entity has an eternal spiritual form, which lies dormant until one arouses one's original Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Without knowledge of one's own spiritual personality it is not possible to cultivate love of the Supreme Personality, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, the words *jñātvā svātmānam* are significant here, indicating that every living entity can realize his full potential as an individual person only in the kingdom of God.

TEXT 19.6

*jñāna-vijñāna-yajñena
mām iṣṭvātmānam ātmani
sarva-yajña-patim mām vai
saṁsiddhim munayo'gaman*

jñāna – of Vedic knowledge; *vijñāna* – and spiritual enlightenment; *yajñena* – by the sacrifice; *mām* – Me; *iṣṭvā* – having worshiped; *ātmānam* – the Supreme Lord within everyone's heart; *ātmani* – within themselves; *sarva* – of all; *yajña* – sacrifices; *patim* – the Lord; *mām* – Me; *vai* – certainly; *saṁsiddhim* – the supreme perfection; *munayaḥ* – the sages; *agaman* – achieved.

TRANSLATION

Formerly, great sages, through the sacrifice of Vedic knowledge and spiritual enlightenment, worshiped Me within themselves, knowing Me to be the Supreme Lord of all sacrifice and the Supersoul in everyone's heart. Thus coming to Me, these sages achieved the supreme perfection.

TEXT 19.7

*tvayy uddhavāśrayati yas tri-vidho vikāro
māyāntarāpatati nādy-apavargayor yat
janmādayo'sya yad amī tava tasya kiṁ syur
ādy-antayor yad asato'sti tad eva madhye*

tvayi – in you; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *āśrayati* – enters and remains; *yaḥ* – which; *tri-vidhaḥ* – in three divisions, according to the modes of nature; *vikāraḥ* – (the material body and mind, which are subject to) constant transformation; *māyā* – illusion; *antarā* – during the present; *āpatati* – suddenly appears; *na* – not; *ādi* – in the beginning; *apavargayoḥ* – nor at the end; *yat* – since; *janma* – birth; *ādayaḥ* – and so on (growth, procreation, maintenance, dwindling and death); *asya* – of the body; *yat* – when; *amī* – these; *tava* – in relation to you; *tasya* – in relation to your spiritual nature; *kim* – what relationship; *syuḥ* – could they have; *ādi* – in the beginning; *antayoḥ* – and in the end; *yat* – since; *asataḥ* – of that which does not exist; *asti* – exists; *tat* – that; *eva* – indeed; *madhye* – only in the middle, at present.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, the material body and mind, composed of the three modes of material nature, attach themselves to you, but they are actually illusion, since they appear only at the present, having no original or ultimate existence. How is it possible, therefore, that the various stages of the body, namely birth, growth, reproduction, maintenance, dwindling and death, can have any relation to your eternal self? These phases relate only to the material body, which previously did not exist and ultimately will not exist. The body exists merely at the present moment.

PURPORT

The example is given that a man walking in the forest may see a rope but consider it to be a snake. Such perception is *māyā*, or illusion, although the rope actually exists and a snake also exists in another place. Illusion thus refers to the false identification of one object with another. The material body exists briefly and then disappears. In the past the body did not exist, and in the future it will not exist; it enjoys a flickering, momentary existence in so-called present time. If we falsely identify ourselves as the material body or mind, we are creating an illusion. One who identifies himself as American, Russian, Chinese, Mexican, black or white, man or woman, communist or capitalist, and so on, accepting such designations as his permanent identity, is certainly in deep illusion. He can be compared to a sleeping man who sees himself acting in a different body while dreaming. In the previous verse Lord Kṛṣṇa told Uddhava that spiritual knowledge is the means of achieving the highest perfection, and now the Lord is explicitly describing such knowledge.

TEXT 19.8

śrī-uddhava uvāca
jñānaṁ viśuddhaṁ vipulaṁ yathaitad
vairāgya-vijñāna-yutaṁ purāṇam
ākhyāhi viśveśvara viśva-mūrte
tvad-bhakti-yogaṁ ca mahad-vimṛgyam

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *jñānam* – knowledge; *viśuddham* – transcendental; *vipulam* – extensive; *yathā* – just as; *etat* – this; *vairagya* – detachment; *vijñāna* – and direct perception of the truth; *yutam* – including; *purāṇam* – traditional among great philosophers; *ākhyāhi* – please explain; *viśva-īśvara* – O Lord of the universe; *viśva-mūrte* – O form of the universe; *tvat* – unto You; *bhakti-yogam* – loving devotional service; *ca* – also; *mahat* – by great souls; *vimṛgyam* – sought after.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: O Lord of the universe! O form of the universe! Please explain to me that process of knowledge which automatically brings detachment and direct perception of the truth, which is transcendental, and which is traditional among great spiritual philosophers. This knowledge, sought by elevated personalities, describes loving devotional service unto Your Lordship.

PURPORT

Those who are able to cross over the darkness of material existence are called *mahat*, or great personalities. Secondary items like cosmic consciousness or universal control do not deviate the attention of such great souls from loving service to the Lord. Śrī Uddhava desires to hear knowledge of the eternal religious principles that are the traditional aim and objective of all superior personalities.

TEXT 19.9

*tāpa-trayeṇābhihatasya ghore
santapyamānasya bhavādhvaniśa
paśyāmi nānyac charaṇam tavāṅghri-
dvandvātapatrād amṛtābhivarṣāt*

tāpa – by the miseries; *trayeṇa* – threefold; *abhihatasya* – of one overwhelmed; *ghore* – which is terrible; *santapyamānasya* – being tormented; *bhava* – of material existence; *adhvani* – in the path; *īśa* – O Lord; *paśyāmi* – I see; *na* – none; *anyat* – other; *śaraṇam* – shelter; *tava* – Your; *aṅghri* – lotus feet; *dvandva* – of the two; *ātapatrāt* – than the umbrella; *amṛta* – of nectar; *abhivarṣāt* – the shower.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, for one who is being tormented on the terrible path of birth and death and is constantly overwhelmed by the threefold miseries, I do not see any possible shelter other than Your two lotus feet, which are just like a refreshing umbrella that pours down showers of delicious nectar.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa, recognizing Uddhava's highly intellectual nature, has repeatedly recommended to him that one should achieve perfection by cultivation of transcendental knowledge. But the Lord has also clearly demonstrated that such knowledge must bring one to the point of loving devotional service to Him, for otherwise it is useless. In this verse Śrī Uddhava corroborates Lord

Kṛṣṇa's statements that actual happiness is obtained by surrendering to His lotus feet. When the incarnation of Godhead Pṛthu Mahārāja was crowned, the demigod Vāyu presented him with an umbrella that constantly sprayed fine particles of water. The Lord's two lotus feet are similarly compared here to a wonderful umbrella that produces a constant shower of delicious nectar, the bliss of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Normally, speculative analytic knowledge terminates in an impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth, but the so-called bliss of merging into impersonal spiritual existence can never be compared to the bliss of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as stated here by Śrī Uddhava. Kṛṣṇa consciousness thus automatically constitutes perfect knowledge, since Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate shelter of all living entities. The words *abhihatasya* and *abhivarṣāt* are significant in this verse. *Abhihatasya* indicates one who is being defeated on all sides by the onslaught of material nature, whereas *abhivarṣāt* indicates a downpour of nectar that eliminates all of the problems of material existence. By our intelligence we should look beyond the dull material body and nonsensical material mind to observe the unlimited shower of blissful nectar coming from the two lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Then our real good fortune will begin.

TEXT 19.10

*daṣṭam janam sampatitam bile'smin
kālāhinā kṣudra-sukhoru-tarṣam
samuddharainam kṛpayāpavargyair
vacobhir āsiñca mahānubhāva*

daṣṭam – bitten; *janam* – the person; *sampatitam* – hopelessly fallen; *bile* – in the dark hole; *asmin* – this; *kāla* – of time; *ahinā* – by the serpent; *kṣudra* – insignificant; *sukha* – having happiness; *uru* – and tremendous; *tarṣam* – hankering; *samuddhara* – please uplift; *enam* – this person; *kṛpayā* – by Your causeless mercy; *āpavargyaiḥ* – that awaken one to liberation; *vacobhiḥ* – by Your words; *āsiñca* – please pour; *mahā-anubhāva* – O mighty Lord.

TRANSLATION

O almighty Lord, please be merciful and uplift this hopeless living entity who has fallen into the dark hole of material existence, where the snake of time has bitten him. In spite of such abominable conditions, this poor living entity has tremendous desire to relish the most insignificant material happiness. Please save me, my Lord, by pouring down the nectar of Your instructions, which awaken one to spiritual freedom.

PURPORT

Material life, so much cherished by the nondevotees, is here compared to a dark hole filled with poisonous snakes. In material life there is certainly no clear understanding of one's ultimate identity, of God or of the universe. Everything is vague and dark. In material life the poisonous snake of time is always threatening, and at any moment our near and dear ones will be killed by the mortal fangs of the serpent. Ultimately, we ourselves will also be

bitten and killed by the poisonous effects of time. The word *sampatitam* indicates that the falldown of the living entity is complete. In other words, he cannot get up again. Śrī Uddhava therefore appeals to the Lord to be kind to these poor fallen souls, humbly represented by his own self. If one receives the Lord's mercy, then even without any further qualification one can go back home, back to Godhead; and without the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the most learned, austere, powerful, wealthy or beautiful man will be pathetically crushed by the material world's machinery of illusion. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, as described here, is *mahānubhāva*, or the greatest, most powerful and most merciful personality, whose influence extends everywhere. The Lord's mercy is manifest in the form of His nectarean instructions such as *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Uddhava-gītā*, being spoken here. The word *kṣudra-sukhoru-tarṣam* reveals the irony of material existence. Although material happiness is *kṣudra*, or ridiculous and insignificant, our desire to enjoy it is *uru*, tremendous. Our disproportionate hankering to enjoy dead matter is certainly an illusory state of mind, and it gives us constant distress, keeping us bound up in the dark hole of material existence. Every living entity should put aside his false prestige based on ephemeral bodily qualifications and appeal sincerely to the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, for His mercy. The Lord hears every sincere appeal, from even the most fallen soul, and the effects of the Lord's mercy are wonderful. Although *jñānīs*, *yogīs* and fruitive workers are laboriously endeavoring to achieve their respective goals, their position is precarious and uncertain. Simply by achieving the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, however, one can very easily attain the highest perfection of life. If even one who is not a great or pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa sincerely appeals to the Lord for His mercy, the Lord is sure to give it generously.

TEXT 19.11

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ittham etat purā rājā
bhīṣmam dharmā-bhṛtām varam
ajāta-śatruḥ papraccha
sarveṣām no'nuśṛṇvatām

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *ittham* - thus; *etat* - this; *purā* - formerly; *rājā* - the King; *bhīṣmam* - unto Bhīṣma; *dharmā* - of religious principles; *bhṛtām* - of the upholders; *varam* - unto the best; *ajāta-śatruḥ* - King Yudhiṣṭhira, who considered no one his enemy; *papraccha* - asked; *sarveṣām* - while all; *naḥ* - of us; *anuśṛṇvatām* - were carefully listening.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, just as you are now inquiring from Me, similarly, in the past King Yudhiṣṭhira, who considered no one his enemy, inquired from the

greatest of the upholders of religious principles, Bhīṣma, while all of us were carefully listening.

TEXT 19.12

*nivṛtte bhārate yuddhe
suhṛn-nidhana-vihvalaḥ
śrutvā dharmān bahūn paścān
mokṣa-dharmān aprcchata*

nivṛtte – when it ended; *bhārate* – of the descendants of Bhārata (the Kurus and Pāṇḍavas); *yuddhe* – the war; *suhṛt* – of his beloved well-wishers; *nidhana* – by the destruction; *vihvalaḥ* – overwhelmed; *śrutvā* – having heard; *dharmān* – religious principles; *bahūn* – many; *paścāt* – at last; *mokṣa* – concerning liberation; *dharmān* – religious principles; *aprcchata* – asked about.

TRANSLATION

When the great Battle of Kurukṣetra had ended, King Yudhiṣṭhira was overwhelmed by the death of many beloved well-wishers, and thus, after listening to instructions about many religious principles, he finally inquired about the path of liberation.

TEXT 19.13

*tān ahaṁ te'bhidhāsyāmi
deva-vrata-mukhāc chrutān
jñāna-vairāgya-vijñāna-
śraddhā-bhakty-upabṛmhitān*

tān – those; *aham* – I; *te* – unto you; *abhidhāsyāmi* – will describe; *deva-vrata* – of Bhīṣmadeva; *mukhāt* – from the mouth; *śrutān* – heard; *jñāna* – Vedic knowledge; *vairāgya* – detachment; *vijñāna* – self-realization; *śraddhā* – faith; *bhakti* – and devotional service; *upa-bṛmhitān* – consisting of.

TRANSLATION

I will now speak unto you those religious principles of Vedic knowledge, detachment, self-realization, faith and devotional service that were heard directly from the mouth of Bhīṣmadeva.

TEXT 19.14

*navaikādaśa pañca trīn
bhāvān bhūteṣu yena vai
īkṣetāthaikam apy eṣu
taj jñānam mama niścitam*

nava – nine; *ekādaśa* – eleven; *pañca* – five; *trīn* – and three; *bhāvān* – elements; *bhūteṣu* – in all living beings (from Lord Brahmā down to the immovable living entities); *yena* – by which knowledge; *vai* – certainly; *īkṣeta* – one may see; *atha* – thus; *ekam* – one element; *api* – indeed; *eṣu* – within these twenty-eight elements; *tat* – that; *jñānam* – knowledge; *mama* – by Me; *niścitam* – is authorized.

TRANSLATION

I personally approve of that knowledge by which one sees the combination of nine, eleven, five and three elements in all living entities, and ultimately one element within those twenty-eight.

PURPORT

The nine elements are material nature, the living entity, the *mahat-tattva*, false ego, and the five objects of sense perception, namely sound, touch, form, taste and aroma. The eleven elements are the five working senses (the voice, hands, legs, anus and genitals) plus the five knowledge-acquiring senses (the ears, touch, eyes, tongue and nostrils), along with the coordinative sense, the mind. The five elements are the five physical elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and sky, and the three elements are the three modes of material nature – goodness, passion and ignorance. All living entities, from mighty Lord Brahmā down to an insignificant weed, manifest material bodies composed of these twenty-eight elements. The one element within all twenty-eight is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supersoul, who is all-pervading within the material and spiritual worlds. One can easily understand that the material universe is composed of innumerable causes and effects. Since Lord Kṛṣṇa is the cause of all causes, all secondary causes and their effects are ultimately nondifferent from the Personality of Godhead. This understanding constitutes real knowledge, or *jñāna*, which is essential for perfecting one's life.

TEXT 19.15

*etat eva hi vijñānam
na tathaikena yena yat
sthity-utpatty-apyayān paśyed
bhāvānām tri-guṇātmanām*

etat – this; *eva* – indeed; *hi* – actually; *vijñānam* – realized knowledge; *na* – not; *tathā* – in that way; *ekena* – by the one (Personality of Godhead); *yena* – by whom; *yat* – which (universe); *sthiti* – maintenance; *utpatti* – creation; *apyayān* – and annihilation; *paśyet* – one should see; *bhāvānām* – of all material elements; *tri-guṇa* – of the three modes of nature; *ātmanām* – composed.

TRANSLATION

When one no longer sees the twenty-eight separated material elements, which arise from a single cause, but rather sees the cause itself, the Personality of Godhead – at that time one's direct experience is called vijñāna, or self-realization.

PURPORT

The difference between *jñāna* (ordinary Vedic knowledge) and *vijñāna* (self-realization) can be understood as follows. A conditioned soul, although cultivating Vedic knowledge, continues to identify himself to some extent with the material body and mind and consequently with the material universe. In trying to understand the world he lives in, the conditioned soul

learns through Vedic knowledge that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the one supreme cause of all material manifestations. He comes to understand the world around him, which he accepts more or less as his world. As he progresses in spiritual realization, breaking through the barrier of bodily identification, and realizes the existence of the eternal soul, he gradually identifies himself as part and parcel of the spiritual world, *Vaikuṅṭha*. At that time he is no longer interested in the Personality of Godhead merely as the supreme explanation of the material world; rather, he begins to reorient his entire mode of consciousness so that the central object of his attention is the Personality of Godhead. Such a reorientation is required, since the Supreme Lord is the factual center and cause of everything. A self-realized soul in the stage of *vijñāna* thus experiences the Personality of Godhead not merely as the creator of the material world but as the supreme living entity existing blissfully in His own eternal context. As one progresses in one's realization of the Supreme Lord in His own abode in the spiritual sky, one gradually becomes disinterested in the material universe and ceases to define the Supreme Lord in terms of His temporary manifestations. A self-realized soul in the stage of *vijñāna* is not at all attracted by objects that are created, maintained and ultimately destroyed. The stage of *jñāna* is the preliminary stage of knowledge for those still identifying themselves in terms of the material universe, whereas *vijñāna* is the mature stage of knowledge for those who see themselves as part and parcel of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 19.16

*ādāv ante ca madhye ca
sṛjyāt sṛjyam yad anviyāt
punaḥ tat-pratiśaṅkrāme
yac chiṣyeta tad eva sat*

ādau – in the causal stage; *ante* – in the termination of the causal function; *ca* – also; *madhye* – in the phase of maintenance; *ca* – also; *sṛjyāt* – from one production; *sṛjyam* – to another production; *yad* – which; *anviyāt* – accompanies; *punaḥ* – again; *tat* – of all material phases; *pratiśaṅkrāme* – in the annihilation; *yad* – which; *śiṣyeta* – remains; *tad* – that; *eva* – indeed; *sat* – the one eternal.

TRANSLATION

Commencement, termination and maintenance are the stages of material causation. That which consistently accompanies all these material phases from one creation to another and remains alone when all material phases are annihilated is the one eternal.

PURPORT

The Lord here reiterates that the one Supreme Personality of Godhead is the basis of unlimited material variety. Material activity is a chain of cause-and-effect relationships by which innumerable objects are produced. A particular material effect is converted into a subsequent cause, and when the causal

phase is terminated, the effect disappears. Fire causes firewood to burn to ashes, and when the causal function of fire is finished, fire itself, which was the effect of a previous cause, is also terminated. The simple fact is that all material objects are created, maintained and ultimately annihilated by the supreme potency of the Lord. And when the entire field of material cause and effect is withdrawn, so that all cause-effect relationships vanish, the Personality of Godhead remains in His own abode. Therefore, although innumerable objects may function as causes, they are not the ultimate or supreme cause. Only the Personality of Godhead is the absolute cause. Similarly, although material things may exist, they do not always exist. The Personality of Godhead alone has absolute existence. By the process of *jñāna*, or knowledge, one should understand the supreme position of the Lord.

TEXT 19.17

*śrutiḥ pratyakṣam aitihyam
anumānam catuṣṭayam
pramāṇeṣv anavasthānād
vikalpāt sa virajyate*

śrutiḥ - Vedic knowledge; *pratyakṣam* - direct experience; *aitihyam* - traditional wisdom; *anumānam* - logical induction; *catuṣṭayam* - fourfold; *pramāṇeṣu* - among all types of evidence; *anavasthānāt* - due to the flickering nature; *vikalpāt* - from material diversity; *saḥ* - a person; *virajyate* - becomes detached.

TRANSLATION

From the four types of evidence - Vedic knowledge, direct experience, traditional wisdom and logical induction - one can understand the temporary, insubstantial situation of the material world, by which one becomes detached from the duality of this world.

PURPORT

In the *śruti*, or Vedic literature, it is clearly stated that everything emanates from the Absolute Truth, is maintained by the Absolute Truth and at the end is conserved within the Absolute Truth. Similarly, by direct experience we can observe the creation and destruction of great empires, cities, buildings, bodies and so on. Furthermore, we find all around the world traditional wisdom warning people that things in this world cannot last. Finally, by logical induction we can easily conclude that nothing in this world is permanent. Material sense gratification - up to the highest possible living standard found in the heavenly planets or down to the lowest conditions in the most repugnant precincts of hell - is always unsteady and prone to collapse at any moment. One should therefore develop *vairāgya*, detachment, as stated here.

Another meaning of this verse is that the four types of evidence cited here are often mutually contradictory in their description of the highest truth. One

should therefore be detached from the duality of mundane evidence, including the portions of the *Vedas* that deal with the material world. Instead, one should accept the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the actual authority. Both in *Bhagavad-gītā* and here in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Lord Kṛṣṇa is personally speaking, and thus there is no need to enter into the bewildering network of competing systems of mundane logic. One can directly hear from the Absolute Truth Himself and immediately acquire perfect knowledge. One thereby becomes detached from inferior systems of knowledge, which cause one to hover on the material mental platform.

TEXT 19.18

*karmaṇām pariṇāmitvād
ā-viriñcyād amaṅgalam
vipaścīn naśvaram paśyed
adṛṣṭam api dṛṣṭa-vat*

karmaṇām – of material activities; *pariṇāmitvāt* – because of being subject to transformation; *ā* – up to; *viriñcyāt* – the planet of Lord Brahmā; *amaṅgalam* – inauspicious unhappiness; *vipaścīn* – an intelligent person; *naśvaram* – as temporary; *paśyed* – should see; *adṛṣṭam* – that which he has not yet experienced; *api* – indeed; *dṛṣṭa-vat* – just like that already experienced.

TRANSLATION

An intelligent person should see that any material activity is subject to constant transformation and that even on the planet of Lord Brahmā there is thus simply unhappiness. Indeed, a wise man can understand that just as all that he has seen is temporary, similarly, all things within the universe have a beginning and an end.

PURPORT

The word *adṛṣṭam* indicates the heavenly standard of life available in the higher planets within this universe. Such celestial neighborhoods are not actually experienced on the earth planet, although they are described in the Vedic literatures. One may argue that promotion to material heaven is recommended in the *karma-kāṇḍa* portion of the *Vedas* and that although the happiness available there is not eternal, at least for some time one may enjoy life. Lord Kṛṣṇa here states, however, that even on the planet of Lord Brahmā, which is superior to the heavenly planets, there is no happiness whatsoever. Even in the upper planetary systems there is rivalry, envy, irritation, lamentation and ultimately death itself.

TEXT 19.19

*bhakti-yogaḥ puraivoktaḥ
prīyamāṇāya te'nagha
punaś ca kathayiṣyāmi
mad-bhakteḥ kāraṇam param*

bhakti-yogaḥ – devotional service to the Lord; *purā* – previously; *eva* – indeed; *uktaḥ* – explained; *prīyamāṇāya* – who has developed love; *te* – unto

you; *anagha* – O sinless Uddhava; *punaḥ* – again; *ca* – also; *kathayiṣyāmi* – I will explain; *mat* – unto Me; *bhakteḥ* – of devotional service; *kāraṇam* – the actual means; *param* – supreme.

TRANSLATION

O sinless Uddhava, because you love Me, I previously explained to you the process of devotional service. Now I will again explain the supreme process for achieving loving service unto Me.

PURPORT

Although Lord Kṛṣṇa previously described *bhakti-yoga* to Śrī Uddhava, Uddhava is not yet satisfied, because he loves Lord Kṛṣṇa. Anyone who loves the Lord cannot be fully satiated by discussions of devotional service mixed with descriptions of mere Vedic duties and analytic philosophy. The supreme stage of conscious existence is pure love of Kṛṣṇa, and one who is addicted to Lord Kṛṣṇa desires to constantly drink the nectar of such topics. Lord Kṛṣṇa has given an extensive survey of many aspects of human civilization, including the *varṇāśrama-dharma* system and the processes of distinguishing between matter and spirit, renouncing sense gratification, and so forth. Now Uddhava is hankering to hear specifically about pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and the Lord thus turns to that topic.

TEXTS 19.20-24

*śraddhāmṛta-kathāyām me
śāśvan mad-anukīrtanam
pariniṣṭhā ca pūjāyām
stutibhiḥ stavanam mama
ādarah paricaryāyām
sarvāṅgair abhivandanam
mad-bhakta-pūjābhyadhikā
sarva-bhūteṣu man-matiḥ
mad-artheṣv aṅga-ceṣṭā ca
vacasā mad-guṇeraṇam
mayy arpaṇam ca manasaḥ
sarva-kāma-vivarjanam
mad-arthe'rtha-parityāgo
bhogasya ca sukhasya ca
iṣṭam dattam hutam japtam
mad-artham yad vratam tapaḥ
evam dharmair manuṣyāṇām
uddhavātma-nivedinām
mayi sañjāyate bhaktiḥ
ko'nyo'rtho'syāvaśiṣyate*

śraddhā – faith; *amṛta* – in the nectar; *kathāyām* – of narrations; *me* – about Me; *śāśvat* – always; *mat* – of Me; *anukīrtanam* – chanting the glories; *pariniṣṭhā* – fixed in attachment; *ca* – also; *pūjāyām* – in worshiping Me; *stutibhiḥ* – with beautiful hymns; *stavanam* – formal prayers; *mama* – in

relation to Me; *ādarah* – great respect; *paricaryāyām* – for My devotional service; *sarva-aṅgaiḥ* – with all the limbs of the body; *abhivandanam* – offering obeisances; *mat* – My; *bhakta* – of the devotees; *pūjā* – worship; *abhyadhikā* – preeminent; *sarva-bhūteṣu* – in all living entities; *mat* – of Me; *matih* – consciousness; *mat-artheṣu* – for the sake of serving Me; *aṅga-ceṣṭā* – ordinary, bodily activities; *ca* – also; *vacasā* – with words; *mat-guṇa* – My transcendental qualities; *īraṇam* – declaring; *mayi* – in Me; *arpaṇam* – placing; *ca* – also; *manasaḥ* – of the mind; *sarva-kāma* – of all material desires; *vivarjanam* – rejection; *mat-arthe* – for My sake; *artha* – of wealth; *parityāgaḥ* – the giving up; *bhogasya* – of sense gratification; *ca* – also; *sukhasya* – of material happiness; *ca* – also; *iṣṭam* – desirable activities; *dattam* – charity; *hutam* – offering of sacrifice; *japtam* – chanting the holy names of the Lord; *mat-artham* – for the sake of achieving Me; *yat* – which; *vratam* – vows, such as fasting on Ekādaśī; *tapah* – austerities; *evam* – thus; *dharmaih* – by such religious principles; *manuṣyānām* – of human beings; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *ātma-nivedinām* – who are surrendered souls; *mayi* – to Me; *sañjāyate* – arises; *bhaktiḥ* – loving devotion; *kaḥ* – what; *anyaḥ* – other; *arthaḥ* – purpose; *asya* – of My devotee; *avaśiṣyate* – remains.

TRANSLATION

Firm faith in the blissful narrations of My pastimes, constant chanting of My glories, unwavering attachment to ceremonial worship of Me, praising Me through beautiful hymns, great respect for My devotional service, offering obeisances with the entire body, performing first-class worship of My devotees, consciousness of Me in all living entities, offering of ordinary, bodily activities in My devotional service, use of words to describe My qualities, offering the mind to Me, rejection of all material desires, giving up wealth for My devotional service, renouncing material sense gratification and happiness, and performing all desirable activities such as charity, sacrifice, chanting, vows and austerities with the purpose of achieving Me - these constitute actual religious principles, by which those human beings who have actually surrendered themselves to Me automatically develop love for Me. What other purpose or goal could remain for My devotee?

PURPORT

The words *mad-bhakta-pūjābhyadhikā* are significant in this verse. *Abhyadhikā* indicates “superior quality.” The Lord is extremely satisfied with those who offer worship to His pure devotees, and He rewards them accordingly. Because of the Lord’s generous appraisal of His pure devotees, worship of the pure devotees is described as superior to worship of the Lord Himself. The words *mad-artheṣv aṅga-ceṣṭā* state that ordinary, bodily activities such as brushing the teeth, taking bath, eating, etc., should all be offered to the Supreme Lord as devotional service. The words *vacasā mad-guṇeraṇam* indicate that whether one speaks in ordinary, crude language or with learned poetic eloquence, one should describe the glories of the

Personality of Godhead. The words *mad-arthe 'rtha-parityāgaḥ* indicate that one should spend one's money for festivals glorifying the Personality of Godhead, such as Ratha-yātrā, Janmāṣṭamī and Gaura-pūrṇimā. Also, one is herein instructed to spend money to assist the mission of one's spiritual master and other Vaiṣṇavas. Wealth that cannot be used properly in the Lord's service and is thus an impediment to one's clear consciousness should be given up entirely. The word *bhogasya* refers to sense gratification, headed by sex enjoyment, and *sukhasya* refers to sentimental material happiness, such as excessive family attachment. The words *dattam hutam* indicate that one should offer to *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas first-class foods cooked in ghee. One should offer the vibration *svāhā* to Lord Viṣṇu in an authorized sacrificial fire along with grains and ghee. The word *japtam* indicates that one should constantly chant the holy names of the Lord.

TEXT 19.25

*yadātmany arpitaṁ cittam
śāntam sattvopabṛmhitam
dharmaṁ jñānam sa vairāgyam
aiśvaryaṁ cābhipadyate*

yadā – when; *ātmani* – in the Supreme Lord; *arpitam* – fixed; *cittam* – consciousness; *śāntam* – peaceful; *sattva* – by the mode of goodness; *upabṛmhitam* – strengthened; *dharmaṁ* – religiosity; *jñānam* – knowledge; *saḥ* – he; *vairāgyam* – detachment; *aiśvaryaṁ* – opulence; *ca* – also; *abhipadyate* – achieves.

TRANSLATION

When one's peaceful consciousness, strengthened by the mode of goodness, is fixed on the Personality of Godhead, one achieves religiosity, knowledge, detachment and opulence.

PURPORT

A pure devotee becomes peaceful, *śānta*, by desiring everything for the service of the Lord and nothing for himself. He is strengthened by the transcendental, or purified, mode of goodness and thus achieves the supreme religious principle of directly serving the Lord. He also achieves *jñāna*, or knowledge of the Lord's form and his own spiritual body, detachment from material piety and sin, and the opulences of the spiritual world. One who is not a pure devotee of the Lord, however, but whose devotion is mixed with a fascination for mystic knowledge, is strengthened by the material mode of goodness. Through his meditation on the Lord he achieves the lesser results of *dharma* (piety in the mode of goodness), *jñāna* (knowledge of spirit and matter) and *vairāgya* (detachment from the lower modes of nature). Ultimately, one should be a pure devotee of the Lord, since even the best the material world has to offer is most insignificant compared to the kingdom of God.

TEXT 19.26

*yad arpitam tad vikalpe
indriyaiḥ paridhāvati
rajas-valam cāsan-niṣṭham
cittam viddhi viparyayam*

yat – when; *arpitam* – fixed; *tad* – this (consciousness); *vikalpe* – in material variety (the body, home, family, etc.); *indriyaiḥ* – with the senses; *paridhāvati* – chasing all around; *rajaḥ-valam* – strengthened by the mode of passion; *ca* – also; *asat* – to that which has no permanent reality; *niṣṭham* – dedicated; *cittam* – consciousness; *viddhi* – you should understand; *viparyayam* – the opposite (of what was previously mentioned).

TRANSLATION

When consciousness is fixed on the material body, home and other, similar objects of sense gratification, one spends one’s life chasing after material objects with the help of the senses. Consciousness, thus powerfully affected by the mode of passion, becomes dedicated to impermanent things, and in this way irreligion, ignorance, attachment and wretchedness arise.

PURPORT

In the previous verse Lord Kṛṣṇa explained the auspicious results of fixing the mind in Him, and now the opposite is explained. *Rajas-valam* indicates that one’s passion grows so strong that one commits sinful activities and reaps all types of misfortune. Although materialistic people are blind to their impending wretchedness, one can confirm by all types of evidence – namely Vedic injunctions, direct observation, traditional wisdom and inductive logic – that the result of violating the laws of God is disastrous.

TEXT 19.27

*dharmo mad-bhakti-kṛt prokto
jñānam caikātmya-darśanam
guṇesv asaṅgo vairāgyam
aiśvaryaṁ cāṇimādayaḥ*

dharmāḥ – religion; *mat* – My; *bhakti* – devotional service; *kṛt* – producing; *proktaḥ* – it is declared; *jñānam* – knowledge; *ca* – also; *aikātmya* – the presence of the Supreme Soul; *darśanam* – seeing; *guṇeṣu* – in the objects of sense gratification; *asaṅgaḥ* – having no interest; *vairāgyam* – detachment; *aiśvaryaṁ* – opulence; *ca* – also; *aṇimā* – the mystic perfection called *aṇimā*; *ādayaḥ* – and so forth.

TRANSLATION

Actual religious principles are stated to be those that lead one to My devotional service. Real knowledge is the awareness that reveals My all-pervading presence. Detachment is complete disinterest in the objects of material sense gratification, and opulence is the eight mystic perfections, such as aṇimā-siddhi.

PURPORT

The Supreme Lord is perfect knowledge; thus one who has been delivered from ignorance automatically engages in the devotional service of the Lord and is called religious. One who becomes detached from the three modes of material nature and the gratificatory objects they produce is considered to be situated in detachment. The eight mystic *yoga* perfections, described previously by the Lord to Uddhava, constitute material power, or opulence, in the highest degree.

TEXTS 19.28-32

śrī-uddhava uvāca
yamaḥ kati-vidhaḥ prokto
niyamo vāri-karṣaṇa
kaḥ śamaḥ ko damaḥ kṛṣṇa
kā titikṣā dhṛtiḥ prabho
kiṁ dānaṁ kiṁ tapaḥ śauryaṁ
kim satyam ṛtam ucyate
kaś tyāgaḥ kiṁ dhanam ceṣṭam
ko yajñaḥ kā ca dakṣiṇā
puṁsaḥ kiṁ svid balaṁ śrīman
bhago lābhaś ca keśava
kā vidyā hrīḥ parā kā śrīḥ
kiṁ sukhaṁ duḥkham eva ca
kaḥ paṇḍitaḥ kaś ca mūrkhah
kaḥ panthā utpathaś ca kaḥ
kaḥ svargo narakah kaḥ svit
ko bandhur uta kiṁ gṛham
ka āḍhyaḥ ko daridro vā
kṛpaṇah kaḥ ka īśvaraḥ
etān praśnān mama brūhi
viparītāṁś ca sat-pate

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *yamaḥ* – disciplinary regulations; *kati-vidhaḥ* – how many different types; *proktaḥ* – are declared to exist; *niyamaḥ* – regular daily duties; *vā* – or; *ari-karṣaṇa* – O Kṛṣṇa, subduer of the enemy; *kaḥ* – what is; *śamaḥ* – mental equilibrium; *kaḥ* – what is; *damaḥ* – self-control; *kṛṣṇa* – my dear Kṛṣṇa; *kā* – what is; *titikṣā* – tolerance; *dhṛtiḥ* – steadfastness; *prabho* – my Lord; *kim* – what is; *dānam* – charity; *kim* – what is; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *śauryam* – heroism; *kim* – what is; *satyam* – reality; *ṛtam* – truth; *ucyate* – is said; *kaḥ* – what is; *tyāgaḥ* – renunciation; *kim* – what is; *dhanam* – wealth; *ca* – also; *iṣṭam* – desirable; *kaḥ* – what is; *yajñaḥ* – sacrifice; *kā* – what is; *ca* – also; *dakṣiṇā* – religious remuneration; *puṁsaḥ* – of a person; *kim* – what is; *svit* – indeed; *balam* – strength; *śrī-man* – O most fortunate Kṛṣṇa; *bhagaḥ* – opulence; *lābhaḥ* – profit; *ca* – also; *keśava* – my dear Keśava; *kā* – what is; *vidyā* – education; *hrīḥ* – humility; *parā* – supreme; *kā* – what is; *śrīḥ* – beauty; *kim* – what is; *sukham* – happiness; *duḥkham* –

unhappiness; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *kaḥ* – who is; *paṇḍitaḥ* – learned; *kaḥ* – who is; *ca* – also; *mūrkhaḥ* – a fool; *kaḥ* – what is; *panthāḥ* – the real path; *utpathaḥ* – the false path; *ca* – also; *kaḥ* – what is; *kaḥ* – what is; *svargaḥ* – heaven; *narakaḥ* – hell; *kaḥ* – what is; *svit* – indeed; *kaḥ* – who is; *bandhuḥ* – a friend; *uta* – and; *kim* – what is; *gṛham* – home; *kaḥ* – who is; *āḍhyaḥ* – wealthy; *kaḥ* – who is; *daridraḥ* – poor; *vā* – or; *kṛpaṇaḥ* – a miser; *kaḥ* – who is; *kaḥ* – who is; *īśvaraḥ* – a controller; *etān* – these; *praśnān* – subject matters of inquiry; *mama* – to me; *brūhi* – please speak; *viparītān* – the opposite qualities; *ca* – also; *sat-pate* – O Lord of the devotees.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, O chastiser of the enemies, please tell me how many types of disciplinary regulations and regular daily duties there are. Also, my Lord, tell me what is mental equilibrium, what is self-control, and what is the actual meaning of tolerance and steadfastness. What are charity, austerity and heroism, and how are reality and truth to be described? What is renunciation, and what is wealth? What is desirable, what is sacrifice, and what is religious remuneration? My dear Keśava, O most fortunate one, how am I to understand the strength, opulence and profit of a particular person? What is the best education, what is actual humility, and what is real beauty? What are happiness and unhappiness? Who is learned, and who is a fool? What are the true and the false paths in life, and what are heaven and hell? Who is indeed a true friend, and what is one’s real home? Who is a rich man, and who is a poor man? Who is wretched, and who is an actual controller? O Lord of the devotees, kindly explain these matters to me, along with their opposites.

PURPORT

All of the items mentioned in these five verses are defined in different ways by different cultures and societies throughout the world. Therefore, Śrī Uddhava is directly approaching the supreme authority, Lord Kṛṣṇa, to obtain the standard definition for these universal aspects of civilized life.

TEXTS 19.33-35

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ahimsā satyam asteyam
asaṅgo hrīr asañcayaḥ
āstikyam brahmacaryam ca
maunam sthairyam kṣamābhayam
śaucam japas tapo homaḥ
śraddhātithyam mad-arcanam
tīrthāṭanam parārthehā
tuṣṭir ācārya-sevanam
ete yamāḥ sa-niyamā
ubhayor dvādaśa smṛtāḥ

*puṁsām upāsītās tāta
yathā-kāmaṁ duhanti hi*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *ahiṁsā* – nonviolence; *satyam* – truthfulness; *asteyam* – never coveting or stealing the property of others; *asaṅgaḥ* – detachment; *hrīḥ* – humility; *asañcayaḥ* – being nonpossessive; *āstikyam* – trust in the principles of religion; *brahmacaryam* – celibacy; *ca* – also; *maunam* – silence; *sthairyam* – steadiness; *kṣamā* – forgiving; *abhayam* – fearless; *śaucam* – internal and external cleanliness; *japaḥ* – chanting the holy names of the Lord; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *homaḥ* – sacrifice; *śraddhā* – faith; *ātithyam* – hospitality; *mat-arcanam* – worship of Me; *tīrtha-aṭanam* – visiting holy places; *para-artha-īhā* – acting and desiring for the Supreme; *tuṣṭiḥ* – satisfaction; *ācārya-sevanam* – serving the spiritual master; *ete* – these; *yamāḥ* – disciplinary principles; *sa-niyamāḥ* – along with secondary regular duties; *ubhayoḥ* – of each; *dvādaśa* – twelve; *smṛtāḥ* – are understood; *puṁsām* – by human beings; *upāsītāḥ* – being cultivated with devotion; *tāta* – My dear Uddhava; *yathā-kāmaṁ* – according to one’s desire; *duhanti* – they supply; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Nonviolence, truthfulness, not coveting or stealing the property of others, detachment, humility, freedom from possessiveness, trust in the principles of religion, celibacy, silence, steadiness, forgiveness and fearlessness are the twelve primary disciplinary principles. Internal cleanliness, external cleanliness, chanting the holy names of the Lord, austerity, sacrifice, faith, hospitality, worship of Me, visiting holy places, acting and desiring only for the supreme interest, satisfaction, and service to the spiritual master are the twelve elements of regular prescribed duties. These twenty-four elements bestow all desired benedictions upon those persons who devotedly cultivate them.

TEXTS 19.36-39

*śamo man-niṣṭhatā buddher
dama indriya-saṁyamaḥ
titikṣā duḥkha-sammarṣo
jihvopastha-jayo dhṛtiḥ
daṇḍa-nyāsaḥ param dānam
kāma-tyāgas tapaḥ smṛtam
svabhāva-vijayaḥ śauryam
satyam ca sama-darśanam
anyac ca sunṛtā vāṇī
kavibhiḥ parikīrtitā
karmasv asaṅgamaḥ śaucam
tyāgaḥ sannyāsa ucyate*

*dharmā iṣṭam dhanam nṛṇām
yajño'ham bhagavattamaḥ
dakṣiṇā jñāna-sandehaḥ
prāṇāyāmaḥ param balam*

śamaḥ – mental equilibrium; *mat* – in Me; *niṣṭhatā* – steady absorption; *buddheḥ* – of the intelligence; *damaḥ* – self-control; *indriya* – of the senses; *saṁyamaḥ* – perfect discipline; *titikṣā* – tolerance; *duḥkha* – unhappiness; *samarśaḥ* – tolerating; *jihvā* – the tongue; *upastha* – and genitals; *jayaḥ* – conquering; *dhṛtiḥ* – steadiness; *daṇḍa* – aggression; *nyāsaḥ* – giving up; *param* – the supreme; *dānam* – charity; *kāma* – lust; *tyāgaḥ* – giving up; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *smṛtam* – is considered; *svabhāva* – one's natural tendency to enjoy; *vijayaḥ* – conquering; *śauryam* – heroism; *satyam* – reality; *ca* – also; *sama-darśanam* – seeing the Supreme Lord everywhere; *anyat* – the next element (truthfulness); *ca* – and; *su-nṛtā* – pleasing; *vāṇī* – speech; *kavibhiḥ* – by the sages; *parikīrtitā* – is declared to be; *karmasu* – in fruitive activities; *asaṅgamaḥ* – detachment; *śaucam* – cleanliness; *tyāgaḥ* – renunciation; *sannyāsaḥ* – the *sannyāsa* order of life; *ucyate* – is said to be; *dharmāḥ* – religiousness; *iṣṭam* – desirable; *dhanam* – wealth; *nṛṇām* – for human beings; *yajñaḥ* – sacrifice; *aham* – I am; *bhagavat-tamaḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *dakṣiṇā* – religious remuneration; *jñāna-sandehaḥ* – the instruction of perfect knowledge; *prāṇāyāmaḥ* – the yogic system of controlling the breath; *param* – the supreme; *balam* – strength.

TRANSLATION

Absorbing the intelligence in Me constitutes mental equilibrium, and complete discipline of the senses is self-control. Tolerance means patiently enduring unhappiness, and steadfastness occurs when one conquers the tongue and genitals. The greatest charity is to give up all aggression toward others, and renunciation of lust is understood to be real austerity. Real heroism is to conquer one's natural tendency to enjoy material life, and reality is seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead everywhere. Truthfulness means to speak the truth in a pleasing way, as declared by great sages. Cleanliness is detachment in fruitive activities, whereas renunciation is the *sannyāsa* order of life. The true desirable wealth for human beings is religiousness, and I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, am sacrifice. Religious remuneration is devotion to the *ācārya* with the purpose of acquiring spiritual instruction, and the greatest strength is the *prāṇāyāma* system of breath control.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa here describes those qualities that are desirable for persons advancing in human life. *Śama*, or “mental equilibrium,” means to fix the intelligence in Lord Kṛṣṇa. Mere peacefulness without Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a dull and useless state of mind. *Dama*, or “discipline,” means first to control one's own senses. If one wants to discipline one's children, disciples or followers without controlling one's own senses, one becomes a mere

laughingstock. Tolerance means to patiently endure unhappiness, such as that provoked by the insults or negligence of others. One must also sometimes accept material inconvenience to carry out the injunctions of scriptures, and that unhappiness must also be patiently endured. If one is not tolerant of the insults and abuse of others, nor tolerant of the inconveniences that may arise from following authorized religious scriptures, it is simply foolishness for him to make a whimsical show of tolerating extreme heat, cold and pain and so on, just to impress others. Concerning steadfastness, if one does not control the tongue and genitals, then any other steadfastness is useless. Real charity means to renounce all aggression toward others. If one gives money to charitable causes but at the same time engages in exploitative business enterprises or abusive political tactics, one's charity is worth nothing at all. Austerity means to give up lust and sense gratification and to observe prescribed vows such as Ekādaśī; it does not mean inventing whimsical methods of torturing the material body. Real heroism is to conquer one's lower nature. Certainly everyone likes to propagate his own fame as a brilliant person, but everyone is also subject to lust, anger, greed and so forth. Therefore, if one can conquer these lower characteristics generated from the modes of passion and ignorance, one is a greater hero than those who merely destroy their political opponents through intrigue and violence.

One can develop equal vision by giving up jealousy and envy and by recognizing the existence of the soul within every material body. This attitude pleases the Supreme Lord, who then reveals Himself, solidifying forever one's equal vision. Merely describing things that exist does not constitute the last word in the perception of reality. One must also see the true spiritual equality of all living entities and all situations. Truthfulness means that one should speak in a pleasing way so that there will be a beneficial effect. If one becomes attached to pointing out the faults of others in the name of truth, then such faultfinding will not be appreciated by saintly persons. The bona fide spiritual master speaks the truth in such a way that people can elevate themselves to the spiritual platform, and one should learn this art of truthfulness. If one is attached to material things, his body and mind are understood to be always polluted. Cleanliness therefore means to give up material attachment, not merely to frequently rinse one's skin with water. Real renunciation is giving up one's false sense of proprietorship over one's relatives and wife, and not just giving away material objects, while real wealth is to be religious. Sacrifice is the Personality of Godhead Himself, because the performer of sacrifice, to be successful, must absorb his consciousness in the Personality of Godhead and not in temporary, material rewards that may accrue from sacrifice. Real religious remuneration means that one should serve saintly persons who can enlighten one with spiritual knowledge. One may offer remuneration to his spiritual master, who has enlightened him, by distributing the same knowledge to others, thereby pleasing the *ācārya*. Preaching work thus constitutes the highest form of

remuneration. By performing the *prāṇāyāma* system of respiratory control, one can easily subdue the mind, and one who can in this way perfectly control the restless mind is the most powerful person.

TEXTS 19.40-45

*bhago ma aiśvaro bhāvo
lābho mad-bhaktir uttamaḥ
vidyātmani bhidā-bādho
jugupsā hrīr akarmasu
śrīr guṇā nairapekṣyādyāḥ
sukhaṁ duḥkha-sukhātyayaḥ
duḥkhaṁ kāma-sukhāpekṣā
paṇḍito bandha-mokṣa-vit
mūrkho dehādy-ahaṁ-buddhiḥ
panthā maṅ-nigamaḥ smṛtaḥ
utpathaś citta-vikṣepaḥ
svargaḥ sattva-guṇodayaḥ
narakas tama-unnāho
bandhur gurur ahaṁ sakhe
gṛhaṁ śarīraṁ mānuṣyaṁ
guṇādhya hy ādhya ucyate
daridro yas tv asantuṣṭaḥ
kṛpaṇo yo'jitendriyaḥ
guṇeṣv asakta-dhīr īśo
guṇa-saṅgo viparyayaḥ
eta uddhava te praśnāḥ
sarve sādhu nirūpitāḥ
kiṁ varṇitena bahunā
lakṣaṇaṁ guṇa-doṣayoḥ
guṇa-doṣa-dṛśir doṣo
guṇas tūbhaya-varjitaḥ*

bhagaḥ – opulence; *me* – My; *aiśvaraḥ* – divine; *bhāvaḥ* – nature; *lābhaḥ* – gain; *mat-bhaktiḥ* – devotional service unto Me; *uttamaḥ* – supreme; *vidyā* – education; *ātmani* – in the soul; *bhidā* – duality; *bādhaḥ* – nullifying; *jugupsā* – disgust; *hrīḥ* – modesty; *akarmasu* – in sinful activities; *śrīḥ* – beauty; *guṇāḥ* – good qualities; *nairapekṣya* – detachment from material things; *ādyāḥ* – and so on; *sukhaṁ* – happiness; *duḥkha* – material unhappiness; *sukha* – and material happiness; *atyayaḥ* – transcending; *duḥkham* – unhappiness; *kāma* – of lust; *sukha* – on the happiness; *apekṣā* – meditating; *paṇḍitaḥ* – a wise man; *bandha* – from bondage; *mokṣa* – liberation; *vit* – one who knows; *mūrkhaḥ* – a fool; *deha* – with the body; *ādi* – and so forth (the mind); *ahaṁ-buddhiḥ* – one who identifies himself; *panthāḥ* – the true path; *mat* – to Me; *nigamaḥ* – leading; *smṛtaḥ* – is to be understood; *utpathaḥ* – the wrong path; *citta* – of consciousness; *vikṣepaḥ* – bewilderment; *svargaḥ* – heaven; *sattva-guṇa* – of the mode of goodness; *udayaḥ* – the predominance;

narakaḥ – hell; *tamaḥ* – of the mode of ignorance; *unnāhaḥ* – the predominance; *bandhuḥ* – the real friend; *guruḥ* – the spiritual master; *aham* – I am; *sakhe* – My dear friend, Uddhava; *grham* – one’s home; *śarīram* – the body; *mānuṣyam* – human; *guṇa* – with good qualities; *āḍhyaḥ* – enriched; *hi* – indeed; *āḍhyaḥ* – a rich person; *ucyate* – is stated to be; *daridraḥ* – a poor person; *yaḥ* – one who; *tu* – indeed; *asantuṣṭaḥ* – unsatisfied; *kṛpaṇaḥ* – a wretched person; *yaḥ* – one who; *ajita* – has not conquered; *indriyaḥ* – the senses; *guṇeṣu* – in material sense gratification; *asakta* – not attached; *dhīḥ* – whose intelligence; *īśaḥ* – a controller; *guṇa* – to sense gratification; *saṅgaḥ* – attached; *viparyayaḥ* – the opposite, a slave; *ete* – these; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *te* – your; *praśnāḥ* – subjects of inquiry; *sarve* – all; *sādhu* – properly; *nirūpitāḥ* – elucidated; *kim* – what is the value; *varṇitena* – of describing; *bahunā* – elaborately; *lakṣaṇam* – the characteristics; *guṇa* – of good qualities; *doṣayoḥ* – and of bad qualities; *guṇa-doṣa* – good and bad qualities; *dṛśiḥ* – seeing; *doṣaḥ* – a fault; *guṇaḥ* – the real good quality; *tu* – indeed; *ubhaya* – from both of them; *varjitaḥ* – distinct.

TRANSLATION

Actual opulence is My own nature as the Personality of Godhead, through which I exhibit the six unlimited opulences. The supreme gain in life is devotional service to Me, and actual education is nullifying the false perception of duality within the soul. Real modesty is to be disgusted with improper activities, and beauty is to possess good qualities such as detachment. Real happiness is to transcend material happiness and unhappiness, and real misery is to be implicated in searching for sex pleasure. A wise man is one who knows the process of freedom from bondage, and a fool is one who identifies with his material body and mind. The real path in life is that which leads to Me, and the wrong path is sense gratification, by which consciousness is bewildered. Actual heaven is the predominance of the mode of goodness, whereas hell is the predominance of ignorance. I am everyone’s true friend, acting as the spiritual master of the entire universe, and one’s home is the human body. My dear friend Uddhava, one who is enriched with good qualities is actually said to be rich, and one who is unsatisfied in life is actually poor. A wretched person is one who cannot control his senses, whereas one who is not attached to sense gratification is a real controller. One who attaches himself to sense gratification is the opposite, a slave. Thus, Uddhava, I have elucidated all of the matters about which you inquired. There is no need for a more elaborate description of these good and bad qualities, since to constantly see good and bad is itself a bad quality. The best quality is to transcend material good and evil.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is naturally full of six opulences, namely unlimited beauty, wealth, fame, knowledge, strength and

renunciation. Therefore the greatest profit in life is to achieve personal loving service to the Lord, who is naturally the reservoir of all pleasure. Real education means to give up the false idea that anything is separate from the Lord, the source of all potencies. Similarly, one should not falsely consider the individual soul to be different or separate from the Supreme Soul. Mere bashfulness does not constitute modesty. One should spontaneously withdraw in disgust from sinful activities; then one is actually modest or humble. One who is satisfied in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thus does not seek material pleasure or suffer material unhappiness is considered to be actually situated in happiness. The most wretched person is one addicted to sex pleasure, and a wise man is one who knows the process of freedom from such material bondage. A fool is one who gives up his eternal friendship with Lord Kṛṣṇa and instead identifies himself with his own temporary material body, mind, society, community and family. The real path in life is not simply a modern interstate highway or, in more simple cultures, a footpath free of thorns and mud. It is that path that leads to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The wrong path in life is not simply a road having many thieves or tollbooths; it is that path that leads one to utter confusion in material sense gratification. A heavenly situation is that in which the mode of goodness predominates, rather than that found on the planet of Indra, where passion and ignorance sometimes disturb the celestial atmosphere. Hell is anywhere the mode of ignorance is predominant, and not merely the hellish planets, where, according to Lord Śiva, a pure devotee can think of Kṛṣṇa and remain happy. Our actual friend in life is the bona fide spiritual master, who saves us from all dangers. Among all *gurus*, Lord Kṛṣṇa is Himself the *jagad-guru*, or spiritual master of the entire universe. In material life our own material body is our immediate home, rather than some structure of bricks, cement, stone and wood. A rich man is one who possesses innumerable good qualities; he is not a neurotic fool with a large bank account. A poor man is one who is unsatisfied, which is self-explanatory. One who cannot control his senses is certainly wretched and miserable in life, whereas one who detaches himself from material life is actually a lord or controller. In modern times there are remnants of aristocracy in Europe and other countries, but such so-called lords often display the habits of lower forms of life. A real lord is one who conquers material existence by rising to the spiritual platform. A person who is attached to material life will undoubtedly manifest the opposites of all the good qualities mentioned here, and he is thus the symbol of going backward in life. The Lord concludes His analysis by stating that there is no need for further elaboration of these good and bad qualities. Indeed, the purpose of life is to transcend materially good and bad qualities and come to the liberated platform of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This point will be further explained in the following chapter.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Nineteenth

Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Perfection of Spiritual Knowledge.”

CHAPTER TWENTY

**Pure Devotional Service
Surpasses Knowledge and
Detachment**

The processes of *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga* are explained in this chapter, in terms of the presence of different good and bad qualities in particular candidates.

The Vedic *śāstras* are the words expressing the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In these Vedic literatures is found an outlook of duality, based on such concepts as the *varṇāśrama* system, and at the same time the *Vedas* reject this dualistic vision. Uddhava, desiring to understand the reason why the scriptures contain such conflicting ideas, and how these might be reconciled, inquired from Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa about this matter. In response the Supreme Lord replied that the *Vedas* describe the processes of *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga* for facilitating the attainment of liberation. *Karma-yoga* is designated for those persons who are not detached and who are full of gross desires; *jñāna-yoga* is for those who are detached from the fruits of activity and have given up material endeavors; and *bhakti-yoga* is for those persons who have taken to the principle of *yukta-vairāgya*, appropriate renunciation. As long as one has not become uninterested in enjoying the fruits of one's work, or as long as one's faith in the topics of discussion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead on the path of devotional service has not awakened, then one must continue to fulfill all the prescribed duties of his *karma*. But neither the renunciant nor the devotee of the Supreme Lord need carry out ritualistic duties.

Persons who follow their own duty, who abandon that which is forbidden and who are free from greed and other unhealthy characteristics attain either monistic knowledge or else, if they are fortunate, devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such knowledge and devotion can be achieved in the human form of life, which is therefore a desirable object both for those living in hell and for the demigods. The human body, even though it awards the whole purpose of existence in the form of knowledge and devotion, is ephemeral; therefore one who is discriminating should soberly strive for liberation before death comes. The human body is like a boat, Śrī Gurudeva is the helmsman, and the mercy of the Supreme Lord is the favorable breeze. If the person who has attained such a rare boat in the form of the human body does not desire to cross over the ocean of material existence, he is in fact the killer of the soul. The mind is fickle, but one should not indifferently allow it to act as it will. Rather, one should conquer the senses and the vital air and by intelligence endowed with the qualities of goodness should bring the mind under control.

Until the mind finally becomes stable, one should continue to meditate about the process of the creation of all material things in sequence from subtle to gross and of their destruction in reverse sequence of gross to subtle. One who has a sense of detachment and renunciation can give up false identification with the body and other sense objects by constantly studying the instructions of his spiritual master. By the *yoga* practice of *yama*, *niyama* and so forth, by cultivation of transcendental knowledge and by worship of

and meditation upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one can remember the Supersoul.

Virtue, or *guṇa*, means to remain steadfast in the object of one's particular platform of qualification. By developing the desire to reject one's accumulated material association by pursuing the injunctions of what is good and what is bad, all of one's inauspicious material activities become diminished. By devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead all perfections are achieved. Anyone who renders service to the Supreme Lord by constant devotional service will be able to steadily fix his mind upon the Supreme Lord, and thus all desires for sense gratification sitting within the heart will be destroyed to the root. When one directly perceives the presence of the Supreme Lord, his false ego becomes completely eradicated; all of his doubts are shattered, and heaps of material activities become diminished to nil. For this reason the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead do not consider knowledge and renunciation to be the means for achieving the highest benefit. Only in the heart of a person who is devoid of material desire and disinterested in material things can devotional service to the Lord arise. The piety and impiety that result from ritualistic injunctions and prohibitions cannot be applied to the unalloyed pure devotees of the Supreme Lord.

TEXT 20.1

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
vidhiś ca pratiśedhaś ca
nigamo hīśvarasya te
avekṣate'raviṇḍākṣa
guṇam doṣam ca karmaṇām*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *vidhiḥ* – positive injunction; *ca* – also; *pratiśedhaḥ* – prohibitive injunction; *ca* – and; *nigamaḥ* – the Vedic literature; *hi* – indeed; *īśvarasya* – of the Lord; *te* – of You; *avekṣate* – focuses upon; *araviṇḍa-akṣa* – O lotus-eyed one; *guṇam* – good or pious qualities; *doṣam* – bad or sinful qualities; *ca* – also; *karmaṇām* – of activities.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, You are the Supreme Lord, and thus the Vedic literatures, consisting of positive and negative injunctions, constitute Your order. Such literatures focus upon the good and bad qualities of work.

PURPORT

At the end of the previous chapter, Lord Kṛṣṇa stated, *guṇa-doṣa-dṛśir doṣo guṇas tūbhaya-varjitaḥ*: “Focusing upon material piety and sin is itself a discrepancy, since actual piety means to transcend both of them.” Śrī Uddhava now pursues this point so that Lord Kṛṣṇa will give a more elaborate explanation of this difficult subject matter. Śrī Uddhava here states that the Vedic literatures, which constitute the laws of God, deal with piety and sin; therefore, it must be clarified how one transcends activities recommended in the *Vedas*. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Uddhava

suddenly understood Lord Kṛṣṇa's purpose in the words He had just spoken, and to induce the Lord to elaborate upon this interesting point Uddhava outwardly challenged the Lord's statement.

TEXT 20.2

*varṇāśrama-vikalpaṁ ca
pratilomānulomajam
dravya-deśa-vayaḥ-kālān
svargaṁ narakam eva ca*

varṇa-āśrama - of the *varṇāśrama* system; *vikalpam* - the variety of superior and inferior positions created by piety and sin; *ca* - and; *pratiloma* - birth in a mixed family wherein the father is inferior in social status to the mother; *anuloma-jam* - birth in a mixed family in which the father is superior in social status to the mother; *dravya* - material objects or possessions; *deśa* - the place; *vayaḥ* - one's age; *kālān* - the time; *svargam* - heaven; *narakam* - hell; *eva* - indeed; *ca* - also.

TRANSLATION

According to Vedic literature, the superior and inferior varieties found in the human social system, varṇāśrama, are due to pious and sinful modes of family planning. Thus piety and sin are constant points of reference in the Vedic analysis of the components of a given situation - namely the material ingredients, place, age and time. Indeed, the Vedas reveal the existence of material heaven and hell, which are certainly based on piety and sin.

PURPORT

Pratiloma indicates the combination of a superior woman with an inferior man. For example, the *vaidehaka* community consists of those born of a *śūdra* father and *brāhmaṇa* mother, whereas the *sūtas* are those born from a *kṣatriya* father and a *brāhmaṇa* mother or from a *śūdra* father and *kṣatriya* mother. *Anuloma* indicates those born from a superior father and inferior mother. The *mūrdhāvasikta* are those born of a *brāhmaṇa* father and *kṣatriya* mother. *Ambaṣṭhas* are those born from a *brāhmaṇa* father and *vaiśya* mother, and they often become medical men. *Karaṇa* indicates those born of a *vaiśya* father and *śūdra* mother or of a *kṣatriya* father and *vaiśya* mother. That such mixing of castes is not very much appreciated in the Vedic culture is demonstrated in the First Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Arjuna was very worried that the death of so many *kṣatriyas* on the battlefield would lead to the mixing of superior women with inferior men, and on those grounds he objected to fighting. In any case, the entire Vedic social system is based on distinguishing between piety and sin, and Śrī Uddhava is encouraging the Lord to explain more elaborately His statement that one should transcend both piety and sin.

TEXT 20.3

*guṇa-doṣa-bhidā-dr̥ṣṭim
antareṇa vacaḥ tava
niḥśreyasaṁ katham nṛṇām
niṣedha-vidhi-lakṣaṇam*

guṇa – piety; *doṣa* – sin; *bhidā* – the difference between; *dr̥ṣṭim* – seeing; *antareṇa* – without; *vacaḥ* – words; *tava* – Your; *niḥśreyasaṁ* – perfection of life, liberation; *katham* – how is it possible; *nṛṇām* – for human beings; *niṣedha* – prohibitions; *vidhi* – positive injunctions; *lakṣaṇam* – characterized by.

TRANSLATION

Without seeing the difference between piety and sin, how can one understand Your own instructions in the form of Vedic literatures, which order one to act piously and forbid one to act sinfully? Furthermore, without such authorized Vedic literatures, which ultimately award liberation, how can human beings achieve the perfection of life?

PURPORT

If one does not accept the necessity of performing pious activities and avoiding sinful activities, it becomes very difficult to understand authorized religious scriptures; and without such scriptures, how can human beings attain salvation? This is the essence of Śrī Uddhava's question.

TEXT 20.4

*pitṛ-deva-manuṣyāṇām
vedaś cakṣus taveśvara
śreyas tv anupalabdhe'rthe
sādhyā-sāadhanayoḥ api*

pitṛ – of the forefathers; *deva* – of the demigods; *manuṣyāṇām* – of the human beings; *vedaḥ* – the Vedic knowledge; *cakṣuḥ* – is the eye; *tava* – emanating from You; *īśvara* – O Supreme Lord; *śreyaḥ* – superior; *tu* – indeed; *anupalabdhe* – in that which cannot be directly perceived; *arthe* – in the goals of human life, such as sense gratification, liberation, and attainment of heaven; *sādhyā-sāadhanayoḥ* – both in the means and the end; *api* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, to understand those things beyond direct experience - such as spiritual liberation or the attainment of heaven and similar material enjoyments - and in general to understand the means and end of all things, it is imperative that the forefathers, demigods and human beings consult the Vedic literatures, for these literatures, being Your own laws, constitute the highest evidence and revelation.

PURPORT

One might argue that while human beings are certainly prone to ignorance, the elevated forefathers and demigods are considered to be all-knowing

within universal affairs. If such superior beings would communicate with the earth, then everyone could bypass Vedic knowledge in achieving his personal desire. This concept is denied here by the words *vedaś cakṣuḥ*. Even the demigods and forefathers have at best an ambiguous conception of supreme liberation, and even in material affairs they are subject to personal frustration. Although the demigods are all-powerful in awarding material benedictions to inferior species such as human beings, they are sometimes thwarted in their personal programs of sense gratification. A rich businessman, for example, may have no difficulty paying the insignificant salary of one of his innumerable workers, but the same wealthy man may be completely frustrated in his dealings with his own family and friends and may also be defeated in his attempts to expand his fortune by further investments. Although a rich man appears to be all-powerful to his subordinate workers, he must personally struggle to fulfill his personal desires. Similarly, the demigods and forefathers encounter many difficulties in maintaining and expanding their celestial standard of living. They must therefore constantly take shelter of superior Vedic knowledge. Even in the administration of cosmic affairs, they strictly follow the guidelines of the *Vedas*, which are the laws of God. If such fabulous entities as demigods must take shelter of the *Vedas*, we can just imagine the position of human beings, who are frustrated at virtually every step of their lives. Every human being should accept Vedic knowledge as the highest evidence in material and spiritual affairs. Uddhava points out to the Lord that if one accepts the authority of Vedic knowledge, it is seemingly impossible to reject the concept of material piety and sin. Thus Uddhava persists in examining the Lord's controversial statement at the end of the last chapter.

TEXT 20.5

*guṇa-doṣa-bhidā-dṛṣṭir
nigamāt te na hi svataḥ
nigamenāpavādaś ca
bhidāyā iti ha bhramaḥ*

guṇa – piety; *doṣa* – sin; *bhidā* – the difference between; *dṛṣṭiḥ* – seeing; *nigamāt* – from Vedic knowledge; *te* – Your; *na* – not; *hi* – indeed; *svataḥ* – automatically; *nigamena* – by the *Vedas*; *apavādaḥ* – nullification; *ca* – also; *bhidāyāḥ* – of such distinction; *iti* – thus; *ha* – clearly; *bhramaḥ* – confusion.

TRANSLATION

My dear Lord, the distinction observed between piety and sin comes from Your own Vedic knowledge and does not arise by itself. If the same Vedic literature subsequently nullifies such distinction between piety and sin, there will certainly be confusion.

PURPORT

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15) Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*: “By all the *Vedas* I am to be known. Indeed, I am the compiler of *Vedānta*, and I know the *Veda* as it is.” Vedic knowledge emanates from the

breathing of the Personality of Godhead; therefore, whatever Lord Kṛṣṇa speaks is *Veda*, or perfect knowledge. The Vedic literatures are full of descriptions of piety and sin, but Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement that one should transcend piety and sin is also to be understood as Vedic knowledge. Śrī Uddhava has understood this point and therefore requests Lord Kṛṣṇa to clear up an apparent contradiction. Ultimately, the material world gives the living entities a chance to satisfy their perverted desires and at the same time gradually achieve the liberation of going back home, back to Godhead. Thus material piety must be considered a means and never an absolute end, since the material world itself is not absolute, being temporary and limited. The Personality of Godhead is Himself the reservoir of all virtue and goodness. Those persons and activities that please the Lord are to be considered virtuous, and those that displease Him are to be considered sinful. There cannot be any other permanent definition of these terms. If one becomes a mundane moralist, forgetting the Supreme Lord, one's position is certainly imperfect, and one will not achieve the ultimate goal of piety, going back home, back to Godhead. On the other hand, there is great fear among moralists that if the distinction between piety and sin is minimized, people will commit many atrocities in the name of God. In the modern world there is no clear understanding of spiritual authority, and moral men consider any appeal to transcend morality to be an invitation to fanaticism, anarchy, violence and corruption. Thus they regard material moral principles as more important than directly trying to please God. Because this point is controversial, Uddhava is anxiously requesting the Lord to give a clear explanation.

TEXT 20.6

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
yogās trayo mayā proktā
nṛṇāṃ śreyo-vidhitsuṣā
jñānaṃ karma ca bhaktiś ca
noḥ pāyaḥ anyo'sti kutrचित्

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *yogāḥ* – processes; *trayaḥ* – three; *mayā* – by Me; *proktāḥ* – described; *nṛṇāṃ* – of human beings; *śreyaḥ* – perfection; *vidhitsuṣā* – desiring to bestow; *jñānam* – the path of philosophy; *karma* – the path of work; *ca* – also; *bhaktiḥ* – the path of devotion; *ca* – also; *na* – no; *upāyaḥ* – means; *anyaḥ* – other; *asti* – exists; *kutrचित्* – whatsoever.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, because I desire that human beings may achieve perfection, I have presented three paths of advancement - the path of knowledge, the path of work and the path of devotion. Besides these three there is absolutely no other means of elevation.

PURPORT

Ultimately, the goal of philosophical speculation, pious regulated work and devotional service is the same – Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As stated by the Lord in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.11):

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

“All of them – as they surrender unto Me – I reward accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pṛthā.” Although all authorized processes of human perfection ultimately lead to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or love of God, various performers have specific propensities and qualifications and thus gravitate to different methods of self-realization. Lord Kṛṣṇa here describes the three authorized processes together in order to emphasize that their ultimate goal is one. At the same time, philosophical speculation and regulated pious work can never be considered equal to pure love of Godhead, as the Lord has elaborately clarified in the previous chapters. The word *trayaḥ*, or “three,” indicates that despite their ultimate oneness of purpose, the three paths display diversity in progress and achievement. One cannot achieve the same result by mere speculation or piety that one achieves by directly surrendering to the Personality of Godhead, depending completely on His mercy and friendship. The word *karma* here indicates work dedicated to the Personality of Godhead. As described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.9):

*yajñārthāt karmaṇo'nyatra
loko'yaṁ karma-bandhanaḥ
tad-arthaṁ karma kaunteya
mukta-saṅgaḥ samācara*

“Work done as a sacrifice for Viṣṇu has to be performed; otherwise work binds one to this material world. Therefore, O son of Kuntī, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain unattached and free from bondage.” In the process of *jñāna*, one seeks impersonal liberation by merging into the glaring effulgence of the Personality of Godhead. Such liberation is considered hellish by the devotees, because by merging one loses all awareness of the supreme blissful feature of the Lord as Bhagavān, the supreme person. The performers of *karma*, or regulated work, seek the three aspects of human progress other than liberation – namely religiosity, economic development and sense gratification. The fruitive workers think that by exhausting each of their innumerable material desires they will gradually come out of the dark tunnel of material existence into the clear light of spiritual liberation. This process is very dangerous and uncertain, because not only is there virtually no limit to material desires, but even a slight flaw in the process of regulated work constitutes sin and throws one off the path of progressive life. The devotees directly aim for love of Godhead and are therefore most pleasing to

the Supreme Lord. In any case, all three divisions of Vedic elevation depend completely on the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One cannot progress along any one of these paths without the blessings of the Lord. Other Vedic processes, such as austerity, charity and so forth, are included within the three primary divisions described here.

TEXT 20.7

*nirviṇṇānām jñāna-yogo
nyāsinām iha karmasu
teṣv anirviṇṇa-cittānām
karma-yogas tu kāmīnām*

nirviṇṇānām – for those who are disgusted; *jñāna-yogaḥ* – the path of philosophical speculation; *nyāsinām* – for those who are renounced; *iha* – among these three paths; *karmasu* – in ordinary material activities; *teṣu* – in those activities; *anirviṇṇa* – not disgusted; *cittānām* – for those who have consciousness; *karma-yogaḥ* – the path of *karma-yoga*; *tu* – indeed; *kāmīnām* – for those who still desire material happiness.

TRANSLATION

Among these three paths, jñāna-yoga, the path of philosophical speculation, is recommended for those who are disgusted with material life and are thus detached from ordinary, fruitive activities. Those who are not disgusted with material life, having many desires yet to fulfill, should seek perfection through the path of karma-yoga.

PURPORT

In this verse the Lord reveals the different propensities that lead human beings to adopt different processes of perfection. Those who are frustrated in the ordinary material life of society, friendship and love, and who understand that promotion to heaven simply brings further domestic miseries, take directly to the path of knowledge. Through authorized philosophical discrimination they transcend the bonds of material existence. Those who are still desirous of enjoying material society, friendship and love, and who are excited by the prospect of going with their relatives to material heavenly planets, cannot take directly to the path of rigorous philosophical advancement, which requires great austerity. Such persons are advised to remain in family life and offer the fruits of their work to the Supreme. In this way, they also can become perfect and gradually learn detachment from material life.

TEXT 20.8

*yadṛcchayā mat-kathādau
jāta-śraddhas tu yaḥ pumān
na nirviṇṇo nāti-sakto
bhakti-yogo'sya siddhi-daḥ*

yadṛcchayā – somehow or other by good fortune; *mat-kathā-ādau* – in the narrations, songs, philosophy, dramatical performances, etc., that describe My glories; *jāta* – awakened; *śraddhaḥ* – faith; *tu* – indeed; *yaḥ* – one who; *pumān* – a person; *na* – not; *nirviṇṇaḥ* – disgusted; *na* – not; *ati-saktaḥ* – very attached; *bhakti-yogaḥ* – the path of loving devotion; *asya* – his; *siddhi-daḥ* – will award perfection.

TRANSLATION

If somehow or other by good fortune one develops faith in hearing and chanting My glories, such a person, being neither disgusted with nor very much attached to material life, should achieve perfection through the path of loving devotion to Me.

PURPORT

If somehow or other one gets the association of pure devotees of the Lord and hears from them the transcendental message of Lord Kṛṣṇa, then one has the chance to become a devotee of the Lord. As mentioned in the previous verse, those who become disgusted with material life take to impersonal philosophical speculation and rigorously try to stamp out any trace of personal existence. Those who are still attached to material sense gratification try to purify themselves by offering the fruits of their ordinary activities to the Supreme. A first-class candidate for pure devotional service, on the other hand, is neither completely disgusted with nor attached to material life. He does not desire to pursue ordinary material existence any further, because it cannot award real happiness. Nevertheless, a candidate for devotional service does not give up all hope for perfecting personal existence. A person who avoids the two extremes of material attachment and impersonal reaction to material attachment and who somehow or other gets the association of pure devotees, faithfully hearing their message, is a good candidate for going back home, back to Godhead, as described here by the Lord.

TEXT 20.9

*tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta
na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā
śraddhā yāvan na jāyate*

tāvat – up to that time; *karmāṇi* – fruitive activities; *kurvīta* – one should execute; *na nirvidyeta* – is not satiated; *yāvatā* – as long as; *mat-kathā* – of discourses about Me; *śravaṇa-ādau* – in the matter of *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* and so on; *vā* – or; *śraddhā* – faith; *yāvat* – as long as; *na* – not; *jāyate* – is awakened.

TRANSLATION

As long as one is not satiated by fruitive activity and has not awakened his taste for devotional service by śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ, one has to act according to the regulative principles of the Vedic injunctions.

PURPORT

Unless one has developed firm faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa by association with pure devotees and is thus engaged full time in the devotional service of the Lord, one should not neglect ordinary Vedic principles and duties. As stated by the Lord Himself,

*śruti-smṛtī mamaivājñe
yas te ullaṅghya vartate
ājñā-cchedī mama dveṣī
mad-bhakto'pi na vaiṣṇavaḥ*

“The *śruti* and *smṛti* literatures are to be understood as My injunctions, and one who violates such codes is to be understood as violating My will and thus opposing Me. Although such a person may claim to be My devotee, he is not actually a Vaiṣṇava.” The Lord here states that if one has not developed firm faith in the process of chanting and hearing, one must comply with the ordinary injunctions of Vedic literatures. There are many symptoms by which one can recognize an advanced devotee of the Lord. In the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.7) it is stated:

*vāsudeve bhagavati
bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyaṁ
jñānaṁ ca yad ahaitukam*

One who is actually engaged in advanced devotional service immediately develops both clear knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and detachment from nondevotional activities. One who is not situated on this platform must comply with the ordinary injunctions of Vedic literature or risk becoming inimical to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. On the other hand, one who has developed great faith in the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa does not hesitate to do anything that will further the mission of the Lord. As stated in the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.5.41):

*devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇāṁ piṭṛṇāṁ
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇaṁ śaraṇyaṁ
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam*

“Anyone who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, the giver of liberation, giving up all kinds of obligation, and has taken to the path in all seriousness, owes neither duties nor obligations to the demigods, sages, general living entities, family members, humankind or forefathers.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī points out in this regard that when a person fully surrenders to Lord Kṛṣṇa, he takes shelter of the Lord’s promise to liquidate all other responsibilities and debts of the surrendered soul. The devotee thus becomes fearless by meditating on the Lord’s promise of protection. Those, however, who are materially attached are frightened by the prospect of full surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, thereby revealing their inimical mentality toward the Lord.

TEXT 20.10

*sva-dharma-stho yajan yajñair
anāśīḥ-kāma uddhava
na yāti svarga-narakau
yady anyan na samācaret*

sva-dharma – in one’s prescribed duties; *sthaḥ* – situated; *yajan* – worshiping; *yajñair* – by prescribed sacrifices; *anāśīḥ-kāmaḥ* – not desiring fruitive results; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *na* – does not; *yāti* – go; *svarga* – to heaven; *narakau* – or to hell; *yady* – if; *anyat* – something other than his prescribed duty; *na* – does not; *samācaret* – perform.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, a person who is situated in his prescribed duty, properly worshiping by Vedic sacrifices but not desiring the fruitive result of such worship, will not go to the heavenly planets; similarly, by not performing forbidden activities he will not go to hell.

PURPORT

The perfection of *karma-yoga* is described here. One who does not desire fruitive rewards for his religious activities does not waste time going to the heavenly planets for celestial sense gratification. Similarly, one who does not neglect his prescribed duty or perform forbidden activities will not be bothered by going to hell for punishment. Thus avoiding material rewards and punishments, such a desireless person can be promoted to the platform of pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 20.11

*asmiḥ loke vartamānaḥ
sva-dharma-stho’naghaḥ śuciḥ
jñānam viśuddham āpnoti
mad-bhaktim vā yadṛcchayā*

asmin – in this; *loke* – world; *vartamānaḥ* – existing; *sva-dharma* – in one’s prescribed duty; *sthaḥ* – situated; *anaghaḥ* – free from sinful activities; *śuciḥ* – cleansed of material contamination; *jñānam* – knowledge; *viśuddham* – transcendental; *āpnoti* – obtains; *mat* – to Me; *bhaktim* – devotional service; *vā* – or; *yadṛcchayā* – according to one’s fortune.

TRANSLATION

One who is situated in his prescribed duty, free from sinful activities and cleansed of material contamination, in this very life obtains transcendental knowledge or, by fortune, devotional service unto Me.

PURPORT

Asmin loke indicates one’s present duration of life. Before the death of one’s present body one can obtain transcendental knowledge or, by great fortune,

pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord. The word *yadṛcchayā* indicates that if one somehow or other gets the association of pure devotees and hears from them faithfully, one can achieve Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the highest perfection of life. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, through transcendental knowledge one obtains liberation, whereas through pure devotional service one can achieve love of Godhead, in which liberation is automatically included. Both results are certainly superior to ordinary, fruitive activities, by which one tries to enjoy much the same things that animals do. If one's devotional service is mixed with a tendency toward fruitive activities or mental speculation, then one may achieve the neutral stage of love of Godhead, whereas those who are inclined to serve only Lord Kṛṣṇa advance to the higher stages of love of Godhead in servitude, friendship, parental love and the conjugal relationship.

TEXT 20.12

*svargiṇo'py etam icchanti
lokam nirayaṇas tathā
sādhakam jñāna-bhaktibhyām
ubhayam tad-asādhakam*

svargiṇaḥ – the residents of the heavenly planets; *api* – even; *etam* – this; *icchanti* – desire; *lokam* – earth planet; *nirayaṇaḥ* – the residents of hell; *tathā* – in the same way; *sādhakam* – leading to achievement; *jñāna-bhaktibhyām* – of transcendental knowledge and love of Godhead; *ubhayam* – both (heaven and hell); *tat* – for that perfection; *asādhakam* – not useful.

TRANSLATION

The residents of both heaven and hell desire human birth on the earth planet because human life facilitates the achievement of transcendental knowledge and love of Godhead, whereas neither heavenly nor hellish bodies efficiently provide such opportunities.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī points out that in material heaven one becomes absorbed in extraordinary sense gratification and in hell one is absorbed in suffering. In both cases there is little impetus to acquire transcendental knowledge or pure love of Godhead. Excessive suffering or excessive enjoyment are thus impediments to spiritual advancement.

TEXT 20.13

*na naraḥ svar-gatiṁ kāṅkṣen
nārakīm vā vicakṣaṇaḥ
nemaṁ lokam ca kāṅkṣeta
dehāveśāt pramādyati*

na – never; *naraḥ* – a human being; *svaḥ-gatiṁ* – promotion to heaven; *kāṅkṣet* – should desire; *nārakīm* – to hell; *vā* – or; *vicakṣaṇaḥ* – a learned person; *na* – nor; *imam* – this; *lokam* – earth planet; *ca* – also; *kāṅkṣeta* – one

should desire; *deha* - in the material body; *āveśāt* - from absorption; *pramādyati* - one becomes a fool.

TRANSLATION

A human being who is wise should never desire promotion to heavenly planets or residence in hell. Indeed, a human being should also never desire permanent residence on the earth, for by such absorption in the material body one becomes foolishly negligent of one's actual self-interest.

PURPORT

One who has achieved human life on the earth has an excellent opportunity to attain spiritual liberation through Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or devotional service to the Lord. Thus one should not desire promotion to heaven or risk residence in hell, where excessive enjoyment or punishment deviate one's mind from self-realization. On the other hand, one should not think, "The earth is so nice, I can stay here forever." One should develop thorough detachment from all aspects and categories of material existence and go back home, back to Godhead, where life is eternal and full of bliss and knowledge.

Lord Kṛṣṇa now begins to develop His conclusive proof that actual human progress lies beyond material piety and sin. The Lord first clarified that there are basically three methods of human elevation, namely *jñāna*, *karma* and *bhakti*, and that the goal is transcendental knowledge and ultimately love of Godhead. Now the Lord explains that promotion to heavenly planets (the final goal of piety) as well as residence in hell (the result of sinful activities) are both useless in fulfilling the actual purpose of life. Neither material piety nor sin establish the eternal living entity in his constitutional position; therefore something more is required to achieve the actual perfection of life.

TEXT 20.14

*etat vidvān purā mṛtyor
abhavāya ghaṭeta saḥ
apramatta idaṁ jñātvā
martyam apy artha-siddhi-dam*

etat - this; *vidvān* - knowing; *purā* - before; *mṛtyoḥ* - death; *abhavāya* - to transcend material existence; *ghaṭeta* - should act; *saḥ* - he; *apramattaḥ* - without laziness or foolishness; *idaṁ* - this; *jñātvā* - knowing; *martyam* - subject to death; *api* - even though; *artha* - of the goal of life; *siddhi-dam* - giving the perfection.

TRANSLATION

A wise person, knowing that although the material body is subject to death it can still award the perfection of one's life, should not foolishly neglect to take advantage of this opportunity before death arrives.

TEXT 20.15

*chidyamānaṁ yamair etaiḥ
kṛta-nīḍaṁ vanaspatim
khagaḥ sva-ketaṁ utsrjya
kṣemaṁ yāti hy alampaṭaḥ*

chidyamānam – being cut down; *yamaiḥ* – by cruel men, who are like death personified; *etaiḥ* – by these; *kṛta-nīḍam* – in which he has constructed his nest; *vanaspatim* – a tree; *khagaḥ* – a bird; *sva-ketaṁ* – his home; *utsrjya* – giving up; *kṣemam* – happiness; *yāti* – achieves; *hi* – indeed; *alampaṭaḥ* – without attachment.

TRANSLATION

Without attachment, a bird gives up the tree in which his nest was constructed when that tree is cut down by cruel men who are like death personified, and thus the bird achieves happiness in another place.

PURPORT

Here the example is given of detachment from the bodily concept of life. The living entity resides within the body just as a bird dwells within a tree. When thoughtless men cut down the tree, the bird, without lamenting the loss of its previous nest, does not hesitate to establish its residence in another place.

TEXT 20.16

*aho-rātrais chidyamānaṁ
buddhvāyur bhaya-vepathuḥ
mukta-saṅgaḥ param buddhvā
nirīha upasāmyati*

ahaḥ – by days; *rātraiḥ* – by nights; *chidyamānam* – being cut down; *buddhvā* – knowing; *āyuh* – the duration of life; *bhaya* – with fear; *vepathuḥ* – trembling; *mukta-saṅgaḥ* – free from attachment; *param* – the Supreme Lord; *buddhvā* – understanding; *nirīhaḥ* – without material desire; *upasāmyati* – achieves perfect peace.

TRANSLATION

Knowing that one’s duration of life is being similarly cut down by the passing of days and nights, one should be shaken by fear. In this way, giving up all material attachment and desire, one understands the Supreme Lord and achieves perfect peace.

PURPORT

An intelligent devotee knows that the passing days and nights are exhausting one’s duration of life, and he therefore gives up his futile attachment to material sense objects. Instead, he strives to achieve permanent benefit in life. Just as the detached bird immediately gives up its nest and goes to another tree, similarly, a devotee knows that there is no permanent opportunity for residence within the material world. Instead he dedicates his working energy to achieving eternal residence in the kingdom of God. Transcending the modes of material nature by attaining Kṛṣṇa’s own spiritual nature, the devotee at last obtains perfect peace.

TEXT 20.17

*nṛ-deham ādyam su-labham su-durlabham
plavam su-kalpam guru-karṇadhāram
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritam
pumān bhavābdhim na taret sa ātma-hā*

nṛ – human; *deham* – body; *ādyam* – the source of all favorable results; *su-labham* – effortlessly obtained; *su-durlabham* – although impossible to obtain even with great endeavor; *plavam* – a boat; *su-kalpam* – extremely well suited for its purpose; *guru* – having the spiritual master; *karṇa-dhāram* – as the captain of the boat; *mayā* – by Me; *anukūlena* – with favorable; *nabhasvatā* – winds; *īritam* – impelled; *pumān* – a person; *bhava* – of material existence; *abdhim* – the ocean; *na* – does not; *taret* – cross over; *saḥ* – he; *ātma-hā* – the killer of his own soul.

TRANSLATION

The human body, which can award all benefit in life, is automatically obtained by the laws of nature, although it is a very rare achievement. This human body can be compared to a perfectly constructed boat having the spiritual master as the captain and the instructions of the Personality of Godhead as favorable winds impelling it on its course. Considering all these advantages, a human being who does not utilize his human life to cross the ocean of material existence must be considered the killer of his own soul.

PURPORT

The human body, which is obtained after passing through many inferior forms, is created in such a way that it can award the highest perfection of life. A human being is supposed to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the bona fide spiritual master is the appropriate guide for such service. The causeless mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa is compared to favorable winds that help the boat of the body to ply smoothly on the course back home, back to Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa gives His personal instructions in Vedic literature, speaks through the bona fide spiritual master, and encourages, warns and protects His sincere devotee from within the devotee's heart. Such merciful guidance of the Lord moves a sincere soul quickly on the path back to Godhead. But one who cannot understand that the human body is a suitable boat for crossing the ocean of material existence will see no need to accept a captain in the form of the spiritual master and will not at all appreciate the favorable winds of the Lord's mercy. He has no chance of achieving the goal of human life. Acting against his own self-interest, he gradually becomes the killer of his own soul.

TEXT 20.18

*yadārambheṣu nirviṇṇo
viraktaḥ saṁyatendriyaḥ
abhyāsenātmano yogī
dhārayed acalam manaḥ*

yadā – when; *ārambheṣu* – in material endeavors; *nirviṇṇaḥ* – hopeless; *viraktaḥ* – detached; *saṁyata* – completely controlling; *indriyaḥ* – the senses; *abhyāsenā* – by practice; *ātmanaḥ* – of the soul; *yogī* – the transcendentalist; *dhārayet* – should concentrate; *acalam* – steady; *manaḥ* – the mind.

TRANSLATION

A transcendentalist, having become disgusted and hopeless in all endeavors for material happiness, completely controls the senses and develops detachment. By spiritual practice he should then fix the mind on the spiritual platform without deviation.

PURPORT

The inevitable result of material sense gratification is disappointment and pain that sears the heart. One becomes gradually hopeless and despondent in material life; then, receiving good instructions from the Lord or His devotee, one transforms one's material disappointment into spiritual success. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa is our only true friend, and this simple understanding can bring one to a new life of spiritual happiness in the company of the Lord.

TEXT 20.19

*dhāryamāṇam mano yarhi
bhrāmyad āśv anavasthitam
atandrito'nurodhena
mārgenātma-vaśam nayet*

dhāryamāṇam – being concentrated on the spiritual platform; *manaḥ* – the mind; *yarhi* – when; *bhrāmyat* – is deviated; *āśu* – suddenly; *anavasthitam* – not situated on the spiritual platform; *atandritaḥ* – carefully; *anurodhena* – according to the prescribed regulations; *mārgena* – by the process; *ātma* – of the soul; *vaśam* – under the control; *nayet* – one should bring.

TRANSLATION

Whenever the mind, being concentrated on the spiritual platform, is suddenly deviated from its spiritual position, one should carefully bring it under the control of the self by following the prescribed means.

PURPORT

Although one is seriously engaging the mind in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the mind is so flickering that it may suddenly be deviated from its spiritual position. One should then carefully bring the mind back under the control of the self. It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* that if one is too austere or too sensuous one cannot control the mind. Sometimes one may bring the mind under control by allowing the material senses limited satisfaction. For example, although one may eat austerely, from time to time one may accept

a reasonable amount of *mahā-prasādam*, opulent foods offered to the temple Deities, so that the mind will not become disturbed. Similarly, one may occasionally relax with other transcendentalists through joking, swimming and so forth. But if such activities are performed excessively, they will lead to a setback in spiritual life. When the mind desires sinful gratification such as illicit sex or intoxication, one must simply tolerate the mind's foolishness and by strenuous effort push on with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then the waves of illusion will soon subside, and the path of advancement will again open wide.

TEXT 20.20

*mano-gatim na visṛjeḥ
jita-prāṇo jitendriyaḥ
sattva-sampannayā buddhyā
mana ātma-vaśam nayet*

manaḥ – of the mind; *gatim* – goal; *na* – not; *visṛjet* – should lose sight of; *jita-prāṇaḥ* – one who has conquered the breath; *jita-indriyaḥ* – who has conquered his senses; *sattva* – of the mode of goodness; *sampannayā* – characterized by flourishing; *buddhyā* – by the intelligence; *manaḥ* – the mind; *ātma-vaśam* – under the control of the self; *nayet* – one should bring.

TRANSLATION

One should never lose sight of the actual goal of mental activities, but rather, conquering the life air and senses and utilizing intelligence strengthened by the mode of goodness, one should bring the mind under the control of the self.

PURPORT

Although the mind may suddenly wander outside the jurisdiction of self-realization, one must bring the mind back under control by clear intelligence in the mode of goodness. The best solution is to keep the mind always busy in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa so that the mind cannot wander onto the dangerous path of sense gratification, headed by sex attraction. The material mind is naturally inclined to accept material objects at every moment. Therefore unless the mind is seriously brought under control there is no possibility of becoming steady on the path of spiritual advancement.

TEXT 20.21

*eṣa vai paramo yogo
manasaḥ saṅgrahaḥ smṛtaḥ
hṛdaya-jñātvam anvicchan
damyasyevārvato muhuḥ*

eṣaḥ – this; *vai* – indeed; *paramaḥ* – supreme; *yogaḥ* – yoga process; *manasaḥ* – of the mind; *saṅgrahaḥ* – complete control; *smṛtaḥ* – thus declared; *hṛdaya-jñātvam* – the characteristic of knowing intimately; *anvicchan* – carefully watching; *damyasya* – which is to be subdued; *iva* – like; *arvataḥ* – of a horse; *muhuḥ* – always.

TRANSLATION

An expert horseman, desiring to tame a headstrong horse, first lets the horse have his way for a moment and then, pulling the reins, gradually places the horse on the desired path. Similarly, the supreme yoga process is that by which one carefully observes the movements and desires of the mind and gradually brings them under full control.

PURPORT

Just as an expert rider intimately knows the propensities of an untamed horse and gradually brings the horse under control, an expert *yogī* allows the mind to reveal its materialistic propensities and then controls them through superior intelligence. A learned transcendentalist withholds and supplies sense objects so that the mind and senses remain fully controlled, just as the horseman sometimes pulls sharply on the reins and sometimes allows the horse to run freely. The rider never forgets his actual goal or destination, and eventually places the horse on the right path. Similarly, a learned transcendentalist, even though sometimes allowing the senses to act, never forgets the goal of self-realization, nor does he allow the senses to engage in sinful activity. Excessive austerity or restriction may result in great mental disturbance, just as pulling excessively on the reins of a horse may cause the horse to rear up against the rider. The path of self-realization depends upon clear intelligence, and the easiest way to acquire such expertise is surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10):

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ
bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ
yena mām upayānti te*

One may not be a great scholar or spiritual intellect, but if one is sincerely engaged in loving service to the Lord without personal envy or personal motivation the Lord will reveal from within the heart the methodology required to control the mind. Expertly riding the waves of mental desire, a Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not fall from the saddle, and he eventually rides all the way back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 20.22

*sāṅkhyena sarva-bhāvānāṁ
pratilomānulomataḥ
bhavāpyayāv anudhyāyen
mano yāvat prasīdati*

sāṅkhyena – by analytic study; *sarva* – of all; *bhāvānāṁ* – material elements (cosmic, earthly and atomic); *pratiloma* – by regressive function; *anulomataḥ* – by progressive function; *bhava* – creation; *apyayau* – annihilation; *anudhyāyet* – should constantly observe; *manaḥ* – the mind; *yāvat* – until; *prasīdati* – is spiritually satisfied.

TRANSLATION

Until one's mind is fixed in spiritual satisfaction, one should analytically study the temporary nature of all material objects, whether cosmic, earthly or atomic. One should constantly observe the process of creation through the natural progressive function and the process of annihilation through the regressive function.

PURPORT

There is a saying that whatever goes up must come down. Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.27):

*jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur
dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca
tasmād aparihārye'rthe
na tvaṁ śocitum arhasi*

“For one who has taken his birth, death is certain; and for one who is dead, birth is certain. Therefore, in the unavoidable discharge of your duty, you should not lament.” *Mano yāvat prasīdati*: Until one has established one's consciousness on the liberated platform of perfect knowledge, one must constantly ward off the attacks of illusion through rigid analytic observation of material nature. The material mind may be attracted to sex; therefore by spiritual intelligence one should scrutinize the temporary nature of one's own body and the body that has artificially become the object of one's material lust. One may apply this rigid analysis to all material bodies, from the fantastic cosmic body of Lord Brahmā down to that of the most insignificant germ. As previously stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa, one who is advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness spontaneously avoids sense gratification and is constantly drawn by spiritual love into his relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who has not achieved the platform of spontaneous Kṛṣṇa consciousness must remain constantly vigilant so as not to be grossly cheated by the material energy of the Lord. One who tries to exploit the material energy ruins his spiritual life and experiences varieties of misery.

TEXT 20.23

*nirviṇṇasya viraktasya
puruṣasyokta-vedinaḥ
manas tyajati daurātmyaṁ
cintitasyānucintayā*

nirviṇṇasya – of one who is disgusted with the illusory nature of the material world; *viraktasya* – and who is therefore detached; *puruṣasya* – of such a person; *ukta-vedinaḥ* – who is guided by the instructions of his spiritual master; *manaḥ* – the mind; *tyajati* – gives up; *daurātmyam* – the false identification with the material body and mind; *cintitasya* – of that which is contemplated; *anucintayā* – by constant analysis.

TRANSLATION

When a person is disgusted with the temporary, illusory nature of this world and is thus detached from it, his mind, guided by the

instructions of his spiritual master, considers again and again the nature of this world and eventually gives up the false identification with matter.

PURPORT

Although it is difficult to control the mind, by constant practice the mind can be spiritualized in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. A sincere disciple constantly remembers the instructions of his spiritual master and thereby faces again and again the stark truth that the material world is not the ultimate reality. By detachment and perseverance the mind gradually gives up its propensity toward sense gratification; thus illusion loses its grip on a sincere Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee. Gradually the purified mind completely gives up the false identification with this world and transfers its attention to the spiritual platform. Then one is considered to be perfect in the *yoga* system.

TEXT 20.24

*yamādibhir yoga-pathair
ānvīkṣikyā ca vidyayā
mamārcopāsanābhir vā
nānyair yogyaṁ smaren manaḥ*

yama-ādibhiḥ – by disciplinary regulations, etc.; *yoga-pathaiḥ* – by the procedures of the *yoga* system; *ānvīkṣikyā* – by logical analysis; *ca* – also; *vidyayā* – by spiritual knowledge; *mama* – My; *arcā* – worship; *upāsanābhiḥ* – by adoration, etc.; *vā* – or; *na* – never; *anyaiḥ* – by other (means); *yogyam* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the object of meditation; *smaret* – one should focus on; *manaḥ* – the mind.

TRANSLATION

Through the various disciplinary regulations and the purificatory procedures of the yoga system, through logic and spiritual education or through worship and adoration of Me, one should constantly engage his mind in remembering the Personality of Godhead, the goal of yoga. No other means should be employed for this purpose.

PURPORT

The word *vā* is significant in this verse, for it indicates that one engaged in the worship and adoration of the Personality of Godhead need not trouble himself with the disciplinary, regulatory and purificatory procedures of *yoga*, nor with the grueling intricacies of Vedic studies and logic. *Yogyam*, or the most appropriate object of meditation, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as confirmed throughout Vedic literature. One who directly takes to the worship of the Lord should not employ other methods, for full dependence on the Lord is in itself the supreme process of perfection.

TEXT 20.25

*yadi kuryāt pramādena
yogī karma vigarhitam*

*yogenaiva dahed aṁho
nānyat tatra kadācana*

yadi - if; *kuryāt* - should perform; *pramādena* - due to negligence; *yogī* - the *yogī*; *karma* - an activity; *vigarhitam* - abominable; *yogena* - by the *yoga* process; *eva* - only; *dahet* - he should burn up; *aṁhaḥ* - that sin; *na* - no; *anyat* - other means; *tatra* - in this matter; *kadācana* - at any time (should be employed).

TRANSLATION

If, because of momentary inattention, a yogī accidentally commits an abominable activity, then by the very practice of yoga he should burn to ashes the sinful reaction, without at any time employing any other procedure.

PURPORT

The word *yogena* here indicates *jñānena yogena* and *bhaktiyā yogena*, since these two transcendental systems have the power to burn sinful reactions to ashes. It should be clearly understood that the word *aṁhas*, or “sin,” here refers to an accidental falldown against one’s desire. Premeditated exploitation of the mercy of the Lord can never be excused. Significantly, the Lord forbids any extraneous purificatory rites, since the transcendental *yoga* systems are themselves the most purifying processes, especially *bhakti-yoga*. If one gives up one’s regular prescribed duties to perform a special ritual or penance, trying to purify a sinful reaction, then one will be guilty of the additional fault of giving up one’s prescribed duties. One should pick oneself up from an accidental falldown and go on vigorously with one’s prescribed duties in life without being unnecessarily discouraged. One should certainly lament and feel ashamed, or there will be no purification. However, if one becomes overly depressed at an accidental falldown one will not have the enthusiasm to go on to perfection. Lord Kṛṣṇa also states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.30):

*api cet su-durācāro
bhajate mām ananya-bhāḥ
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ
samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

“Even if one commits the most abominable actions, if he is engaged in devotional service, he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated.” The most important point is that one should be properly engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, for then the Lord will excuse and purify an accidental falldown. One should, however, be most cautious to avoid such an unhappy event.

TEXT 20.26

*sve sve 'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā
sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ
karmaṇām jāty-aśuddhānām
anena niyamaḥ kṛtaḥ*

*guṇa-doṣa-vidhānena
saṅgānām tyājanecchayā*

sve sve – each in his own; *adhikāre* – position; *yā* – which; *niṣṭhā* – steady practice; *saḥ* – this; *guṇaḥ* – piety; *parikīrtitaḥ* – is thoroughly declared; *karmaṇām* – of fruitive activities; *jāti* – by nature; *aśuddhānām* – impure; *anena* – by this; *niyamaḥ* – disciplinary control; *kṛtaḥ* – is established; *guṇa* – of piety; *doṣa* – of sin; *vidhānena* – by the rule; *saṅgānām* – of association with different types of sense gratification; *tyājana* – of renunciation; *icchayā* – by the desire.

TRANSLATION

It is firmly declared that the steady adherence of transcendentalists to their respective spiritual positions constitutes real piety and that sin occurs when a transcendentalist neglects his prescribed duty. One who adopts this standard of piety and sin, sincerely desiring to give up all past association with sense gratification, is able to subdue materialistic activities, which are by nature impure.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa here explains more clearly that those persons directly engaged in self-realization either through *jñāna-yoga* or *bhakti-yoga* need not give up their regular duties and perform special penances to atone for an accidental falldown. The actual purpose of Vedic literature is to direct one back home, back to Godhead, and not to encourage material sense gratification. Although the *Vedas* recommend innumerable rituals for promotion to heavenly planets and enjoyment of all varieties of material opulence, such materialistic rewards are meant only to engage materialistic people, who otherwise would become demoniac. To purify an accidental falldown, one who is engaged in transcendental realization need not adopt any procedure beyond his own spiritual practice. The words *saṅgānām tyājanecchayā* indicate that one should not practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness or self-realization superficially or casually; rather, one should sincerely and earnestly desire freedom from one's past sinful life. Similarly, the words *yā niṣṭhā* indicate that one must constantly practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thus, essential piety is to give up material sense gratification and engage in the loving service of the Lord. One who engages his senses, mind and intelligence twenty-four hours a day in the Lord's service is the most pious person, and the Lord personally protects such a surrendered soul.

TEXTS 20.27-28

*jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu
nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu
veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān
parityāge'py anīśvaraḥ
tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ
śraddhālur dṛḍha-niścayaḥ*

*juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān
duḥkhodarkāṁś ca garhayan*

jāta – one who has awakened; *śraddhaḥ* – faith; *mat-kathāsu* – in the descriptions of My glories; *nirviṇṇaḥ* – disgusted; *sarva* – with all; *karmasu* – activities; *veda* – he knows; *duḥkha* – misery; *ātmakān* – constituted of; *kāmān* – all types of sense gratification; *parityāge* – in the process of renouncing; *api* – although; *anīśvaraḥ* – unable; *tataḥ* – due to such faith; *bhajeta* – he should worship; *mām* – Me; *prītaḥ* – remaining happy; *śraddhāluḥ* – being faithful; *dṛḍha* – resolute; *niścayaḥ* – conviction; *juṣamāṇaḥ* – engaging in; *ca* – also; *tān* – that; *kāmān* – sense gratification; *duḥkha* – misery; *udarkān* – leading to; *ca* – also; *garhayan* – repenting of.

TRANSLATION

Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities.

PURPORT

The beginning stage of pure devotional service is described here by the Lord. A sincere devotee has practically seen that all material activities lead only to sense gratification and all sense gratification leads only to misery. Thus a devotee's sincere desire is to engage twenty-four hours a day in the loving service of Lord Kṛṣṇa without any personal motivation. The devotee sincerely desires to be established in his constitutional position as the Lord's eternal servitor, and he prays to the Lord to elevate him to this exalted position. The word *anīśvara* indicates that because of one's past sinful activities and bad habits one may not immediately be able to completely extinguish the enjoying spirit. The Lord here encourages such a devotee not to be overly depressed or morose but to remain enthusiastic and to go on with his loving service. The word *nirviṇṇa* indicates that a sincere devotee, although somewhat entangled in the remnants of sense gratification, is completely disgusted with material life and under no circumstances willingly commits sinful activities. In fact, he avoids every kind of materialistic activity. The word *kāmān* basically refers to sex attraction and its by-products in the form of children, home and so forth. Within the material world, the sex impulse is so strong that even a sincere candidate in the loving service of the Lord may sometimes be disturbed by sex attraction or by lingering sentiments for wife and children. A pure devotee certainly feels spiritual affection for all living entities, including the so-called wife and children, but he knows that material bodily attraction leads to no good, for it simply entangles one and one's so-called relatives in a miserable chain reaction of fruitive activities. The word *dṛḍha-niścaya* ("steadfast conviction") indicates that in any circumstance a

devotee is completely determined to go on with his prescribed duties for Kṛṣṇa. Thus he thinks, “By my previous shameful life my heart is polluted with many illusory attachments. Personally I have no power to stop them. Only Lord Kṛṣṇa within my heart can remove such inauspicious contamination. But whether the Lord removes such attachments immediately or lets me go on being afflicted by them, I will never give up my devotional service to Him. Even if the Lord places millions of obstacles in my path, and even if because of my offenses I go to hell, I will never for a moment stop serving Lord Kṛṣṇa. I am not interested in mental speculation and fruitive activities; even if Lord Brahmā personally comes before me offering such engagements, I will not be even slightly interested. Although I am attached to material things I can see very clearly that they lead to no good because they simply give me trouble and disturb my devotional service to the Lord. Therefore, I sincerely repent my foolish attachments to so many material things, and I am patiently awaiting Lord Kṛṣṇa’s mercy.”

The word *prīta* indicates that a devotee feels exactly like the son or subject of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is very attached to his relationship with the Lord. Therefore, although sincerely lamenting occasional lapses into sense enjoyment, he never gives up his enthusiasm to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa. If a devotee becomes too morose or discouraged in devotional service, he may drift into an impersonal consciousness or give up his devotional service to the Lord. Therefore, the Lord here advises that although one should sincerely repent, he should not become chronically depressed. One should understand that because of his past sins he must occasionally suffer disturbances from the material mind and senses, but one should not therefore become a devotee of detachment, as do the speculative philosophers. Although one may desire detachment to purify one’s devotional service to the Lord, if one becomes more concerned with renunciation than with acting for the pleasure of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he is misunderstanding the position of loving devotional service. Faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa is so powerful that in due course of time it will automatically award detachment and perfect knowledge. If one gives up Lord Kṛṣṇa as the central object of one’s worship and concentrates more on knowledge and detachment, one will become deviated from one’s progress in going back home, back to Godhead. A sincere devotee of the Lord must be sincerely convinced that simply by the strength of devotional service and the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa he will achieve everything auspicious in life. One must believe that Lord Kṛṣṇa is all-merciful and that He is the only real goal of one’s life. Such determined faith combined with a sincere desire to give up sense enjoyment will carry one past the obstacles of this world.

The words *jāta-śraddhaḥ mat-kathāsu* are most significant here. By faithful hearing of the mercy and glories of the Lord one will gradually be freed from all material desire and clearly see at every moment the utter frustration of sense gratification. Chanting the glories of the Lord with firm faith and

conviction is a tremendously powerful spiritual process that enables one to give up all material association.

There is actually nothing inauspicious in the devotional service of the Lord. Occasional difficulties experienced by a devotee are due to his previous material activities. On the other hand, the endeavor for sense gratification is completely inauspicious. Thus sense gratification and devotional service are directly opposed to each other. In all circumstances one should therefore remain the Lord's sincere servant, always believing in His mercy. Then one will certainly go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 20.29

*proktena bhakti-yogena
bhajato māsakṛn muneḥ
kā mā hṛdayyā naśyanti
sarve mayi hṛdi sthite*

proktena – which has been described; *bhakti-yogena* – by devotional service; *bhajataḥ* – who is worshipping; *mā* – Me; *asakṛt* – constantly; *muneḥ* – of the sage; *kāmāḥ* – material desires; *hṛdayyāḥ* – in the heart; *naśyanti* – are destroyed; *sarve* – all of them; *mayi* – in Me; *hṛdi* – when the heart; *sthite* – is firmly situated.

TRANSLATION

When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshipping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed.

PURPORT

The material senses are engaged in gratifying the concoctions of the mind, causing many types of material desires to become prominent, one after another. One who constantly engages in the devotional service of the Lord by hearing and chanting the Lord's transcendental glories with firm faith gets relief from the harassment of material desires. By serving the Lord one becomes strengthened in the conviction that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the only actual enjoyer and all others are meant to share the Lord's pleasure through devotional service. A devotee of the Lord situates Śrī Kṛṣṇa on a beautiful throne within his heart and there offers the Lord constant service. Just as the rising sun gradually eliminates all trace of darkness, the Lord's presence within the heart causes all material desires there to weaken and eventually disappear. The words *mayi hṛdi sthite* ("when the heart is situated in Me") indicate that an advanced devotee sees Lord Kṛṣṇa not only within his own heart but within the hearts of all living creatures. Thus a sincere devotee who chants and hears the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa should not be discouraged by the remnants of material desires within the heart. He should faithfully wait for the devotional process to naturally purify the heart of all contamination.

TEXT 20.30

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś
chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi
mayi dr̥ṣṭe'khilātmani*

bhidyate – pierced; *hṛdaya* – heart; *granthiḥ* – knots; *chidyante* – cut to pieces; *sarva* – all; *saṁśayāḥ* – misgivings; *kṣīyante* – terminated; *ca* – and; *asya* – his; *karmāṇi* – chain of fruitive actions; *mayi* – when I; *dr̥ṣṭe* – am seen; *akhila-ātmani* – as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

The knot in the heart is pierced, all misgivings are cut to pieces and the chain of fruitive actions is terminated when I am seen as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

Hṛdaya-granthi indicates that one's heart is bound to illusion by false identification with the material body. One thus becomes absorbed in material sex pleasure, dreaming of innumerable combinations of male and female bodies. A person intoxicated by sex attraction cannot understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the reservoir of all pleasure and the supreme enjoyer. When a devotee achieves steadiness in devotional service, feeling transcendental pleasure at every moment in the execution of his loving service to the Lord, the knot of false identification is pierced and all his misgivings are cut to pieces. In illusion we imagine that the living entity cannot be fully satisfied without material sense gratification and speculative doubting of the Absolute Truth. Materialistic persons consider sense enjoyment and speculative doubting to be essential for civilized life. A pure devotee, however, realizes that Lord Kṛṣṇa is an unlimited ocean of happiness and the personification of all knowledge. This realization of Lord Kṛṣṇa completely eradicates the twin tendencies of sense gratification and mental speculation. Thus the chain of fruitive activities, or *karma*, automatically collapses, just as a fire collapses and goes out when its fuel is removed.

Advanced devotional service automatically awards one liberation from material bondage, as confirmed by Lord Kapila: *jarayaty āśu yā kośaṁ nigīrṇam analo yathā*. “*Bhakti*, devotional service, dissolves the subtle body of the living entity without separate effort, just as fire in the stomach digests all that we eat.” (*Bhāg.* 3.25.33) Śrīla Prabhupāda states in his purport to this verse, “A devotee does not have to try separately to attain liberation. That very service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the process of liberation, because to engage oneself in the service of the Lord is to liberate oneself from material entanglement. Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura explained this position very nicely. He said, ‘If I have unflinching devotion unto the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, then *mukti*, or liberation, serves me as my maidservant. *Mukti* the maidservant is always ready to do whatever I ask.’ For a devotee, liberation is no problem at all. Liberation takes place without separate endeavor.”

TEXT 20.31

*tasmān mad-bhakti-yuktasya
yogino vai mad-ātmanaḥ
na jñānaṁ na ca vairāgyaṁ
prāyaḥ śreyo bhaved iha*

tasmāt – therefore; *mat-bhakti-yuktasya* – of one who is engaged in My loving service; *yoginaḥ* – of a devotee; *vai* – certainly; *mat-ātmanaḥ* – whose mind is fixed in Me; *na* – not; *jñānam* – the cultivation of knowledge; *na* – nor; *ca* – also; *vairāgyam* – the cultivation of renunciation; *prāyaḥ* – generally; *śreyaḥ* – the means of achieving perfection; *bhaved* – may be; *iha* – in this world.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, for a devotee engaged in My loving service, with mind fixed on Me, the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation is generally not the means of achieving the highest perfection within this world.

PURPORT

A surrendered devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa does not seek perfection through the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation outside the loving service of the Lord. Devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, being itself the supreme transcendental process, never depends upon the secondary methods involving the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation. By chanting and hearing the glories of the Personality of Godhead a devotee automatically realizes all knowledge, and as the devotee's attachment to the Lord increases, he automatically gives up attachment for the inferior material nature. The Lord has explicitly declared in the previous verses that a devotee should not try to solve his lingering problems by means other than devotional service. Although a sincere devotee has surrendered heart and soul in loving service to the Lord, there may be lingering material attachments that prevent the devotee from perfectly realizing transcendental knowledge. Devotional service, however, will automatically eradicate such lingering attachments in due course of time. If the devotee tries to purify himself through cultivation of knowledge and renunciation which fall outside the scope of devotional service, there is danger of his being deviated from the Lord's lotus feet and falling down completely from the transcendental path. One who endeavors for purification outside the loving service of the Lord has not actually understood the transcendental potency of *bhakti-yoga* and does not appreciate the extent of Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

Within this world one's heart is bound by sex attraction, which disturbs one's meditation on the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Intoxicated by contact with women, the conditioned soul becomes artificially proud and forgets his loving

servitude to the Lord. Through determined cultivation of knowledge and detachment, a conditioned soul may try to purify himself without the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but such false pride is to be given up, just as one must give up the false pride of material attraction. When pure devotional service to the Lord is available to a conditioned soul, attraction to other processes is certainly a deviation in his devotional career. Material desire stubbornly residing within the heart can be vanquished by taking full shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Without false confidence in one's own cultivation of knowledge and renunciation, one should depend fully on the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa and at the same time strictly follow the rules and regulations of *bhakti-yoga*, as instructed by the Lord Himself.

TEXTS 20.32-33

*yat karmabhir yat tapasā
jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yat
yogena dāna-dharmeṇa
śreyobhir itarair api
sarvaṁ mad-bhakti-yogena
mad-bhakto labhate'ñjasā
svargāpavargam mad-dhāma
kathañcid yadi vāñchati*

yat – that which is obtained; *karmabhiḥ* – by fruitive activities; *yat* – that which; *tapasā* – by penance; *jñāna* – by cultivation of knowledge; *vairāgyataḥ* – by detachment; *ca* – also; *yat* – that which is achieved; *yogena* – by the mystic *yoga* system; *dāna* – by charity; *dharmeṇa* – by religious duties; *śreyobhiḥ* – by processes for making life auspicious; *itaraiḥ* – by others; *api* – indeed; *sarvam* – all; *mat-bhakti-yogena* – by loving service unto Me; *mat-bhaktaḥ* – My devotee; *labhate* – achieves; *añjasā* – easily; *svarga* – promotion to heaven; *apavargam* – liberation from all misery; *mat-dhāma* – residence in My abode; *kathañcit* – somehow or other; *yadi* – if; *vāñchati* – he desires.

TRANSLATION

Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties and all other means of perfecting life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me. If somehow or other My devotee desires promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode, he easily achieves such benedictions.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa here reveals the transcendental glories of devotional service to the Lord. Although pure devotees are desireless, desiring only the Lord's service, sometimes a great devotee may desire the Lord's benediction to facilitate his loving service. In the Sixth Canto of the *Bhāgavatam* we find that Śrī Citraketu, a great devotee of the Lord, desired promotion to heaven so that accompanied by the most attractive ladies of the Vidyādhara planet

he could beautifully chant the glories of the Lord. Similarly, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the great narrator of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, desiring to avoid entanglement in the illusory potency of the Lord, would not come out of his mother's womb. In other words, Śukadeva Gosvāmī desired *apavargam*, or liberation from *māyā*, so that his devotional service would not be disturbed. Lord Kṛṣṇa personally sent the illusory energy far away so that Śukadeva Gosvāmī would come out of his mother's womb. Because of intense loving desire to serve the lotus feet of the Lord, a devotee may also desire promotion to the spiritual world.

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a devotee, having given up the independent cultivation of knowledge and detachment, may have firm faith in the devotional service of the Lord and yet remain slightly attached to the fruits of such activities. By expert fruitive activities one gains residence in material heaven, and by cultivation of detachment one is relieved of all bodily distress. If Lord Kṛṣṇa detects within a devotee's heart the desire for such benedictions, the Lord can easily award them to His devotee.

The word *itaraiḥ* in this verse indicates visiting holy places, accepting religious vows and so forth. Several auspicious processes of elevation are mentioned in the verse preceding this, but all the auspicious results of these processes are easily achieved by loving service to the Lord. Thus all devotees of the Lord, in whatever stage of advancement, should dedicate their energy exclusively to the Lord's service, as affirmed in the Second Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī:

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā
mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena
yajeta puruṣam param*

“A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead.” (*Bhāg.* 2.3.10)

TEXT 20.34

*na kiñcit sādhave dhīrā
bhaktā hy ekāntino mama
vāñchanty api mayā dattam
kaivalyam apunar-bhavam*

na – never; *kiñcit* – anything; *sādhavaḥ* – saintly persons; *dhīrāḥ* – with deep intelligence; *bhaktāḥ* – devotees; *hi* – certainly; *ekāntinaḥ* – completely dedicated; *mama* – unto Me; *vāñchanti* – desire; *api* – indeed; *mayā* – by Me; *dattam* – given; *kaivalyam* – liberation; *apunaḥ-bhavam* – freedom from birth and death.

TRANSLATION

Because My devotees possess saintly behavior and deep intelligence, they completely dedicate themselves to Me and do not

desire anything besides Me. Indeed, even if I offer them liberation from birth and death, they do not accept it.

PURPORT

The words *ekāntino mama* indicate that the pure devotees of the Lord, being saintly and most intelligent, dedicate themselves exclusively to the devotional service of the Personality of Godhead. Even when the Lord offers them personal liberation from birth and death, the devotees will not accept it. A pure devotee automatically gains an eternal life of bliss and knowledge in the Lord's personal abode and thus considers mere liberation without the loving service of the Lord to be most abominable. One who chants Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name or superficially serves the Lord with the motive of achieving impersonal liberation or material sense gratification cannot be considered a transcendental devotee of the Lord. As long as one desires mundane religiosity, economic development, sense gratification or liberation, one cannot achieve the platform of *samādhi*, or perfect self-realization. Every living entity is actually the eternal servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa and is constitutionally meant to engage in the loving service of the Lord without personal desire. This pure and supreme status of life is described in this verse by the Lord Himself.

TEXT 20.35

*nairapekṣyaṁ paraṁ prāhur
niḥśreyasam analpakam
tasmān nirāśiṣo bhaktir
nirapekṣasya me bhavet*

nairapekṣyam – not desiring anything except devotional service; *param* – the best; *prāhuḥ* – it is said; *niḥśreyasam* – highest stage of liberation; *analpakam* – great; *tasmāt* – therefore; *nirāśiṣaḥ* – of one who does not seek personal rewards; *bhaktiḥ* – loving devotional service; *nirapekṣasya* – of one who only sees Me; *me* – unto Me; *bhavet* – may arise.

TRANSLATION

It is said that complete detachment is the highest stage of freedom. Therefore, one who has no personal desire and does not pursue personal rewards can achieve loving devotional service unto Me.

PURPORT

As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.10):

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā
mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena
yajeta puruṣaṁ param*

“A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead.” In this statement by Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the words *tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena* are very significant. Śrīla Prabhupāda remarks in this regard, “As the unmixed sun ray is very

forceful and is therefore called *tīvra*, similarly, unmixed *bhakti-yoga* of hearing, chanting, etc., may be performed by one and all regardless of inner motive.” Undoubtedly, in this Age of Kali people are generally very fallen and polluted by material lust, greed, anger, lamentation and so forth. In this age most people are *sarva-kāma*, or full of material desires. Still we must understand that simply by taking shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa we will achieve everything in life. The living entity should not engage in any process except the loving service of the Lord. One must accept that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all pleasure and that only Lord Kṛṣṇa within our heart can fulfill our real desire. This simple faith that one will achieve everything by approaching Lord Kṛṣṇa is the essence of all knowledge and carries even a fallen person over the painful hurdles of this difficult age.

TEXT 20.36

*na mayy ekānta-bhaktānām
guṇa-doṣodbhavā guṇāḥ
sādhūnām sama-cittānām
buddheḥ param upeyuṣām*

na – not; *mayi* – in Me; *eka-anta* – unalloyed; *bhaktānām* – of the devotees; *guṇa* – recommended as good; *doṣa* – forbidden as unfavorable; *udbhavāḥ* – arising from such things; *guṇāḥ* – piety and sin; *sādhūnām* – of those who are free from material hankering; *sama-cittānām* – who maintain steady spiritual consciousness in all circumstances; *buddheḥ* – that which can be conceived by material intelligence; *param* – beyond; *upeyuṣām* – of those who have achieved.

TRANSLATION

Material piety and sin, which arise from the good and evil of this world, cannot exist within My unalloyed devotees, who, being free from material hankering, maintain steady spiritual consciousness in all circumstances. Indeed, such devotees have achieved Me, the Supreme Lord, who am beyond anything that can be conceived by material intelligence.

PURPORT

The words *buddheḥ param* indicate that the material modes of nature cannot be found within a pure devotee absorbed in the transcendental qualities of the Lord. In the Second Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly explains that a pure devotee is recognized by complete detachment from personal desire; therefore, a pure devotee constantly engaged in selfless service to Lord Kṛṣṇa may not always observe the innumerable details of Vedic rituals and regulations. Such occasional negligence is not to be considered a transgression. Similarly, observance of ordinary material piety does not constitute the ultimate qualification of a soul surrendered to God. Love of Kṛṣṇa and absolute surrender to the Lord’s will raise one immediately to the transcendental platform, where activities performed on the Lord’s behalf are absolute, being an expression of God’s will. Ordinary materialistic

persons sometimes falsely claim this exalted status for their whimsical, immoral activities and cause a great disturbance in society. However, just as an ordinary person should not falsely claim the executive privileges of the personal assistants of a national leader, similarly, an ordinary conditioned soul may not foolishly claim that his immoral, whimsical or speculative activities are sheltered by divine right, being the will of God. One must actually be a pure devotee of the Lord, empowered by the Lord Himself and completely surrendered to the will of the Lord, before one may be accepted as transcendental to ordinary piety and sin.

There are cases of highly elevated devotees who momentarily fell down from the saintly platform of devotional service. The Lord instructs in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.30):

*api cet su-durācāro
bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ
samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

A momentary falldown by a sincere devotee of the Lord cannot change the Lord's feelings toward such a person. Even an ordinary father or mother quickly excuses a momentary transgression by their child. Just as children and parents enjoy mutual love, the Lord's surrendered servants enjoy a loving relationship with the Lord. An unpremeditated, accidental falldown is quickly excused by the Lord, and all members of society must share in the Lord's own feelings, excusing such a sincere devotee. An advanced devotee should not be branded as materialistic or sinful because of accidental falldown. A devotee immediately returns to the platform of saintly service and begs the Lord's forgiveness. However, one who permanently remains in a fallen condition can no longer be accepted as a highly elevated devotee of the Lord.

TEXT 20.37

*evam etān mayā diṣṭān
anutiṣṭhanti me pathaḥ
kṣemaṁ vindanti mat-sthānaṁ
yad brahma paramaṁ viduḥ*

evam - thus; *etān* - these; *mayā* - by Me; *diṣṭān* - instructed; *anutiṣṭhanti* - those who follow; *me* - Me; *pathaḥ* - the means of achieving; *kṣemaṁ* - freedom from illusion; *vindanti* - they achieve; *mat-sthānaṁ* - My personal abode; *yad* - that which; *brahma paramaṁ* - the Absolute Truth; *viduḥ* - they directly know.

TRANSLATION

Persons who seriously follow these methods of achieving Me, which I have personally taught, attain freedom from illusion, and upon reaching My personal abode they perfectly understand the Absolute Truth.

*Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twentieth Chapter,
of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Pure Devotional Service Surpasses
Knowledge and Detachment."*

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Explanation of the Vedic Path

There are persons who are unfit for all three of the forms of *yoga* – *karma*, *jñāna* and *bhakti*. They are inimical to Lord Kṛṣṇa, attached to sense gratification, and are dominated by fruitive activities aimed at fulfillment of material desires. This chapter describes their faults in terms of place, time, substance and beneficiary of actions.

For those who are perfect in knowledge and devotion to the Lord, there are no materially good qualities or faults. But for a candidate endeavoring on the platform of *karma* to achieve cessation of material life, execution of regular and special fruitive duties is good and the failure to execute such is evil. That which counteracts sinful reaction is also good for him.

For one on the platform of knowledge in the pure mode of goodness and for one on the platform of devotion, the proper actions are, respectively, cultivation of knowledge and practice of devotional service consisting of hearing, chanting and so forth. For both, everything detrimental to their proper actions is bad. But for persons who are not candidates for transcendental advancement or who are not perfected souls, namely those who are completely inimical to spiritual life and are devoted exclusively to fruitive work for fulfillment of lusty desires, there are numerous considerations of purity and impurity and auspiciousness and inauspiciousness. These are to be made in terms of one's body, the place of activity, the time, the objects utilized, the performer, the *mantras* chanted and the particular activity.

In actuality, virtue and fault are not absolute but are relative to one's particular platform of advancement. Remaining fixed in the type of discrimination suitable to one's level of advancement is good, and anything else is bad. This is the basic understanding of virtue and fault. Even among objects belonging to the same category, there are different considerations of their purity or impurity in relation to performance of religious duties, worldly transactions, and the maintenance of one's life. These distinctions are described in various scriptures.

The doctrine of *varṇāśrama* codifies precepts of bodily purity and impurity. With respect to place, purity and impurity are distinguished by such facts as the presence of black deer. In connection with time, there are distinctions of purity and impurity either in terms of the time itself or in terms of its specific relation with various objects. In connection with physical substances, distinctions of purity and impurity are made in terms of sanctification of objects and words and by such activities as bathing, giving charity, performing austere penances and remembering the Supreme Lord. There are also distinctions of the purity and impurity of the performers of actions.

When one's knowledge of *mantras* is received from the lips of the bona fide spiritual master, one's *mantra* is considered pure, and one's work is purified by offering it unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If the six factors of place, time and so forth are purified, then there is *dharma*, or virtue, but otherwise there is *adhama*, or fault.

Ultimately, there is no substantial basis in distinctions of virtue and fault, because they transform according to place, time, beneficiary and so on. In regard to the execution of prescribed duties for sense gratification, the actual intent of all the scriptures is the subduing of materialistic propensities; such is the actual principle of religion that destroys sorrow, confusion and fear and bestows all good fortune. Work performed for sense gratification is not actually beneficial. The descriptions of such fruitive benefits offered in various *phala-śrutis* are actually meant to help one gradually cultivate a taste for the highest benefit. But persons of inferior intelligence take the flowery benedictory verses of the scriptures to be the actual purport of the *Vedas*; this opinion, however, is never held by those in factual knowledge of the truth of the *Vedas*. Persons whose minds are agitated by the flowery words of the *Vedas* have no attraction for hearing topics about Lord Hari. It should be understood that there is no inner purport to the *Vedas* apart from the original Personality of Godhead. The *Vedas* focus exclusively upon the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. Because this material world is simply the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord, it is by refuting material existence that one gains disassociation from matter.

TEXT 21.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ya etān mat-patho hitvā
bhakti-jñāna-kriyātmakān
kṣudrān kāmāś calaiḥ prāṇair
juṣantaḥ saṁsaranti te*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *ye* - those who; *etān* - these; *mat-pathaḥ* - means for achieving Me; *hitvā* - giving up; *bhakti* - devotional service; *jñāna* - analytic philosophy; *kriyā* - regulated work; *ātmakān* - consisting of; *kṣudrān* - insignificant; *kāmān* - sense gratification; *calaiḥ* - by the flickering; *prāṇaiḥ* - senses; *juṣantaḥ* - cultivating; *saṁsaranti* - undergo material existence; *te* - they.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Those who give up these methods for achieving Me, which consist of devotional service, analytic philosophy and regulated execution of prescribed duties, and instead, being moved by the material senses, cultivate insignificant sense gratification, certainly undergo the continual cycle of material existence.

PURPORT

As clearly explained by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the previous chapters, philosophical analysis and also the performance of prescribed duties are ultimately meant for achieving Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or pure love of God. Devotional service, based on hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord, directly engages the conditioned soul in the Lord's loving service and thus is the most efficient means of achieving the Lord. All three processes, however, share a common

goal, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Now the Lord describes those who, being completely absorbed in material sense gratification, do not adopt any authorized means to achieve the Lord's mercy. Currently, hundreds of millions of unfortunate human beings fit squarely into this category and, as described here, perpetually suffer the bondage of material existence.

TEXT 21.2

*sve sve'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā
sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ
viparyayas tu doṣaḥ syād
ubhayor eṣa niścayaḥ*

sve sve – each in his own; *adhikāre* – position; *yā* – such; *niṣṭhā* – steadiness; *saḥ* – this; *guṇaḥ* – piety; *parikīrtitaḥ* – is declared to be; *viparyayaḥ* – the opposite; *tu* – indeed; *doṣaḥ* – impiety; *syāt* – is; *ubhayoḥ* – of the two; *eṣaḥ* – this; *niścayaḥ* – the definite conclusion.

TRANSLATION

Steadiness in one's own position is declared to be actual piety, whereas deviation from one's position is considered impiety. In this way the two are definitely ascertained.

PURPORT

In the previous verse Lord Kṛṣṇa explained that the path of spiritual progress begins with working without fruitive desires, advances to the stage of realized spiritual knowledge, and culminates in direct engagement in the devotional service of the Lord. Here the Lord emphasizes that a conditioned soul should not artificially disrupt the natural evolution of his Kṛṣṇa consciousness by deviating from those duties prescribed by the Lord Himself. In the lower stages of human life one is entangled in false identification with the gross material body and desires to execute material fruitive activities based on society, friendship and love. When such materialistic activities are offered in sacrifice to the Supreme Lord, one becomes situated in *karma-yoga*. By regulated sacrifice one gradually gives up the gross bodily concept of life and advances to the stage of realization of spiritual knowledge, whereby one understands oneself to be an eternal spirit soul completely different from the material body and mind. Feeling relief from the pangs of materialism one becomes very attached to one's spiritual knowledge, and thus one is situated in the stage of *jñāna-yoga*. As the candidate further advances on the spiritual path, he understands himself to be part and parcel of the Supreme Soul, the Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. He then sees that his conditional life as well as his spiritual knowledge was obtained from the Personality of Godhead, who awards the results of all types of activities, both pious and sinful. By directly engaging in the loving service of the Supreme Lord and understanding oneself to be the Lord's eternal servant, one's attachment evolves into pure love of Godhead. Thus one first gives up the lower stage of attachment to the material body and then subsequently gives up attachment to cultivation of spiritual knowledge. This relieves one

of material life. Finally one recognizes the Lord Himself as the resting place of one's eternal love and fully surrenders to God in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Lord Kṛṣṇa explains in this verse that one who is still attached to the material body and mind cannot artificially give up the prescribed duties of *karma-yoga*. In the same way, one who is a spiritual neophyte, just beginning to realize the illusion of material life, should not artificially try to think of the Lord's intimate pastimes twenty-four hours a day, imitating the stage of *prema-bhakti*. Rather, he should cultivate analytic knowledge of the material world, by which one gives up attachment to the material body and mind. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* we find many analytic descriptions of the material world, and they can free the conditioned soul from false identification with matter. One who has achieved the perfect stage of love of Godhead, however, being freed from all gross and subtle attachments to the material world, may give up the lower stages of *karma-yoga* and *jñāna-yoga* and engage directly in the Lord's loving service.

In Chapter Nineteen, verse 45, Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *guṇa-doṣa-dṛśir doṣo guṇas tūbhaya-varjitaḥ*. One should not see material good and evil within a devotee of the Lord. Indeed, one becomes pious by giving up such mundane conceptions. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura points out that occasionally a neophyte devotee may be polluted by association with those enthusiastically executing fruitive activities and mental speculation. Such a devotee's religious activities may be affected by mundane tendencies. Similarly, an ordinary person who observes the exalted status of a pure devotee sometimes externally imitates the devotee's activities, considering himself to be on the same exalted platform of pure devotional service. These imperfect practitioners of *bhakti-yoga* are not exempt from criticism, since their fruitive activities, mental speculation and false prestige are material intrusions in the pure loving service of the Lord. A pure devotee engaged exclusively in the Lord's service should not be criticized, but a devotee whose devotional service is mixed with material qualities may be corrected so that he can rise to the platform of pure devotional service. Innocent persons should not be misled by the mixed devotional service of those not engaged exclusively in the *bhakti-yoga* system, but those unable to fully engage in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should nevertheless not give up their regular prescribed duties, declaring them to be illusion. For example, one unable to fully engage in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness should not give up his family, considering it an illusion, for by doing so he will fall into illicit sex life. Material piety and analytic knowledge of the material world must therefore be cultivated until one comes to the stage of directly practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 21.3

*śuddhy-aśuddhī vidhīyete
samāneṣv api vastuṣu
dravyasya vicikitsārthaṁ*

*guṇa-doṣau śubhāśubhau
dharmārtham vyavahārārtham
yātrārtham iti cānagha*

śuddhi – purity; *aśuddhī* – and impurity; *vidhīyete* – are established; *samāneṣu* – of the same category; *api* – indeed; *vastuṣu* – among objects; *dravyasya* – of a particular object; *vicikitsā* – evaluation; *artham* – for the purpose of; *guṇa-doṣau* – good and bad qualities; *śubha-aśubhau* – auspicious and inauspicious; *dharmā-artham* – for the purpose of religious activities; *vyavahāra-artham* – for the purpose of ordinary dealings; *yātrā-artham* – for one’s physical survival; *iti* – thus; *ca* – also; *anagha* – O sinless one.

TRANSLATION

O sinless Uddhava, in order to understand what is proper in life one must evaluate a given object within its particular category. Thus, in analyzing religious principles one must consider purity and impurity. Similarly, in one’s ordinary dealings one must distinguish between good and bad, and to insure one’s physical survival one must recognize that which is auspicious and inauspicious.

PURPORT

In religious activities, ordinary dealings and personal survival one cannot avoid value judgements. Morality and religion are perennial necessities in civilized society; therefore distinctions between purity and impurity, piety and impiety, morality and immorality must somehow be ascertained. Similarly, in our ordinary, worldly activities we distinguish between palatable and tasteless food, good and bad business, high-class and low-class residences, good and bad friends, and so forth. And to insure our physical health and survival, we must constantly distinguish between what is safe and unsafe, healthy and unhealthy, profitable and unprofitable. Even a learned person must constantly distinguish between good and bad within the material world, but at the same time he must understand the transcendental position of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Despite one’s careful calculation of that which is materially healthy and unhealthy, the physical body will collapse and die. Despite careful scrutiny of the socially favorable and unfavorable, one’s entire social milieu will vanish with the passing of time. In the same way, great religions arise and disappear in the course of history. Thus mere religiosity, social and financial expertise or physical fitness cannot award the actual perfection of life. There is a transcendental good beyond the relative good of the material world. Any sane person accepts the practical and immediate necessity of material discrimination; yet one must come ultimately to the transcendental stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, where life is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge. Lord Kṛṣṇa, in His elaborate teachings to Śrī Uddhava, is gradually clarifying the transcendental position of Kṛṣṇa consciousness beyond the endless variety of material good and evil.

TEXT 21.4

*darśito'yaṁ mayācāro
dharmam udvahatām dhuram*

darśitaḥ - revealed; *ayaṁ* - this; *mayā* - by Me; *ācāraḥ* - way of life;
dharmam - religious principles; *udvahatām* - for those who are bearing;
dhuram - the burden.

TRANSLATION

**I have revealed this way of life for those bearing the burden of
mundane religious principles.**

PURPORT

Ordinary religious principles, prescribing innumerable rules, regulations and prohibitions, are undoubtedly a great burden for those bereft of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.11) it is stated, *bhūrīṇi bhūri-karmāṇi śrotavyāni vibhāgaśaḥ*: there are countless religious scriptures in the world prescribing countless religious duties. The authorized scriptures are those spoken by the Lord Himself or His representatives, as stated in this verse. In the last chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.66) Lord Kṛṣṇa states, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*: one should give up the troublesome burden of mundane piety and directly take to the loving service of the Lord, in which everything is simplified. Lord Kṛṣṇa also states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.2), *su-sukhaṁ kartum avyayam*: the *bhakti-yoga* process, which depends completely upon the mercy of the Lord, is very joyful and easily performed. Similarly, Locana dāsa Ṭhākura sings,

*parama karuṇa, pahuṅ dui jana,
nitāi-gauracandra
saba avatāra-, sāra-śīromaṇi,
kevala ānanda-kāṇḍa*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, appeared five hundred years ago to distribute the sublime method of chanting the holy names of the Lord. In this way, rather than bearing the burden of artificial austerity, one can directly take to the Lord's service, cleansing one's heart and immediately experiencing transcendental bliss. Those who have taken to Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement follow four basic principles: no illicit sex, no eating of meat, fish or eggs, no intoxication and no gambling. They rise early in the morning, chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and spend the day happily engaged in the Lord's service. Those who follow the ritualistic *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas*, however, are burdened with innumerable regulations, rituals and ceremonies, which must be personally performed by the worshipers or performed on their behalf by qualified *brāhmaṇas*. At any moment there is danger of discrepancy resulting in the total loss of their accumulated piety. Similarly, those on the philosophical path must painstakingly define, refine and adjust philosophical categories, a process that generally ends in confusion and hopelessness. The practitioners of mystic *yoga* undergo grueling penances, subjecting themselves to severe heat and cold, near starvation and so on. All such materialistic persons have personal desires to fulfill, whereas the devotees of the Lord, who desire the Lord's pleasure,

simply depend upon the Lord's mercy and go back home, back to Godhead. In the previous verse the Lord mentioned that in the material world there are endless distinctions and value judgements to be made in the course of one's life. A devotee, however, sees Kṛṣṇa within everything and everything within Kṛṣṇa, remaining humble, simple and blissful in the Lord's service. He does not perform elaborate religious ceremonies, nor does he become antisocial or immoral. The devotee simply chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and easily achieves the highest perfection of life. Ordinary persons endeavor for bodily maintenance, but a devotee is automatically maintained by the Lord's mercy. A devotee's ordinary dealings and religious activities are also all dedicated to the Personality of Godhead; thus there is nothing but Kṛṣṇa in a devotee's life. Kṛṣṇa gives all protection and maintenance, and the devotee gives everything to Kṛṣṇa. This natural liberated situation is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is the ultimate absolute good, as explained by the Lord throughout this canto.

TEXT 21.5

*bhūmy-ambv-agny-anilākāśā
bhūtānām pañca-dhātavaḥ
ā-brahma-sthāvarādīnām
śārīrā ātma-saṁyutāḥ*

bhūmi – earth; *ambu* – water; *agni* – fire; *anila* – air; *ākāśāḥ* – sky or ether; *bhūtānām* – of all conditioned souls; *pañca* – the five; *dhātavaḥ* – basic elements; *ā-brahma* – from Lord Brahmā; *sthāvara-ādīnām* – down to the nonmoving creatures; *śārīrāḥ* – used for the construction of the material bodies; *ātma* – to the Supreme Soul; *saṁyutāḥ* – equally related.

TRANSLATION

Earth, water, fire, air and ether are the five basic elements that constitute the bodies of all conditioned souls, from Lord Brahmā himself down to the nonmoving creatures. These elements all emanate from the one Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

All material bodies are composed of different proportions of the same five gross elements, which emanate from the one Personality of Godhead and cover the living entities, who are all in the *jīva* category.

The concepts of good and bad depend on the choice of the Supreme Lord and not on inherent qualitative differences in material objects. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person ultimately sees all material phenomena as one. The devotee's good behavior, intelligent discrimination and artistic sense within the material world are all based on the will of God. The material elements, being emanations from the Supreme Lord, are ultimately all nondifferent. However, advocates of mundane piety fear that if the material duality of good and bad is minimized, people will become immoral or anarchistic. Certainly the impersonal and atheistic philosophy preached by modern scientists, in which material variety is reduced to mere mathematical

descriptions of molecular and atomic particles, leads to immoral society. Although both material science and Vedic knowledge uncover the illusion of material variety and reveal the ultimate oneness of all material energy, only the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa are surrendered to the supreme absolute piety of God's will. Thus they always act for the benefit of all living entities, accepting material variety in the Lord's service, according to the Lord's desire. Without Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or God consciousness, people cannot understand the absolute position of spiritual goodness; instead they artificially try to construct a civilization based on interdependent self-interest on the material platform. Such a foolish arrangement easily collapses, as evidenced by widespread social conflict and chaos in the modern age. All members of a civilized society must accept the absolute authority of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and then social peace and harmony will not rest on the flimsy relative platform of mundane piety and sin.

TEXT 21.6

*vedena nāma-rūpāṇi
viṣamāṇi sameṣv api
dhātuṣūddhava kalpyanta
eteṣāṃ svārtha-siddhaye*

vedena – by Vedic literature; *nāma* – names; *rūpāṇi* – and forms; *viṣamāṇi* – different; *sameṣu* – which are equal; *api* – indeed; *dhātuṣu* – in (material bodies composed of) the five elements; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *kalpyante* – are conceived of; *eteṣāṃ* – of them, the living entities; *sva-artha* – of self-interest; *siddhaye* – for the achievement.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, although all material bodies are composed of the same five elements and are thus equal, the Vedic literatures conceive of different names and forms in relation to such bodies so that the living entities may achieve their goal of life.

PURPORT

The words *nāma-rūpāṇi viṣamāṇi* refer to the system of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, in which members of human society are designated according to four social and four occupational divisions. Those dedicated to intellectual or religious perfection are called *brāhmaṇas*, those dedicated to political perfection are called *kṣatriyas*, those dedicated to financial perfection are called *vaiśyas*, and those dedicated to eating, sleeping, sex and honest work are called *sūdras*. Such propensities arise from the three modes of material nature (goodness, passion and ignorance), because the pure soul is not materially intellectual, ambitious for power, enterprising or servile. Rather, the pure soul is always absorbed in loving devotion to the Supreme Lord. If the various propensities of a conditioned soul are not engaged in the *varṇāśrama* system, they will certainly be misused, and thus that person will fall down from the standard of human life. The Vedic system is designed by the Lord so that conditioned souls may pursue their individual achievements

and at the same time advance toward the ultimate goal of life, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Just as a doctor deals with a crazy man by speaking to him sympathetically in terms of his false conception of life, one who understands the Vedic literature engages the living entities according to their illusory identification with the elements of matter. Although all material bodies are composed of the same material elements and are thus qualitatively identical, as described here by the word *sameṣu*, the Vedic social system, *varṇāśrama*, is created to engage all human beings in Kṛṣṇa consciousness according to their various degrees of material identification. The absolute good is the Supreme Lord Himself, and that which approaches the Supreme Lord becomes similarly good. Because the sun is the source of heat within this world, an object that approaches the sun becomes hotter and hotter until it merges into fire. In the same manner, as we approach the transcendental nature of the Personality of Godhead, we automatically become surcharged with absolute goodness. Although this knowledge is the real basis of the Vedic literature, mundane piety is enjoined and sin is prohibited so that one can gradually come to the platform of material goodness, whereupon spiritual knowledge becomes visible.

TEXT 21.7

*deśa-kālādi-bhāvānām
vastūnām mama sattama
guṇa-doṣau vidhīyete
niyamārtham hi karmaṇām*

deśa – of space; *kāla* – time; *ādi* – and so on; *bhāvānām* – of such states of existence; *vastūnām* – of things; *mama* – by Me; *sat-tama* – O most saintly Uddhava; *guṇa-doṣau* – piety and sin; *vidhīyete* – are established; *niyama-artham* – for the restriction; *hi* – certainly; *karmaṇām* – of fruitive activities.

TRANSLATION

O saintly Uddhava, in order to restrict materialistic activities, I have established that which is proper and improper among all material things, including time, space and all physical objects.

PURPORT

The word *niyamārtham* (“in order to restrict”) is significant in this verse. A conditioned soul falsely identifies with his material senses and thus considers anything giving immediate satisfaction to the body to be good and anything inconvenient or disturbing to be bad. By higher intelligence, however, one recognizes long-term self-interest and danger. For example, medicine may be immediately bitter, but by calculating one’s long-term interest one accepts the bitter medicine to cure a disease that is not immediately troublesome but ultimately fatal. Similarly, Vedic literature restricts the sinful propensities of human beings by establishing what is proper and what is improper among all the objects and activities of the material world. Because everyone must eat, the *Vedas* prescribe foods in the mode of goodness and not those which are sinful, such as meat, fish and eggs. Similarly, one is

advised to live in a peaceful and pious community and not in association with sinful persons, nor in an unclean or turbulent environment. By designating and restricting the exploitation of the material world, Vedic knowledge gradually brings a conditioned soul to the platform of material goodness. At that stage one becomes eligible to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead and enter the transcendental stage of life. It should be remembered that such mere eligibility does not constitute actual qualification; without Kṛṣṇa consciousness mere mundane piety can never qualify a conditioned soul to go back home, back to Godhead. Within this world we are all infected by false pride, which must be diminished through submission to the Vedic injunctions. One who is completely engaged in the loving service of the Lord need not adopt these preliminary methods, for he directly contacts the Personality of Godhead through the spontaneous process of surrender. In the previous verse the Lord explained why Vedic literatures assign different values to the bodies of different living entities, and here the Lord explains the Vedic value system in regard to the material objects that interact with these bodies.

TEXT 21.8

*akṛṣṇa-sāro deśānām
abrahmaṇyo'sucir bhavet
kṛṣṇa-sāro'py asauvīra-
kīkaṭāsaṁskṛterīṇam*

akṛṣṇa-sāraḥ – without spotted antelopes; *deśānām* – among places; *abrahmaṇyaḥ* – where there is no devotion to the *brāhmaṇas*; *aśuciḥ* – contaminated; *bhavet* – is; *kṛṣṇa-sāraḥ* – possessing spotted antelopes; *api* – even; *asauvīra* – without saintly cultured men; *kīkaṭa* – (a place of low-class men, such as) the state of Gayā; *asaṁskṛta* – where people do not practice cleanliness or purificatory ceremonies; *īraṇam* – where the land is barren.

TRANSLATION

Among places, those bereft of the spotted antelope, those devoid of devotion to the brāhmaṇas, those possessing spotted antelopes but bereft of respectable men, provinces like Kīkaṭa and places where cleanliness and purificatory rites are neglected, where meat-eaters are prominent or where the earth is barren, are all considered to be contaminated lands.

PURPORT

The word *kṛṣṇa-sāra* refers to the spotted antelope, whose hide is used by *brahmacārīs* while residing in the *āśrama* of the spiritual master. *Brahmacārīs* never hunt in the forest, but rather accept skins from those animals already deceased. The skin of the black or spotted antelope is also used as a garment by those receiving instruction in the execution of Vedic sacrifice. Therefore, since sacrifice cannot be properly performed in areas bereft of such creatures, these places are impure. Furthermore, although the inhabitants of a particular place may be expert in performing fruitive

activities and ritualistic sacrifices, if they are inimical to the devotional service of the Lord, such a place is also polluted. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that previously the provinces of Bihar and Bengal were bereft of devotional service to the Lord and were considered impure. Then great Vaiṣṇavas such as Jayadeva appeared in these territories, converting them into holy places.

The word *asauvīra* indicates those places without *suvīras*, respectable saintly persons. Ordinarily, a person who obeys the state laws is considered a respectable citizen. In the same way, one who strictly obeys the law of God is considered to be a cultured or decent man, *suvīra*. The place where such intelligent persons reside is called *sauvīram*. Kīkaṭa refers to the modern state of Bihar, which traditionally has been known as a territory of uncivilized men. Even in such provinces, however, any place where saintly persons gather is considered to be holy. On the other hand, a province of generally respectable persons is immediately polluted by the presence of sinful men. *Asamśkrta* indicates lack of external cleanliness, as well as the absence of purificatory ceremonies for internal cleanliness. Śrīla Madhvācārya quotes from the *Skanda Purāṇa* as follows: “Religious persons should reside within an eight-mile radius of rivers, oceans, mountains, hermitages, forests, spiritual cities or places where the *śālagrāma-śilā* is found. All other places should be considered *kīkaṭa*, or contaminated. But if even in such contaminated places black and spotted antelopes are found, one may reside there as long as sinful persons are not also present. Even if sinful persons are present, if the civil power rests with respectable authorities, one may remain. Similarly, one may dwell wherever the Deity of Viṣṇu is duly installed and worshiped.”

The Lord here elaborates upon the theme of piety and sin, which are based on purity and impurity. Thus pure and contaminated places of residence are described here.

TEXT 21.9

*karmaṇyo guṇavān kālo
dravyataḥ svata eva vā
yato nivartate karma
sa doṣo'karmakaḥ smṛtaḥ*

karmaṇyaḥ – suitable for executing one’s prescribed duty; *guṇavān* – pure; *kālaḥ* – time; *dravyataḥ* – by achievement of auspicious objects; *svataḥ* – by its own nature; *eva* – indeed; *vā* – or; *yataḥ* – due to which (time); *nivartate* – is impeded; *karma* – one’s duty; *saḥ* – this (time); *doṣaḥ* – impure; *akarmakaḥ* – inappropriate for working properly; *smṛtaḥ* – is considered.

TRANSLATION

A specific time is considered pure when it is appropriate, either by its own nature or through achievement of suitable paraphernalia, for the performance of one’s prescribed duty. That time which impedes the performance of one’s duty is considered impure.

PURPORT

Having discussed pure and impure places, the Lord now discusses different qualities of time. Certain times, such as the *brāhma-muhūrta*, the last few hours before sunrise, are always auspicious for spiritual advancement. Other times, not auspicious in themselves, become so by achievement of material prosperity that facilitates one's mission in life.

Political, social or economic disturbances that obstruct the execution of one's religious duties are considered inauspicious times. Similarly, a woman is considered contaminated just after childbirth or during her menstrual period. She cannot perform ordinary religious activities at such times, which are therefore inauspicious and impure. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that the most auspicious of all times is the moment one achieves the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one neglects the loving service of the Lord, being carried away by sense gratification, he is certainly living in most inauspicious times. Therefore that moment in which one achieves the association of the Supreme Lord or the Lord's pure devotee is the most auspicious time, whereas the moment of losing such association is most inauspicious. In other words, the perfection of life is simply Kṛṣṇa consciousness, by which one transcends the dualities of time and space caused by the three modes of material nature.

TEXT 21.10

*dravyasya śuddhy-aśuddhī ca
dravyeṇa vacanena ca
saṁskāreṇātha kālena
mahatvālpatayātha vā*

dravyasya - of an object; *śuddhi* - purity; *aśuddhī* - or impurity; *ca* - and; *dravyeṇa* - by another object; *vacanena* - by speech; *ca* - and; *saṁskāreṇa* - by ritual performance; *atha* - or else; *kālena* - by time; *mahatva-*alpatayā** - by greatness or smallness; *atha vā* - or else.

TRANSLATION

An object's purity or impurity is established by application of another object, by words, by rituals, by the effects of time or according to relative magnitude.

PURPORT

Cloth is purified by application of clean water and contaminated by application of urine. The words of a saintly *brāhmaṇa* are pure, but the sound vibration of a materialistic person is contaminated by lust and envy. A saintly devotee explains actual purity to others, whereas a nondevotee makes false propaganda that leads innocent people to commit polluted, sinful activities. Pure rituals are those meant for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord, while materialistic ceremonies are those that lead their followers into materialistic and demoniac activities. The word *saṁskāreṇa* also indicates that the purity or impurity of a particular object is ascertained according to the regulations of ritualistic performances. For example, a flower to be offered to the Deity

must be purified with water. Flowers or food cannot be offered to the Deity, however, if they have been contaminated by being smelled or tasted before the offering. The word *kālena* indicates that certain substances are purified by time and others contaminated by time. Rainwater, for example, is considered pure after ten days' time, and after three days in cases of emergency. On the other hand, certain foods decay in time and thus become impure. *Mahatva* indicates that great bodies of water do not become contaminated, and *alpatayā* means that a small amount of water can easily become polluted or stagnant. In the same way, a great soul is not polluted by occasional contact with materialistic persons, whereas one whose devotion to God is very small is easily carried away and put into doubt by bad association. In terms of combination with other substances, and in terms of speech, ritual, time and magnitude, the purity and impurity of all objects can be ascertained.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura remarks that impure or decayed food is certainly forbidden for normal persons but is permissible for those who have no other means of subsistence.

TEXT 21.11

*śaktyāśaktyātha vā buddhyā
samṛddhyā ca yad ātmane
aghaṁ kurvanti hi yathā
deśāvasthānusārataḥ*

śaktyā – by relative potency; *aśaktyā* – impotence; *atha vā* – or; *buddhyā* – in terms of understanding; *samṛddhyā* – opulence; *ca* – and; *yad* – which; *ātmane* – to oneself; *agham* – sinful reaction; *kurvanti* – cause; *hi* – indeed; *yathā* – in actuality; *deśa* – place; *avasthā* – or one's condition; *anusārataḥ* – in accordance with.

TRANSLATION

Impure things may or may not impose sinful reactions upon a person, depending on that person's strength or weakness, intelligence, wealth, location and physical condition.

PURPORT

The Lord has described the purity and impurity of different places, times and material objects. According to the laws of nature, that which is impure contaminates a particular person in accordance with that person's situation, as described here. For example, on certain occasions, such as a solar eclipse or just after childbirth, one must restrict the intake of food according to ritualistic injunctions. One who is physically weak, however, may eat without being considered impious. Ordinary persons consider the ten days following childbirth to be most auspicious, whereas one who is learned knows that this period is actually impure. Ignorance of the law does not save one from being punished, but one who consciously commits sinful activities is considered most fallen. Concerning opulence (*samṛddhi*), worn-out, dirty clothing or a messy residence are considered impure for a rich man but acceptable for

one who is poor. The word *deśa* indicates that in a safe and peaceful place one is obligated to strictly perform religious rituals, whereas in a dangerous or chaotic situation one may be excused for occasional negligence of secondary principles. One who is physically healthy must offer obeisances to the Deities, attend religious functions and execute his prescribed duties, but a young child or sickly person may be excused from such activities, as indicated by the word *avasthā*. Ultimately, as Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states:

*anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-
śīlanam bhaktir uttamā*

“One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11) One should accept everything which is favorable for the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa and reject whatever is unfavorable. One must learn the process of serving God from the bona fide spiritual master and thus always maintain one’s existence pure and free from anxiety. In general, however, when considering the relative purity and impurity of material things, all of the above-mentioned factors must be calculated.

TEXT 21.12

*dhānya-dārv-asthi-tantūnām
rasa-taijasa-carmaṇām
kāla-vāyav-agni-mṛt-toyaiḥ
pāṛthivānām yutāyutaiḥ*

dhānya - of grains; *dāru* - of wood (in the form of both ordinary objects and sacred utensils); *asthi* - bone (such as elephant tusks); *tantūnām* - and thread; *rasa* - of liquids (oil, ghee, etc.); *taijasa* - fiery objects (gold, etc.); *carmaṇām* - and skins; *kāla* - by time; *vāyu* - by air; *agni* - by fire; *mṛt* - by earth; *toyaiḥ* - and by water; *pāṛthivānām* - (also) of earthen objects (such as chariot wheels, mud, pots, bricks, etc.); *yuta* - in combination; *ayutaiḥ* - or separately.

TRANSLATION

Various objects such as grains, wooden utensils, things made of bone, thread, liquids, objects derived from fire, skins and earthy objects are all purified by time, by the wind, by fire, by earth and by water, either separately or in combination.

PURPORT

The word *kāla*, or “time,” is mentioned here, since all purificatory processes take place within time.

TEXT 21.13

*amedhya-liptam̐ yad yena
gandha-lepam̐ vyapohati
bhajate prakṛtim̐ tasya
tac saucam̐ tāvad iṣyate*

amedhya – by something impure; *liptam* – touched; *yad* – that thing which; *yena* – by which; *gandha* – the bad smell; *lepam* – and the impure covering; *vyapohati* – gives up; *bhajate* – the contaminated object again assumes; *prakṛtim* – its original nature; *tasya* – of that object; *tac* – that application; *śaucam* – purification; *tāvat* – to that extent; *iṣyate* – is considered.

TRANSLATION

A particular purifying agent is considered appropriate when its application removes the bad odor or dirty covering of some contaminated object and makes it resume its original nature.

PURPORT

Furniture, kitchen utensils, clothing and other objects are purified by application of abrasion, alkali, acid, water and so on. One thereby removes the bad fragrance or impure coating of such objects, restoring them to their original clean appearance.

TEXT 21.14

*snāna-dāna-tapo-'vasthā-
vīrya-saṁskāra-karmabhiḥ
mat-smṛtyā cātmanaḥ śaucam̐
śuddhaḥ karmācared dvijaḥ*

snāna – by bathing; *dāna* – charity; *tapah* – austerity; *avasthā* – by virtue of one's age; *vīrya* – potency; *saṁskāra* – execution of ritual purification; *karmabhiḥ* – and prescribed duties; *mat-smṛtyā* – by remembrance of Me; *ca* – also; *cātmanaḥ* – of the self; *śaucam* – cleanliness; *śuddhaḥ* – pure; *karma* – activity; *ācared* – he should perform; *dvijaḥ* – a twice-born man.

TRANSLATION

The self can be cleansed by bathing, charity, austerity, age, personal strength, purificatory rituals, prescribed duties and, above all, by remembrance of Me. The brāhmaṇa and other twice-born men should be duly purified before performing their specific activities.

PURPORT

The word *avasthā* indicates that when boys and girls are young they are kept pure by youthful innocence and that as they grow up they are kept pure through proper education and engagement. By one's individual potency one should avoid sinful activities and the association of those inclined toward sense gratification. The word *karma* here refers to prescribed duties, such as worshiping the spiritual master and the Deity, chanting the Gāyatrī *mantra* three times daily and accepting spiritual initiation. The prescribed duties of the *varṇāśrama* system automatically purify one from the covering of false ego by dovetailing one's bodily designation in appropriate religious activities. There are specific duties for *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, *śūdras*,

brahmacārīs, gr̥hasthas, vānaprasthas and *sannyāsīs*, as described previously in this canto by the Lord Himself. The most significant word here is *mat-smṛtyā* (“by remembrance of Me”). Ultimately, one cannot avoid the infection of illusion through any process except Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The three modes of nature perpetually interact, and one must sometimes fall into the mode of ignorance and sometimes rise to the mode of goodness, uselessly rotating within the kingdom of illusion. But by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, remembrance of the Personality of Godhead, one can actually uproot one’s tendency to act against the will of the Absolute Truth. Then one becomes freed from the clutches of *māyā* and goes back home, back to Godhead. As stated in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*:

*apavitraḥ pavitro vā
sarvāvasthām gato’pi vā
yaḥ smaret puṇḍarikākṣam
sa bāhyābhyantare śuciḥ*

“Whether one is pure or contaminated, and regardless of one’s external situation, simply by remembering the lotus-eyed Personality of Godhead one can internally and externally cleanse one’s existence.”

Lord Caitanya recommended that we constantly remember the Supreme Lord by chanting His holy names, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. This sublime process is essential for every human actually desirous of purifying his existence.

TEXT 21.15

*mantrasya ca parijñānam
karma-śuddhir mad-arpaṇam
dharmāḥ sampadyate ṣaḍbhir
adharmas tu viparyayaḥ*

mantrasya – (the purification) of a *mantra*; *ca* – and; *parijñānam* – correct knowledge; *karma* – of work; *śuddhiḥ* – the purification; *mat-arpaṇam* – offering unto Me; *dharmāḥ* – religiousness; *sampadyate* – is achieved; *ṣaḍbhiḥ* – by the six (purification of place, time, substance, the doer, the *mantras* and the work); *adharmāḥ* – irreligiosity; *tu* – but; *viparyayaḥ* – otherwise.

TRANSLATION

A mantra is purified when chanted with proper knowledge, and one’s work is purified when offered to Me. Thus by purification of the place, time, substance, doer, mantras and work, one becomes religious, and by negligence of these six items one is considered irreligious.

PURPORT

One receives a *mantra* from the mouth of a bona fide spiritual master, who instructs the disciple in the method, meaning and ultimate purpose of the *mantra*. The bona fide spiritual master in this age gives his disciple the *mahā-mantra*, or holy names of God, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa,

Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. One who chants this *mantra*, considering himself to be the eternal servant of the Lord, gradually learns to chant offenselessly and by such purified chanting quickly achieves the highest perfection of life. The Lord here summarizes His discussion of purity and impurity, which manifest ultimately in religious and irreligious life.

TEXT 21.16

*kvacid guṇo'pi doṣaḥ syād
doṣo'pi vidhinā guṇaḥ
guṇa-doṣārtha-niyamas
tad-bhidām eva bādhate*

kvacit – sometimes; *guṇaḥ* – piety; *api* – even; *doṣaḥ* – sin; *syāt* – becomes; *doṣaḥ* – sin; *api* – also; *vidhinā* – on the strength of Vedic injunction; *guṇaḥ* – piety; *guṇa-doṣa* – to piety and sin; *artha* – regarding; *niyamaḥ* – restrictive regulation; *tat* – of them; *bhidām* – the distinction; *eva* – actually; *bādhate* – undoes.

TRANSLATION

Sometimes piety becomes sin, and sometimes what is ordinarily sin becomes piety on the strength of Vedic injunctions. Such special rules in effect eradicate the clear distinction between piety and sin.

PURPORT

The Lord clearly explains here that material piety and sin are always relative considerations. For example, if a neighbor's house is on fire and one chops a hole in the roof so that the trapped family may escape, one is considered to be a pious hero because of the dangerous condition. In normal conditions, however, if one chops a hole in his neighbor's roof or breaks the neighbor's windows, he is considered a criminal. Similarly, one who abandons one's wife and children is certainly irresponsible and thoughtless. If one takes *sannyāsa*, however, and remains fixed on a higher spiritual platform, he is considered to be a most saintly person. Piety and sin therefore depend upon particular circumstances and are at times difficult to distinguish.

According to Śrīla Madhvācārya, persons above the age of fourteen are considered capable of distinguishing between good and bad and are thus responsible for their pious and sinful activities. Animals, on the other hand, being merged in ignorance, cannot be blamed for their offenses or praised for their so-called good qualities, which all arise ultimately from ignorance. Human beings who act like animals, with the idea that one should not feel any guilt but should do whatever one likes, will certainly take birth as animals absorbed in ignorance. And there are other foolish people who, observing the relativity of material piety and sin, conclude that there is no absolute good. It should be understood, however, that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is absolutely good because it involves complete obedience to the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose goodness is eternal and absolute. Those who are inclined to study material piety and sin ultimately

experience frustration due to the relativity and variability of the subject matter. One should therefore come to the transcendental platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is valid and perfect in all circumstances.

TEXT 21.17

*samāna-karmācaraṇam
patitānām na pātakam
autpattiko guṇaḥ saṅgo
na śayānaḥ pataty adhaḥ*

samāna – equal; *karma* – of work; *ācaraṇam* – the performance; *patitānām* – for those who are fallen; *na* – is not; *pātakam* – a cause of falldown; *autpattikaḥ* – dictated by one’s nature; *guṇaḥ* – becomes a good quality; *saṅgaḥ* – material association; *na* – does not; *śayānaḥ* – one who is lying down; *patati* – fall; *adhaḥ* – further down.

TRANSLATION

The same activities that would degrade an elevated person do not cause falldown for those who are already fallen. Indeed, one who is lying on the ground cannot possibly fall further. The material association that is dictated by one’s own nature is considered a good quality.

PURPORT

The Lord here further describes the ambiguity in ascertaining material piety and sin. Although intimate association with women is most abominable for a renounced *sannyāsī*, the same association is pious for a householder, who is ordered by Vedic injunction to approach his wife at the suitable time for procreation. Similarly, a *brāhmaṇa* who drinks liquor is considered to be committing a most abominable act, whereas a *śūdra*, a low-class man, who can moderate his drinking is considered to be self-controlled. Piety and sin on the material level are thus relative considerations. Any member of society, however, who receives *dīkṣā*, initiation into the chanting of the Lord’s holy names, must strictly obey the four regulative principles: no eating of meat, fish or eggs, no illicit sex, no intoxication and no gambling. A spiritually initiated person neglecting these principles will certainly fall from his elevated position of liberation.

TEXT 21.18

*yato yato nivarteta
vimucyeta tatas tataḥ
eṣa dharmo nṛṇām kṣemaḥ
śoka-moha-bhayāpahaḥ*

yataḥ yataḥ – from whatever; *nivarteta* – one desists; *vimucyeta* – he becomes liberated; *tataḥ tataḥ* – from that; *eṣaḥ* – this; *dharmāḥ* – the system of religion; *nṛṇām* – for humans; *kṣemaḥ* – the path of auspiciousness; *śoka* – suffering; *moha* – delusion; *bhaya* – and fear; *apahaḥ* – which takes away.

TRANSLATION

By refraining from a particular sinful or materialistic activity, one becomes freed from its bondage. Such renunciation is the basis of religious and auspicious life for human beings and drives away all suffering, illusion and fear.

PURPORT

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 6.220) it is stated:

*mahāprabhura bhakta-gaṇera vairāgya pradhāna
yāhā dekhi' prīta hana gaura-bhagavān*

“Renunciation is the basic principle sustaining the lives of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s devotees. Seeing this renunciation, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is extremely satisfied.”

Because of false ego one considers oneself to be the proprietor and enjoyer of one’s activities. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, is the proprietor and enjoyer of our activities; recognition of this fact in Kṛṣṇa consciousness leads one to real renunciation. Every human being should perform his prescribed duty as an offering to the Supreme Lord. Then there will be no possibility of material entanglement. Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly explains in *Bhagavad-gītā* that prescribed duties performed as an offering to the Lord award liberation from material bondage. Sinful activities cannot be offered to the Lord but must be given up altogether. In effect, the distinction between piety and sin is made so that the living entities will become pious and eligible to surrender to the Supreme Lord. As explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.28):

*yeṣāṁ tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ
janānāṁ puṇya-karmaṇām
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā
bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*

“Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of delusion, engage themselves in My service with determination.”

By thorough piety one’s life becomes auspicious and freed from lamentation, illusion and fear, and one can then take to the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 21.19

*viṣayeṣu guṇādhyāsāt
puṁsaḥ saṅgas tato bhavet
saṅgāt tatra bhavet kāmaḥ
kāmād eva kalir nṛṇām*

viṣayeṣu – in material objects of sense gratification; *guṇa-adhyāsāt* – because of presuming them to be good; *puṁsaḥ* – of a person; *saṅgaḥ* – attachment; *tataḥ* – from that presumption; *bhavet* – comes into being; *saṅgāt* – from that material association; *tatra* – thus; *bhavet* – arises; *kāmaḥ* – lust; *kāmāt* – from lust; *eva* – also; *kalir* – quarrel; *nṛṇām* – among men.

TRANSLATION

One who accepts material sense objects as desirable certainly becomes attached to them. From such attachment lust arises, and this lust creates quarrel among men.

PURPORT

The actual goal of human life should not be material sense gratification, for it is the basis of conflict in human society. Although the Vedic literature sometimes sanctions sense gratification, the ultimate purpose of the *Vedas* is renunciation, since Vedic culture cannot possibly recommend anything that disturbs human life. A lusty person is easily angered and becomes inimical to anyone frustrating his lusty desires. Since his sex desire can never be satisfied, a lusty person ultimately becomes frustrated with his own sex partner, and thus a “love-hate” relationship develops. A lusty person considers himself to be the enjoyer of God’s creation and is therefore full of pride and false prestige. The lusty, proud person will not be attracted to the process of humble submission at the lotus feet of the bona fide spiritual master. Attraction to illicit sex is thus the direct enemy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which depends upon humble submission to the representative of the Supreme Lord. Lord Kṛṣṇa also states in *Bhagavad-gītā* that desire for illicit sex is the all-devouring, sinful enemy of this world. Because modern society sanctions unrestricted mixing of men and women, its citizens cannot possibly achieve peace; rather, the regulation of conflict becomes the basis of social survival. This is the symptom of an ignorant society falsely accepting the material body as the highest good, as described here by the words *viṣayeṣu guṇādhyāsāt*. One who is too affectionate to his own body will inevitably be seized by sex desire.

TEXT 21.20

*kaler durviṣahaḥ krodhas
tamas tam anuvartate
tamasā grasyate puṁsaś
cetanā vyāpinī drutam*

kaleḥ – from quarrel; *durviṣahaḥ* – intolerable; *krodhaḥ* – anger; *tamaḥ* – ignorance; *tam* – that anger; *anuvartate* – follows; *tamasā* – by ignorance; *grasyate* – is seized; *puṁsaḥ* – of a man; *cetanā* – the consciousness; *vyāpinī* – broad; *drutam* – swiftly.

TRANSLATION

From quarrel arises intolerable anger, followed by the darkness of ignorance. This ignorance quickly overtakes a man’s broad intelligence.

PURPORT

The desire for material association arises from one’s propensity to deny that everything is God’s energy. Falsely imagining material sense objects to be separate from the Supreme Lord, one desires to enjoy them; such desire gives rise to conflict and quarrel in human society. This conflict inevitably

gives rise to great anger, which makes human beings become foolish and destructive. Thus the actual goal of human life is quickly forgotten.

TEXT 21.21

*tayā virahitaḥ sādho
jantuḥ śūnyāya kalpate
tato'sya svārtha-vibhramśo
mūrcchitasya mṛtasya ca*

tayā - of that intelligence; *virahitaḥ* - deprived; *sādho* - O saintly Uddhava; *jantuḥ* - a living creature; *śūnyāya* - practically void; *kalpate* - becomes; *tataḥ* - consequently; *asya* - his; *sva-artha* - from the goals of life; *vibhramśaḥ* - downfall; *mūrcchitasya* - of him who has become like dull matter; *mṛtasya* - virtually dead; *ca* - and.

TRANSLATION

O saintly Uddhava, a person bereft of real intelligence is considered to have lost everything. Deviated from the actual purpose of his life, he becomes dull, just like a dead person.

PURPORT

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so vital and essential that one who has deviated from this progressive path of self-realization is considered to be virtually unconscious, or like a dead person. Since every living entity is part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, anyone who falsely identifies with the external body is actually unconscious of his real position. Thus it is stated, *śūnyāya kalpate*: pursuing that which has no factual existence, he is devoid of any tangible progress or benefit in life. One whose consciousness is absorbed in the nonexistent becomes himself practically nonexistent. In this way, the eternal living entities become fallen, lost in the ocean of material existence, and it is only by the special mercy of the pure devotees of the Lord that they can be rescued. The Lord's devotees therefore instruct the fallen people to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. By this process our real consciousness and life can be quickly revived.

TEXT 21.22

*viṣayābhiniveśena
nātmānaṁ veda nāparam
vṛkṣa jīvikayā jīvan
vyartham bhastreva yaḥ śvasan*

viṣaya - in sense gratification; *abhiniveśena* - by overabsorption; *na* - not; *ātmānam* - himself; *veda* - knows; *na* - nor; *aparam* - another; *vṛkṣa* - of a tree; *jīvakayā* - by the lifestyle; *jīvan* - living; *vyartham* - in vain; *bhastrā iva* - just like a bellows; *yaḥ* - who; *śvasan* - is breathing.

TRANSLATION

Because of absorption in sense gratification, one cannot recognize himself or others. Living uselessly in ignorance like a tree, one is merely breathing just like a bellows.

PURPORT

Just as trees, having no means of defending themselves, are always being cut down, similarly, the conditioned souls are constantly being cut down by the cruel laws of nature, which impose innumerable miseries culminating in sudden death. Although foolish people think they are helping themselves and others, they actually do not know their own identity, nor the identities of their so-called friends and relatives. Absorbed in gratifying the senses of the external body, they spend their lives uselessly, without spiritual profit. This useless lifestyle can be transformed into a perfect life simply by chanting the holy names of God in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as recommended by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

TEXT 21.23

*phala-śrutir iyaṁ nṛṇāṁ
na śreyo rocanam param
śreyo-vivakṣayā proktaṁ
yathā bhaiṣajya-rocanam*

phala-śrutih – the statements of scripture promising rewards; *iyam* – these; *nṛṇāṁ* – for men; *na* – are not; *śreyaḥ* – the highest good; *rocanam* – enticement; *param* – merely; *śreyaḥ* – the ultimate good; *vivakṣayā* – with the idea of saying; *proktaṁ* – spoken; *yathā* – just as; *bhaiṣajya* – for taking medicine; *rocanam* – inducement.

TRANSLATION

Those statements of scripture promising fruitive rewards do not prescribe the ultimate good for men but are merely enticements for executing beneficial religious duties, like promises of candy spoken to induce a child to take beneficial medicine.

PURPORT

In the previous verse Lord Kṛṣṇa stated that persons absorbed in sense gratification certainly deviate from the real purpose of human life. But since the *Vedas* themselves promise heavenly sense gratification as the result of sacrifice and austerity, how can such promotion to heaven be considered a deviation from the goal of life? The Lord here explains that the fruitive rewards offered in religious scriptures are merely inducements, like candy that is used to induce a child to take medicine. It is actually the medicine that is beneficial, and not the candy. Similarly, in fruitive sacrifices it is the worship of Lord Viṣṇu that is beneficial, not the fruitive reward itself. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, those professing fruitive rewards to be the ultimate goal of religious scripture are certainly less intelligent fools inimical to the purpose of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord desires that all conditioned souls be purified and come back home, back to Godhead, for

an eternal life of bliss and knowledge. One who opposes the Lord's purpose in the name of religiosity is certainly bewildered about the purpose of life.

TEXT 21.24

*utpattyaiva hi kāmeṣu
prāṇeṣu sva-janeṣu ca
āsakta-manaso martyā
ātmano'nartha-hetuṣu*

utpattya eva – simply by birth; *hi* – indeed; *kāmeṣu* – in objects of selfish desires; *prāṇeṣu* – in vital functions (such as one's duration of life, sense activities, physical strength and sexual potency); *sva-janeṣu* – in his family members; *ca* – and; *āsakta-manasaḥ* – having become attached within the mind; *martyāḥ* – mortal human beings; *ātmanaḥ* – of their real self; *anartha* – of defeating the purpose; *hetuṣu* – which are the causes.

TRANSLATION

Simply by material birth, human beings become attached within their minds to personal sense gratification, long duration of life, sense activities, bodily strength, sexual potency and friends and family. Their minds are thus absorbed in that which defeats their actual self-interest.

PURPORT

Our attachment to the material body and the bodies of family and friends inevitably leads to unbearable anxiety and suffering. The mind absorbed in the bodily concept of life cannot possibly advance in self-realization, and thus one's hope for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge is defeated by the objects of one's so-called affection. Activities performed in ignorance are beneficial neither for oneself nor others, just as the charitable activities one may perform in a dream bestow no tangible benefit on real people. The conditioned soul is dreaming of a world separate from God, but any advancement experienced in this dream world is merely hallucination. The Lord states in *Bhagavad-gītā, sarva-loka-maheśvaram*: He is the supreme enjoyer and Lord of all planets and worlds. Only by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, recognition of the supremacy of God, can one make actual progress in life.

TEXT 21.25

*natān aviduṣaḥ svārtham
bhrāmyato vṛjinādhvani
katham yuñjyāt punas teṣu
tāms tamo viśato budhaḥ*

natān – submissive; *aviduṣaḥ* – ignorant; *sva-artham* – of their own interest; *bhrāmyataḥ* – wandering; *vṛjina* – of danger; *adhvani* – upon the path; *katham* – for what purpose; *yuñjyāt* – would cause to engage; *punaḥ* – further; *teṣu* – in those (modes of sense gratification); *tān* – them; *tamaḥ* – darkness; *viśataḥ* – who are entering; *budhaḥ* – the intelligent (Vedic authority).

TRANSLATION

Those ignorant of their real self-interest are wandering on the path of material existence, gradually heading toward darkness. Why would the Vedas further encourage them in sense gratification if they, although foolish, submissively pay heed to Vedic injunctions?

PURPORT

Materialistic persons are not prepared to renounce society, friendship and love, which are all based on sex indulgence, to instead take to a life of renunciation and self-realization. In order to bring such foolish persons under the canopy of Vedic injunctions, the *Vedas* promise innumerable material rewards, even promotion to heavenly planets, to those who faithfully execute the Vedic injunctions. As explained by the Lord, such rewards are like the candy offered to a child, who then faithfully takes his medicine. Material enjoyment is certainly the cause of suffering, since all enjoyable objects are subject to destruction along with the so-called enjoyer. Material life is simply painful and full of anxiety, frustration and lamentation. We become agitated by seeing a so-called enjoyable object, such as the naked body of a woman, a beautiful residence, a sumptuous tray of food or the expansion of our own prestige, but actually such imagined happiness is simply the intense expectation of a satisfaction that never comes. One remains perpetually frustrated in material existence, and the more one tries to enjoy, the more one's frustration increases. Therefore, the Vedic knowledge, which aims at ultimate peace and happiness on the spiritual platform, cannot possibly authorize the materialistic way of life. Material rewards are employed by the *Vedas* merely as inducements for the conditioned soul to take the medicine, submission to the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu, through various types of sacrifice. Those who are *veda-vāda-rata* claim that religious scriptures are meant to facilitate sense gratification in the ignorance of conditioned life. The true goal of religion, however, is spiritual liberation, in which material sense gratification ceases to exist. The darkness of bodily attachment cannot exist in the effulgent light of spiritual knowledge. In the ocean of spiritual bliss, the anxiety-ridden apparent pleasure of this world vanishes completely. The true meaning of *veda*, or perfect knowledge, is to surrender to the Supreme Lord in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge as the Lord's faithful servant.

TEXT 21.26

*evam vyavasitam kecid
avijñāya kubuddhayaḥ
phala-śrutim kusumitām
na veda-jñā vadanti hi*

evam – in this way; *vyavasitam* – the actual conclusion; *kecit* – some people; *avijñāya* – not understanding; *ku-buddhayaḥ* – having perverted intelligence; *phala-śrutim* – the scriptural statements promising material rewards;

kusumitām – flowery; *na* – do not; *veda-jñāḥ* – those in full knowledge of the Vedas; *vadanti* – speak; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

Persons with perverted intelligence do not understand this actual purpose of Vedic knowledge and instead propagate as the highest Vedic truth the flowery statements of the Vedas that promise material rewards. Those in actual knowledge of the Vedas never speak in that way.

PURPORT

The followers of the *karma-mīmāṃsā* philosophy declare that there is no eternal kingdom of God beyond this universe and that one should therefore become a professional performer of Vedic rituals in order to keep oneself in a material heavenly planet. As explained by the Lord to Śrī Uddhava in a previous chapter, there is no actual happiness in the material world, since one will inevitably rotate throughout the various planetary environments stretching from heaven to hell and thus always be disturbed within the material atmosphere. Although the doctor may give a child candy-covered medicine, one who urges the child to eat the candy and throw away the medicine is certainly a great fool. In the same way, the flowery statements of the Vedas describing heavenly enjoyment do not award the real fruit of Vedic knowledge but merely supply decorative blossoms of sense gratification. As stated in the Vedas (*R̥g Veda* 1.22.20), *tad viṣṇoḥ paramam padam sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ*. Even the demigods, who are permanent residents of heaven, are always looking to the eternal abode of the Supreme Lord. Foolish people who admire the standard of living in material heaven should therefore note that the demigods themselves are devotees of the Supreme Lord. One should not become a bogus propagator of so-called Vedic knowledge but should take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and make a genuine solution to the problem of progressing in life.

TEXT 21.27

*kāminaḥ kṛpaṇā lubdhāḥ
puṣpeṣu phala-buddhayaḥ
agni-mugdhā dhūma-tāntāḥ
svam lokam na vidanti te*

kāminaḥ – lusty persons; *kṛpaṇāḥ* – miserly; *lubdhāḥ* – greedy; *puṣpeṣu* – flowers; *phala-buddhayaḥ* – thinking to be the ultimate fruits; *agni* – by fire; *mugdhāḥ* – bewildered; *dhūma-tāntāḥ* – suffocating from smoke; *svam* – their own; *lokam* – identity; *na vidanti* – do not recognize; *te* – they.

TRANSLATION

Those who are full of lust, avarice and greed mistake mere flowers to be the actual fruit of life. Bewildered by the glare of fire and suffocated by its smoke, they cannot recognize their own true identity.

PURPORT

Those attached to female association become proud separatists; desiring everything for their personal gratification and that of their lady friends, they become greedy misers, full of anxiety and envy. Such unfortunate persons mistake the flowery statements of the *Vedas* to be the highest perfection of life. The word *agni-mugdhāḥ*, “bewildered by fire,” indicates that such persons consider Vedic fire sacrifices awarding material benefit to be the highest religious truth, and thus they merge into ignorance. Fire produces smoke, which obscures one’s vision. Similarly, the path of fruitive fire sacrifices is cloudy and obscure, without clear understanding of the spirit soul. The Lord here clearly states that fruitive religionists cannot understand their actual spiritual identity, nor do they realize the genuine shelter of the spirit soul in the kingdom of God.

Lord Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15), *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*: all Vedic knowledge is actually meant to lead one to pure love of Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa is certainly the Absolute Truth, and to love Him is the ultimate purpose of our existence. The Vedic knowledge patiently tries to bring the conditioned soul to this perfection of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 21.28

*na te mām aṅga jānanti
hṛdi-stham ya idaṁ yataḥ
uktha-śāstrā hy asu-tṛpo
yathā nīhāra-cakṣuṣaḥ*

na – do not; *te* – they; *mām* – Me; *aṅga* – My dear Uddhava; *jānanti* – know; *hṛdi-stham* – seated within the heart; *yaḥ* – who is; *idaṁ* – this created universe; *yataḥ* – from whom it comes; *uktha-śāstrāḥ* – who consider Vedic ritual activities to be praiseworthy, or else, for whom their own ritualistic performances are like the weapon that kills the sacrificial animal; *hi* – indeed; *asu-tṛpaḥ* – interested only in sense gratification; *yathā* – just as; *nīhāra* – in fog; *cakṣuṣaḥ* – those whose eyes.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, persons dedicated to sense gratification obtained through honoring the Vedic rituals cannot understand that I am situated in everyone’s heart and that the entire universe is nondifferent from Me and emanates from Me. Indeed, they are just like persons whose eyes are covered by fog.

PURPORT

The word *uktha-śāstrāḥ* refers to the chanting of certain Vedic hymns, by which one obtains fruitive results in this world and the next. The word *śāstra* also indicates a weapon, and thus *uktha-śāstra* also means the weapon used in Vedic sacrifice to kill the sacrificial animal. Persons exploiting Vedic knowledge for bodily gratification are slaughtering themselves with the weapon of materialistic religious principles. They are also compared to those trying to see within a dense fog. The false bodily concept of life, in which one

ignores the eternal soul within the body, is a dense fog of ignorance that blocks our vision of God. Lord Kṛṣṇa therefore begins His instruction in *Bhagavad-gītā* by clearing away the dense ignorance of the bodily concept of life. Religion means the law of God. The Lord's final order, or law, is that every conditioned soul surrender unto Him, learn to serve and love Him, and thus go back home, back to Godhead. This is the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXTS 21.29-30

*te me matam avijñāya
parokṣam viṣayātmakāḥ
himsāyām yadi rāgaḥ syād
yajña eva na codanā
himsā-vihārā hy ālabdhaiḥ
paśubhiḥ sva-sukhecchayā
yajante devatā yajñaiḥ
pitṛ-bhūta-patīn khalāḥ*

te – they; *me* – My; *matam* – conclusion; *avijñāya* – without understanding; *parokṣam* – confidential; *viṣaya-ātmakāḥ* – absorbed in sense gratification; *himsāyām* – to violence; *yadi* – if; *rāgaḥ* – attachment; *syāt* – may be; *yajñe* – in the sacrificial prescriptions; *eva* – certainly; *na* – there is not; *codanā* – encouragement; *himsā-vihārāḥ* – those who take pleasure in violence; *hi* – indeed; *ālabdhaiḥ* – which have been slaughtered; *paśubhiḥ* – by means of the animals; *sva-sukha* – for their own happiness; *icchayā* – with the desire; *yajante* – they worship; *devatāḥ* – the demigods; *yajñaiḥ* – by sacrificial rituals; *pitṛ* – the forefathers; *bhūta-patīn* – and the leaders among the ghostly spirits; *khalāḥ* – cruel persons.

TRANSLATION

Those who are sworn to sense gratification cannot understand the confidential conclusion of Vedic knowledge as explained by Me. Taking pleasure in violence, they cruelly slaughter innocent animals in sacrifice for their own sense gratification and thus worship demigods, forefathers and leaders among ghostly creatures. Such passion for violence, however, is never encouraged within the process of Vedic sacrifice.

PURPORT

The Vedic scriptures sanction occasional animal sacrifice to satisfy cruel, low-class men who cannot live without the taste of flesh and blood. Such concessions, however, are restricted by rigorous obligatory rituals and are meant to gradually discourage animal killing, just as the exorbitant cost of a liquor license restricts the number of retail outlets selling alcoholic beverages. But unscrupulous persons misconstrue such restrictive sanctions and declare that Vedic sacrifice is meant for killing animals in order to enjoy sense gratification. Being materialistic, they desire to attain the planets of the forefathers or demigods and thus worship such beings. Sometimes

materialistic persons are attracted to the subtle lifestyle of ghosts and worship ghostly creatures. These methods constitute gross ignorance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the actual enjoyer of all sacrifice and austerity. The demons perform Vedic sacrifice but are inimical to Lord Nārāyaṇa, for they consider the demigods, the forefathers or Lord Śiva to be equal to God. Although understanding the authority of Vedic rituals, they do not accept the ultimate Vedic conclusion and therefore never surrender to God. Thus false religious principles flourish in the demoniac societies of the animal killers. Although in countries like America people outwardly profess to be followers of God alone, actual worship and glorification is offered to innumerable popular heroes such as entertainers, politicians, athletes and other equally insignificant persons. Animal killers, being grossly materialistic, are inevitably attracted to the extraordinary features of material illusion; they cannot understand the real platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or spiritual life.

TEXT 21.31

*svapnopamam amuṁ lokam
asantam śravaṇa-priyam
āśiṣo hṛdi saṅkalpya
tyajanty arthān yathā vaṇik*

svapna – a dream; *upamam* – equal to; *amum* – that; *lokam* – world (after death); *asantam* – unreal; *śravaṇa-priyam* – only enchanting to hear about; *āśiṣaḥ* – mundane achievements in this life; *hṛdi* – in their hearts; *saṅkalpya* – imagining; *tyajanti* – they give up; *arthān* – their wealth; *yathā* – like; *vaṇik* – a businessman.

TRANSLATION

Just as a foolish businessman gives up his real wealth in useless business speculation, foolish persons give up all that is actually valuable in life and instead pursue promotion to material heaven, which although pleasing to hear about is actually unreal, like a dream. Such bewildered persons imagine within their hearts that they will achieve all material blessings.

PURPORT

All over the world people are working hard to achieve perfect sense gratification in this life or the next. As eternal living beings, part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa, we are naturally endowed with all bliss and knowledge in the association of the Lord. But giving up this exalted position of spiritual bliss and knowledge, we foolishly waste our time pursuing the phantasmagoria of bodily happiness, just like a foolish businessman who squanders his real assets in imaginary business ventures that deliver no real profit.

TEXT 21.32

*rajaḥ-sattva-tamo-niṣṭhā
rajaḥ-sattva-tamo-juṣaḥ*

*upāsata indra-mukhyān
devādīn na yathaiva mām*

rajaḥ – in the mode of passion; *sattva* – goodness; *tamaḥ* – or ignorance; *niṣṭhāḥ* – established; *rajaḥ* – passion; *sattva* – goodness; *tamaḥ* – or ignorance; *juṣaḥ* – who manifest; *upāsate* – they worship; *indra-mukhyān* – headed by Lord Indra; *deva-ādīn* – the demigods and other deities; *na* – but not; *yathā eva* – in the proper way; *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

Those established in material passion, goodness and ignorance worship the particular demigods and other deities, headed by Indra, who manifest the same modes of passion, goodness or ignorance. They fail, however, to properly worship Me.

PURPORT

Although the demigods are part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, demigod worship fosters the false idea that the demigods exist apart from the Supreme Lord. Such worship is *avidhi-pūrvakam*, or an improper approach to the Absolute Truth. Śrīla Madhvācārya quotes from the *Hari-varṁśa* that among those primarily in the mode of ignorance there are sometimes manifestations of passion and goodness. Ignorant persons possessing a tendency toward goodness may go to hell but are also allowed a little heavenly pleasure. Thus it can be seen that a man suffering in miserable financial or political conditions sometimes enjoys the company of a beautiful wife, though his general condition is hellish. Those in ignorance mixed slightly with passion simply go to hell, and those purely in the mode of ignorance glide down to the darkest region of hell. Those devoid of devotion to the Supreme Lord are in ignorance in these three categories. Sometimes persons situated in the mode of goodness accept the supremacy of the Supreme Lord but are more attracted to the demigods, believing that through Vedic rituals they can achieve the same standard of living as the demigods. This proud tendency is certainly an obstacle in the loving service of the Supreme Lord and ultimately causes falldown.

TEXTS 21.33-34

*iṣṭveha devatā yajñair
gatvā raṁsyāmahe divi
tasyānta iha bhūyāśma
mahā-śālā mahā-kulāḥ
evam puṣpitayā vācā
vyākṣipta-manasām nṛṇām
māninām cāti-lubdhānām
mad-vārtāpi na rocate*

iṣṭvā – offering sacrifice; *iha* – in this world; *devatāḥ* – to the demigods; *yajñaiḥ* – by our sacrifices; *gatvā* – going; *raṁsyāmahe* – we shall enjoy; *divi* – in heaven; *tasya* – of that enjoyment; *ante* – at the end; *iha* – on this earth; *bhūyāśmaḥ* – we shall become; *mahā-śālāḥ* – great householders; *mahā-*

kulāḥ – members of aristocratic families; *evam* – thus; *puṣṣpitayā* – by the flowery; *vācā* – words; *vyākṣipta-manasām* – for those whose minds are bewildered; *nṛṇām* – men; *māninām* – very proud; *ca* – and; *ati-lubdhānām* – extremely greedy; *mad-vārtā* – topics about Me; *api* – even; *na rocate* – have no attraction.

TRANSLATION

The worshipers of demigods think, “We shall worship the demigods in this life, and by our sacrifices we shall go to heaven and enjoy there. When that enjoyment is finished we shall return to this world and take birth as great householders in aristocratic families.” Being excessively proud and greedy, such persons are bewildered by the flowery words of the Vedas. They are not attracted to topics about Me, the Supreme Lord.

PURPORT

Real pleasure is found in the transcendental form of the Lord, who is the supreme Cupid, engaging in pastimes of love in the spiritual world. Neglecting the eternal bliss of the Lord’s pastimes, the foolish worshipers of the demigods dream of becoming like the Lord, but they achieve exactly the opposite result. In other words, they continue perpetually in the cycle of birth and death.

TEXT 21.35

*vedā brahmātma-viṣayās
tri-kāṇḍa-viṣayā ime
parokṣa-vādā ṛṣayaḥ
parokṣam mama ca priyam*

vedāḥ – the Vedas; *brahma-ātma* – the understanding that the soul is pure spirit; *viṣayāḥ* – having as their subject matter; *tri-kāṇḍa-viṣayāḥ* – divided into three sections (which represent fruitive work, worship of demigods and realization of the Absolute Truth); *ime* – these; *parokṣa-vādāḥ* – speaking esoterically; *ṛṣayaḥ* – the Vedic authorities; *parokṣam* – indirect explanation; *mama* – to Me; *ca* – also; *priyam* – dear.

TRANSLATION

The Vedas, divided into three divisions, ultimately reveal the living entity as pure spirit soul. The Vedic seers and mantras, however, deal in esoteric terms, and I also am pleased by such confidential descriptions.

PURPORT

In the previous verses Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly refuted the concept that Vedic knowledge is meant for material enjoyment, and here the Lord summarizes the actual purpose of Vedic literature: self-realization. Although the conditioned souls are struggling in the network of material energy, their actual existence is transcendental freedom in the kingdom of God. The Vedas gradually lift the conditioned soul out of the darkness of illusion and establish him in the eternal loving service of the Lord. As stated in the

Vedānta-sūtra (4.4.22), *anāvṛttiḥ śabdāt*: “One who properly hears Vedic knowledge does not have to return to the cycle of birth and death.” One may ask why the Lord Himself as well as the Lord’s representatives, the Vedic seers and *mantras*, speak in esoteric or indirect terms. As the Lord states in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya*: the Supreme Lord does not allow Himself to be taken cheaply, and thus He is not manifest to superficial or inimical people. Those who are polluted by the material atmosphere are induced to purify themselves through Vedic rituals that offer fruitive results, just as a child is induced to take medicine by the offer of a candy reward. Because of the confidential nature of Vedic exposition, less intelligent persons cannot appreciate the ultimate transcendental purpose of the *Vedas*, and consequently they fall down to the platform of sense gratification.

The term *brahmātma* (“spirit soul”) ultimately indicates the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who states in *Bhagavad-gītā* that knowledge of Him is *rāja-guhyam*, the most confidential of all secrets. One who depends upon material sense perception remains in gross ignorance of the Absolute Truth. One who depends upon mental and intellectual speculation may get a clue that the eternal soul and Supersoul are both within the material body. But one who depends upon the Lord Himself, faithfully hearing the Lord’s own message in *Bhagavad-gītā*, perfectly understands the entire situation and goes back home, back to Godhead, having fulfilled the true purpose of Vedic knowledge.

TEXT 21.36

*śabda-brahma su-durbodham
prāṇendriya-mano-mayam
ananta-pāram gambhīram
durvigāhyam samudra-vat*

śabda-brahma – the transcendental sound of the *Vedas*; *su-durbodham* – extremely difficult to comprehend; *prāṇa* – of the vital air; *indriya* – senses; *manaḥ* – and mind; *mayam* – manifesting on the different levels; *ananta-pāram* – without limit; *gambhīram* – deep; *durvigāhyam* – unfathomable; *samudra-vat* – like the ocean.

TRANSLATION

The transcendental sound of the Vedas is very difficult to comprehend and manifests on different levels within the prāṇa, senses and mind. This Vedic sound is unlimited, very deep and unfathomable, just like the ocean.

PURPORT

According to Vedic knowledge, the Vedic sound is divided into four phases, which can be understood only by the most intelligent *brāhmaṇas*. This is because three of the divisions are internally situated within the living entity and only the fourth division is externally manifested, as speech. Even this fourth phase of Vedic sound, called *vaikharī*, is very difficult to understand

for ordinary human beings. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains these divisions as follows. The *prāṇa* phase of Vedic sound, known as *parā*, is situated in the *ādhāra-cakra*; the mental phase, known as *paśyantī*, is situated in the area of the navel, on the *maṇipūraka-cakra*; the intellectual phase, known as *madhyamā*, is situated in the heart area, in the *anāhata-cakra*. Finally, the manifest sensory phase of Vedic sound is called *vaikharī*. Such Vedic sound is *ananta-pāra* because it comprehends all vital energies within the universe and beyond and is thus undivided by time or space. Actually, Vedic sound vibration is so subtle, unfathomable and deep that only the Lord Himself and His empowered followers such as Vyāsa and Nārada can understand its actual form and meaning. Ordinary human beings cannot comprehend all of the intricacies and subtleties of Vedic sound, but if one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can immediately understand the conclusion of all Vedic knowledge, namely Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, the original source of Vedic knowledge. Foolish persons devote their vital air, senses and mind to sense gratification and thus do not understand the transcendental value of the holy name of God. Ultimately, the essence of all Vedic sound is the holy name of the Supreme Lord, which is not different from the Lord Himself. Since the Lord is unlimited, His holy name is equally unlimited. No one can understand the transcendental glories of the Lord without the Lord's direct mercy. By offenselessly chanting the holy names Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, one can enter into the transcendental mysteries of Vedic sound. Otherwise the knowledge of the *Vedas* will remain *durvigāhyam*, or impossible to penetrate.

TEXT 21.37

*mayopabṛmhitam bhūmnā
brahmaṇānanta-śaktinā
bhūteṣu ghoṣa-rūpeṇa
viseṣūrṇeva lakṣyate*

mayā - by Me; *upabṛmhitam* - established; *bhūmnā* - by the unlimited; *brahmaṇā* - the changeless Absolute; *ananta-śaktinā* - whose potencies have no end; *bhūteṣu* - within the living beings; *ghoṣa-rūpeṇa* - in the form of subtle sound, the *omkāra*; *viseṣu* - in the subtle fibrous covering of a lotus stalk; *ūrṇā* - one thread; *iva* - as; *lakṣyate* - appears.

TRANSLATION

As the unlimited, unchanging and omnipotent Personality of Godhead dwelling within all living beings, I personally establish the Vedic sound vibration in the form of omkāra within all living entities. It is thus perceived subtly, just like a single strand of fiber on a lotus stalk.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead personally resides within the heart of every living entity, and from this verse we can understand that the seed of

all Vedic knowledge is also situated within all living beings. In this way, the process of awakening Vedic knowledge, and thereby awakening one's eternal relationship with God, is natural and necessary for everyone. All perfection is found within the heart of the living being; as soon as the heart is purified by chanting the holy names of God, that perfection, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, immediately awakens.

TEXTS 21.38-40

*yathorṇanābhir hṛdayād
 ūrṇām udvamate mukhāt
 ākāsād ghoṣavān prāṇo
 manasā sparśa-rūpiṇā
 chando-mayo'mṛta-mayaḥ
 sahasra-padavīm prabhuḥ
 omkārād vyañjita-sparśa-
 svaroṣmāntastha-bhūṣitām
 vicitra-bhāṣā-vitatām
 chandobhiś catur-uttaraiḥ
 ananta-pārām bṛhatīm
 sṛjaty ākṣipate svayam*

yathā – just as; *ūrṇa-nābhiḥ* – a spider; *hṛdayāt* – from its heart; *ūrṇām* – its web; *udvamate* – emits; *mukhāt* – through its mouth; *ākāsāt* – from the ether; *ghoṣa-vān* – manifesting sound vibration; *prāṇaḥ* – the Lord in the form of the original life air; *manasā* – by means of the primeval mind; *sparśa-rūpiṇā* – which exhibits the forms of the different phonemes of the alphabet, beginning with the *sparśa* letters; *chandaḥ-mayaḥ* – comprising all the sacred Vedic meters; *amṛta-mayaḥ* – full of transcendental pleasure; *sahasra-padavīm* – which branches out in thousands of directions; *prabhuḥ* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *omkārāt* – from the subtle vibration *omkāra*; *vyañjita* – expanded; *sparśa* – with the consonant stops; *svara* – vowels; *uṣma* – sibilants; *anta-stha* – and semivowels; *bhūṣitām* – decorated; *vicitra* – variegated; *bhāṣā* – by verbal expressions; *vitatām* – elaborated; *chandobhiḥ* – along with the metrical arrangements; *catur-uttaraiḥ* – each having four syllables more than the previous; *ananta-pārām* – limitless; *bṛhatīm* – the great expanse of Vedic literature; *sṛjati* – He creates; *ākṣipate* – and withdraws; *svayam* – Himself.

TRANSLATION

Just as a spider brings forth from its heart its web and emits it through its mouth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead manifests Himself as the reverberating primeval vital air, comprising all sacred Vedic meters and full of transcendental pleasure. Thus the Lord, from the ethereal sky of His heart, creates the great and limitless Vedic sound by the agency of His mind, which conceives of variegated sounds such as the sparśas. The Vedic sound branches out in thousands of directions, adorned with the different letters

expanded from the syllable om: the consonants, vowels, sibilants and semivowels. The Veda is then elaborated by many verbal varieties, expressed in different meters, each having four more syllables than the previous one. Ultimately the Lord again withdraws His manifestation of Vedic sound within Himself.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has given an elaborate technical explanation of these three verses, the understanding of which requires extensive linguistic knowledge of the Sanskrit language. The essential point is that transcendental knowledge is expressed through Vedic sound vibration, which is itself a manifestation of the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. Vedic sound emanates from the Supreme Lord and is vibrated to glorify and understand Him. The conclusion of all Vedic sound vibration is found in *Bhagavad-gītā*, wherein the Lord states, *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*: all Vedic knowledge is simply meant to teach us to know and love God. One who always thinks of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who becomes the Lord's devotee and who bows down to and worships the Lord with faith and devotion, chanting His holy name, has certainly achieved a perfect understanding of all that is indicated by the word *veda* ("knowledge").

TEXT 21.41

*gāyatrī uṣṇik anuṣṭup ca
br̥hatī pañktir eva ca
triṣṭub jagatī aticchando
hy atyaṣṭi-atijagad-virāṭ*

gāyatrī uṣṇik anuṣṭup ca – known as Gāyatrī, Uṣṇik and Anuṣṭup; *br̥hatī pañktiḥ* – Br̥hatī and Pañkti; *eva ca* – also; *triṣṭub jagatī aticchandaḥ* – Triṣṭub, Jagatī and Aticchanda; *hi* – indeed; *atyaṣṭi-atijagad-virāṭ* – Atyaṣṭi, Atijagatī and Ativirāṭ.

TRANSLATION

The Vedic meters are Gāyatrī, Uṣṇik, Anuṣṭup, Br̥hatī, Pañkti, Triṣṭub, Jagatī, Aticchanda, Atyaṣṭi, Atijagatī and Ativirāṭ.

PURPORT

The Gāyatrī meter has twenty-four syllables, the Uṣṇik twenty-eight, the Anuṣṭup thirty-two, and so on, each meter having four more syllables than the previous one. Vedic sound is called *br̥hatī*, or most expansive, and thus it is not possible for ordinary living entities to understand all the technical details in this matter.

TEXT 21.42

*kiṁ vidhatte kiṁ ācaṣṭe
kim anūdya vikalpayet
ity asyā hṛdayaṁ loke
nānyo mad veda kaścana*

kim – what; *vidhatte* – enjoins (in the ritualistic *karma-kāṇḍa*); *kim* – what; *ācaṣṭe* – indicates (as the object of worship in the *devatā-kāṇḍa*); *kim* – what; *anūdyā* – describing in different aspects; *vikalpayet* – raises the possibility of alternatives (in the *jñāna-kāṇḍa*); *iti* – thus; *asyāḥ* – of Vedic literature; *hṛdayam* – the heart, or confidential purpose; *loke* – in this world; *na* – does not; *anyaḥ* – other; *mat* – than Me; *veda* – know; *kaścana* – anyone.

TRANSLATION

In the entire world no one but Me actually understands the confidential purpose of Vedic knowledge. Thus people do not know what the Vedas are actually prescribing in the ritualistic injunctions of karma-kāṇḍa, or what object is actually being indicated in the formulas of worship found in the upāsanā-kāṇḍa, or that which is elaborately discussed through various hypotheses in the jñāna-kāṇḍa section of the Vedas.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Absolute Truth, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Since the Lord is the source, maintainer and ultimate goal of Vedic knowledge, He is *veda-vit*, or the only true knower of Vedic knowledge. So-called philosophers, either Vedic scholars or ordinary men, may give their sectarian opinion, but it is the Lord Himself who knows the confidential purpose of the Vedas. The Lord is the only actual shelter and lovable object for all living entities. As He states in the Tenth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.41):

*yad yad vibhūtimat sattvaṁ
śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā
tad tad evāvagaccha tvaṁ
mama tejo-'mśa-sambhavam*

“Know that all beautiful, glorious and mighty creations spring from but a spark of My splendor.” All beautiful, extraordinary and powerful manifestations are insignificant displays of the Lord’s own opulences. Although ordinary people may quarrel over the purpose of religion, the actual purpose is one, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or pure love of Godhead. All Vedic formulas are understood to be preliminary stages leading to the perfect stage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in which one fully surrenders to the devotional service of the Lord. The pure devotees of the Lord represent Him within this world and never speak anything which is not authorized by the Lord. Because they are repeating the Lord’s own words, they are also to be understood as true knowers of the *Veda*.

TEXT 21.43

*māṁ vidhatte'bhidhatte māṁ
vikalpyāpohyate tv aham
etāvān sarva-vedārthaḥ
śabda āsthāya māṁ bhidām*

*māyā-mātram anūdyānte
pratiṣidhya prasīdati*

mām – Me; *vidhatte* – enjoins in sacrifice; *abhidhatte* – designates as the object of worship; *mām* – Me; *vikalpya* – presented as alternate hypothesis; *apohyate* – am refuted; *tu* – also; *aham* – I; *etāvān* – thus; *sarva-veda* – of all the *Vedas*; *arthaḥ* – the meaning; *śabdaḥ* – the transcendental sound vibration; *āsthāya* – establishing; *mām* – Me; *bhidām* – material duality; *māyā-mātram* – as simply illusion; *anūdyā* – describing elaborately in different aspects; *ante* – ultimately; *pratiṣidhya* – negating; *prasīdati* – becomes satisfied.

TRANSLATION

I am the ritualistic sacrifice enjoined by the Vedas, and I am the worshipable Deity. It is I who am presented as various philosophical hypotheses, and it is I alone who am then refuted by philosophical analysis. The transcendental sound vibration thus establishes Me as the essential meaning of all Vedic knowledge. The Vedas, elaborately analyzing all material duality as nothing but My illusory potency, ultimately completely negate this duality and achieve their own satisfaction.

PURPORT

The Lord declared in the previous verse that He alone knows the ultimate purpose of the *Vedas*, and now the Lord reveals that He alone is the ultimate basis and purpose of all Vedic knowledge. The *karma-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas* prescribes ritualistic sacrifices for promotion to heaven. Such sacrifices are the Lord Himself. Similarly, the *upāsanā-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas* designates different demigods as objects of ritualistic worship, and these deities are not different from the Lord Himself, being expansions of the Lord's body. In the *jñāna-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas* different philosophical methods of analysis are presented and refuted. Such knowledge, which analyzes the potency of the Supreme Lord, is not different from Him. Ultimately Lord Kṛṣṇa is everything, because everything is part and parcel of the Lord's multipotencies. Although Vedic literature entices those absorbed in material duality to begin the Vedic way of life by offering them materially desirable rewards, the *Vedas* eventually refute all material duality by bringing one to the stage of God consciousness, wherein there is nothing different from the Supreme Lord.

Within the Vedic literature there are various injunctions stating that at a particular stage of life one should give up fruitive rituals and take to the path of knowledge. Similarly, other injunctions declare that a self-realized soul should give up the path of speculative knowledge and take directly to the shelter of the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead. But nowhere is there an injunction recommending that one give up the loving service of the Lord, because that is the eternal constitutional position of every living entity. Different philosophical theses are presented and rejected in the *Vedas*, since one who is progressing must give up each previous stage in the

advancement of knowledge. For example, one who is addicted to sex enjoyment is taught to accept religious marriage and enjoy sex pleasure with his wife. Such ritualistic knowledge is to be given up when one attains the stage of detachment, whereupon one is recommended to take the renounced order of life. In that stage of life one is forbidden to see or speak with women. When, however, one reaches the perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, wherein the Lord is manifest everywhere, one may engage all living entities, including women, in the loving service of the Lord without danger of spiritual falldown. Thus different injunctions based on progressive stages of spiritual vision are presented and refuted in Vedic literature. Since all such injunctions and processes are ultimately meant for the achievement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the loving service of the Lord, they are not different from Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. The conditioned soul, therefore, should not prematurely stop his progressive march back home, back to Godhead, by foolishly mistaking an intermediate or preliminary stage of advancement as the actual goal of life. One must understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the source, maintenance and resting place of everything, and that every living entity is the Lord's eternal servant. In this way one should continue on the Vedic path all the way back home, back to Godhead, for eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-first Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Lord Kṛṣṇa's Explanation of the Vedic Path."

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Enumeration of the Elements of Material Creation

This chapter enumerates and categorizes the natural elements, explains the difference between the male and female natures and describes birth and death.

There are many opinions concerning the number of material elements. But this difference of opinions, brought about by the influence of the illusory energy, is not illogical. All the elements of nature exist everywhere; so authorities who have accepted the illusory potency of the Supreme Personality may propose a variety of theories. The insurmountable illusory energy of God is the root cause of their mutually contradictory arguments. There is no difference between the ultimate enjoyer and the supreme controller. To presuppose any distinction between them is senseless.

Ordinary knowledge is simply a quality of material nature, not of the soul proper. The raw substance of material nature is designated according to its different phases. In the mode of goodness, it is known as knowledge, in the mode of passion as activity, and in the mode of darkness as ignorance. Time is another name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and another name for material propensity is *sūtra* or *mahat-tattva*. The twenty-five elements of nature are the Lord, nature, the *mahat*, false ego, ether, air, fire, water, earth, the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue, the skin, speech, the hands, the feet, the genitals, the anus, the mind, sound, touch, form, taste and smell.

The unmanifest Supreme Personality merely glances at nature. Material nature, which is under the control of the Supreme Lord, then assumes the forms of causes and effects and carries out the creation, maintenance and destruction of the material world. Even though the *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* appear nondifferent to superficial vision, there is an ultimate difference between the two. Material creation is produced from the modes of *prakṛti*, and its quality is transformation. The living entities who are inimical to the Supreme Personality of Godhead take on and give up various kinds of material bodies through the agency of their own material work. But those who are ignorant of the self, because of being bewildered by illusion, do not understand this. The mind, which is filled with ideas of fruitive work, simply takes the senses with it from one body to another, while the soul follows along. Nevertheless, on account of being totally absorbed in sense gratification, one cannot remember his past existence.

The body undergoes nine stages of manifestation, which are brought about by association with the qualities of material nature. These are impregnation, gestation, birth, childhood, youth, maturity, middle age, old age and death. From the death of one's father and the birth of one's son, a person can easily comprehend the rise and fall of his own body. The soul, who is the perceiver, is different from this body. But when there is no knowledge of the true facts, the living entity, confused by the objects of sense gratification, achieves his destinations within the cycle of material existence. Thus the living entity continuously wanders under the spell of material work, taking birth as a sage or a demigod when he is predominated by the mode of goodness, among the

demons or human beings when he is predominantly influenced by the mode of passion, and in the species of ghosts, spirits or animals when he is predominated by the mode of ignorance. The spirit soul does not engage in the enjoyment of sense objects; rather, it is the senses that perform this activity. Therefore the living being has no actual need for sense gratificatory pleasures. With the exception of those peaceful personalities who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and are dedicated to the divine duty of His service, everyone, including so-called learned scholars, is inevitably overcome by the all-powerful material nature.

TEXTS 22.1-3

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
kati tattvāni viśveśa
saṅkhyātāny ṛṣibhiḥ prabho
navaikādaśa pañca trīṇy
āttha tvam iha śuśrūma
kecit ṣaḍ-vimśatiṃ prāhur
apare pañca-vimśatiṃ
saptaike nava ṣaṭ kecit
catvāry ekādaśāpare
kecit saptadaśa prāhuḥ
ṣoḍaśa trayodaśa
etāvattvaṃ hi saṅkhyānām
ṛṣayo yat-vivakṣayā
gāyanti pṛthag āyusmann
idaṃ no vaktum arhasi*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *kati* – how many; *tattvāni* – basic elements of creation; *viśva-īśa* – O Lord of the universe; *saṅkhyātāni* – have been enumerated; *ṛṣibhiḥ* – by great authorities; *prabho* – O my master; *nava* – nine (God, the individual soul, the *mahat-tattva*, false ego and the five gross elements); *ekādaśa* – plus eleven (the ten knowledge-acquiring and working senses together with the mind); *pañca* – plus five (the subtle forms of the sense objects); *trīṇi* – plus three (the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance, making altogether a total of twenty-eight); *āttha* – have stated; *tvam* – You; *iha* – during Your appearance in this world; *śuśrūma* – so I have heard; *kecit* – some; *ṣaḍ-vimśatiṃ* – twenty-six; *prāhuḥ* – they say; *apare* – others; *pañca-vimśatiṃ* – twenty-five; *sapta* – seven; *eke* – some; *nava* – nine; *ṣaṭ* – six; *kecit* – some; *catvāri* – four; *ekādaśa* – eleven; *apare* – still others; *kecit* – some; *saptadaśa* – seventeen; *prāhuḥ* – say; *ṣoḍaśa* – sixteen; *eke* – some; *trayodaśa* – thirteen; *etāvattvaṃ* – such calculations; *hi* – indeed; *saṅkhyānām* – of the different ways of counting the elements; *ṛṣayaḥ* – the sages; *yat-vivakṣayā* – with the intention of expressing what ideas; *gāyanti* – they have declared; *pṛthag* – in various manners; *āyus-man* – O supreme eternal; *idaṃ* – this; *naḥ* – to us; *vaktum* – to explain; *arhasi* – You should please.

TRANSLATION

Uddhava inquired: My dear Lord, O master of the universe, how many different elements of creation have been enumerated by the great sages? I have heard You personally describe a total of twenty-eight - God, the jīva soul, the mahat-tattva, false ego, the five gross elements, the ten senses, the mind, the five subtle objects of perception and the three modes of nature. But some authorities say that there are twenty-six elements, while others cite twenty-five or else seven, nine, six, four or eleven, and even others say that there are seventeen, sixteen or thirteen. What did each of these sages have in mind when he calculated the creative elements in such different ways? O supreme eternal, kindly explain this to me.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa thoroughly explained in the previous chapter that Vedic knowledge is not meant for sense gratification but for liberation from material bondage. Now Uddhava presents some intermediate questions that must be answered so the path of liberation will be clear. Different philosophers have historically disagreed over the exact number of material elements, about the existence and nonexistence of particular external objects and about the existence of the soul itself. The *jñāna-kāṇḍa* section of the *Vedas* aims at liberation through analytic understanding of the material world and of the spirit soul as a transcendental element beyond matter. Ultimately the Supreme Lord Himself stands above all elements and maintains them by His personal potency. Uddhava mentions in numerical terms different methodologies of various sages, citing first the Lord's own opinion. The word *āyusman*, or "possessing eternal form," is significant in this regard. Since Lord Kṛṣṇa is eternal, He possesses all knowledge of past, present and future and is thus the original and supreme philosopher. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the different analytic approaches mentioned by Śrī Uddhava are actually not contradictory, since they are different methods of categorizing the same reality. Atheistic speculation on reality does not recognize the existence of God; consequently it is a worthless attempt to explain the truth. The Lord Himself empowers different living entities to speculate and speak on reality in different ways. The actual reality, however, is the Lord Himself, who will now speak to Śrī Uddhava.

TEXT 22.4

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
yuktam ca santi sarvatra
bhāṣante brāhmaṇā yathā
māyām madīyām udgrhya
vadatām kiṁ nu durghaṭam

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *yuktam* - reasonably; *ca* - even; *santi* - they are present; *sarvatra* - everywhere;

bhāṣante – they speak; *brāhmaṇāḥ* – *brāhmaṇas*; *yathā* – how; *māyām* – the mystic energy; *madīyām* – My; *udgrhya* – resorting to; *vadatām* – of those who speak; *kim* – what; *nu* – after all; *durghaṭam* – will be impossible.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kṛṣṇa replied: Because all material elements are present everywhere, it is reasonable that different learned brāhmaṇas have analyzed them in different ways. All such philosophers spoke under the shelter of My mystic potency, and thus they could say anything without contradicting the truth.

PURPORT

The words *santi sarvatra* in this verse indicate that all material elements are found within each other in gross and subtle forms. In this way there are innumerable ways to categorically describe them. The material world is ultimately illusory, undergoing constant transformation. It may be measured in different ways, just as the mirage of an oasis may be described in different ways, but the Lord’s own analysis of twenty-eight elements is perfect and should be accepted. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī states that the word *māyā* in this verse does not refer to *mahā-māyā*, or the potency of ignorance, but to the Lord’s inconceivable mystic power, which shelters the learned followers of Vedic knowledge. Each of the philosophers mentioned here reveals a particular aspect of truth, and their theories are not contradictory, since they are simply describing the same phenomena with different categorical systems. Such philosophical disagreement is endless within the material world; thus everyone should unite on the platform of the Lord’s own opinion, as stated in this verse. Similarly, in *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa requests all conditioned souls to give up their various forms of worship and surrender unto Him in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, becoming His devotees. Thus the whole universe can be united in love of Godhead by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. By the Lord’s revealing Himself to a sincere devotee, the controversy of analytic philosophy is ended.

TEXT 22.5

*naitad evaṁ yathāttha tvam
yad ahaṁ vacmi tat tathā
evaṁ vivadatām hetuṁ
śaktayo me duratyayāḥ*

na – it is not; *etat* – this; *evaṁ* – so; *yathā* – as; *āttha* – say; *tvam* – you; *yat* – which; *ahaṁ* – I; *vacmi* – am saying; *tat* – that; *tathā* – thus; *evaṁ* – in this way; *vivadatām* – for those who argue; *hetuṁ* – over logical reasons; *śaktayaḥ* – the energies (are impelling); *me* – My; *duratyayāḥ* – unsurpassable.

TRANSLATION

When philosophers argue, “I don’t choose to analyze this particular case in the same way that you have,” it is simply My own

insurmountable energies that are motivating their analytic disagreements.

PURPORT

Because of the material potencies of the Supreme Lord, mundane philosophers are perpetually arguing about which came first, the chicken or the egg. By the influence of the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance, different philosophers are attracted to different views; and by the influence of the material atmosphere created by the Lord, these philosophers perpetually disagree with one another. The Supreme Lord Himself, however, has given the clear explanation. 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 caused 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 respectful obeisances unto Him.”

TEXT 22.6

*yāsām vyatīkarāt āsīt
vikalpo vadatām padam
prāpte śama-dame'pyeti
vādaḥ tam anu śāmyati*

yāsām – of which (energies of Mine); *vyatīkarāt* – by the interaction; *āsīt* – has arisen; *vikalpaḥ* – difference of opinion; *vadatām* – of those arguing; *padam* – the subject of discussion; *prāpte* – when one has achieved; *śama* – the ability to fix his intelligence on Me; *dame* – and control of his external senses; *apyeti* – disappears (that difference of opinion); *vādaḥ* – the argument itself; *tam anu* – consequently; *śāmyati* – subsides.

TRANSLATION

By interaction of My energies different opinions arise. But for those who have fixed their intelligence on Me and controlled their senses, differences of perception disappear, and consequently the very cause for argument is removed.

PURPORT

Conflicting varieties of perception are created by the interaction of the Lord’s material energies in the minds of different philosophers, who staunchly defend their opinions, stating, “This may be the case or perhaps that or the other; or this may not be the case, or perhaps that is not the case.” Such logical or rational proposing, doubting, counter-proposing, counteracting, etc., take thousands of different forms and become the basis of argument.

Actually, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is the basis of all existence, since everything emanates from the Lord, is maintained by the Lord and at the end is merged to rest within the Lord. Lord Kṛṣṇa is *para-tattva*, the highest truth underlying all other dependent truths. In a society of learned persons who have understood the Personality of Godhead to be everything, there is no further cause of philosophical quarrel. Such unity of opinion is not based on the absence of philosophical inquiry, nor on the stifling of rational discussion, but is the natural result of spiritual enlightenment. So-called philosophers proudly boast that they are searching and researching for the Absolute Truth, yet they somehow consider one who has found the Absolute Truth to be less intelligent than one who has not found it but is searching. Because Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth, one who fully surrenders to the Lord becomes the most learned person.

TEXT 22.7

*parasparānupraveśāt
tattvānām puruṣarṣabha
paurvāparya-prasaṅkhyānaṁ
yathā vaktur vivakṣitam*

paraspara – mutual; *anupraveśāt* – because of the entrance (as subtle causes within gross manifestations, and vice versa); *tattvānām* – of the various elements; *puruṣa-ṛṣabha* – O best among men (Uddhava); *paurva* – in terms of prior causes; *aparya* – or of resultant products; *prasaṅkhyānam* – enumeration; *yathā* – however; *vaktuḥ* – the speaker; *vivakṣitam* – wants to describe.

TRANSLATION

O best among men, because subtle and gross elements mutually enter into one another, philosophers may calculate the number of basic material elements in different ways, according to their personal desire.

PURPORT

Material creation takes place as a chain reaction in which subtle elements expand and transform into progressively denser elements. Since a cause is in a sense present within its effect, and the effect is subtly present within the cause, all subtle and gross elements have entered within one another. Thus one may categorize basic material elements in many different ways, assigning various numbers and names according to one's methodology. Although material philosophers proudly assume their individual theories to be supreme, they are all speculating according to their personal proclivities, as described in this and the following verse.

TEXT 22.8

*ekasminn api dṛśyante
praviṣṭānītarāṇi ca*

*pūrvasmin vā parasmin vā
tattve tattvāni sarvaśaḥ*

ekasmin – in one (element); *api* – even; *dṛśyante* – there are seen; *praviṣṭāni* – entered within; *itarāṇi* – others; *ca* – also; *pūrvasmin* – in a prior (subtle causal element, such as the dormant presence of ether within its cause, sound); *vā* – either; *parasmin* – or in a later (produced element, such as the subtle presence of sound within its further product, air); *vā* – or; *tattve* – in some element; *tattvāni* – other elements; *sarvaśaḥ* – in the cases of each of the different enumerations.

TRANSLATION

All subtle material elements are actually present within their gross effects; similarly, all gross elements are present within their subtle causes, since material creation takes place by progressive manifestation of elements from subtle to gross. Thus we can find all material elements within any single element.

PURPORT

Since material elements are present within each other, there are innumerable ways to construe and categorize the material creation of God. Ultimately, however, the significant element is God Himself, who is the basis of all the transformations and permutations of the material cosmos. The creation of the material world takes place by a progression from subtle to gross elements, as explained in the *sāṅkhya-yoga* system of Lord Kapila. The example may be given that we find the dormant existence of an earthen pot within mud and also the existence of mud within the earthen pot. Similarly, one element is present within another, and ultimately all elements rest within the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is simultaneously within everything. By such explanations, Kṛṣṇa consciousness constitutes the ultimate scientific methodology for factually understanding this universe.

TEXT 22.9

*paurvāparyam ato'miśāṁ
prasaṅkhyānam abhīpsatām
yathā viviktam yad-vaktram
gṛhṇīmo yukti-sambhavāt*

paurva – considering causal elements to include their manifest products; *aparyam* – or assuming elements to include their subtle causes; *ataḥ* – therefore; *amiśām* – of these thinkers; *prasaṅkhyānam* – the counting; *abhīpsatām* – who are intending; *yathā* – how; *viviktam* – ascertained; *yad-vaktram* – from whose mouth; *gṛhṇīmaḥ* – We accept it; *yukti* – of reason; *sambhavāt* – because of the possibility.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, no matter which of these thinkers is speaking, and regardless of whether in their calculations they include material elements within their previous subtle causes or else within their subsequent manifest products, I accept their conclusions as

authoritative, because a logical explanation can always be given for each of the different theories.

PURPORT

Although innumerable philosophers may rationally describe the material creation from different points of view, one cannot perfect one's knowledge without Kṛṣṇa consciousness. An intellectual person should therefore not be falsely proud simply because he has ascertained a particular truth within the material world. The Lord here states that one who follows the Vedic way of analysis will undoubtedly have many insights concerning the material creation. Ultimately, however, one must become a devotee of the Supreme Lord and perfect one's knowledge in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 22.10

*anādy-avidyā-yuktasya
puruṣasyātma-vedanam
svato na sambhavād anyas
tattva-jñō jñāna-do bhavet*

anādi – without beginning; *avidyā* – with ignorance; *yuktasya* – who is joined; *puruṣasya* – of a person; *ātma-vedanam* – the process of self-realization; *svataḥ* – by his own ability; *na sambhavāt* – because it cannot occur; *anyaḥ* – another person; *tattva-jñāḥ* – the knower of transcendental reality; *jñāna-daḥ* – the bestower of real knowledge; *bhavet* – must be.

TRANSLATION

Because a person who has been covered by ignorance since time immemorial is not capable of effecting his own self-realization, there must be some other personality who is in factual knowledge of the Absolute Truth and can impart this knowledge to him.

PURPORT

Although the Lord tolerates different methods of calculating material causes within their effects and material effects within their causes, there cannot be any speculation regarding the two spiritual elements found in this universe, namely the individual soul and the Supersoul. Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly states in this verse that the living entity is incapable of effecting his own enlightenment. The Supreme Lord is *tattva-jñā*, omniscient, and *jñāna-da*, the spiritual master of the entire universe. Śrī Uddhava mentioned that some philosophers describe twenty-five elements and others twenty-six. The difference is that the twenty-six elements include a separate category for the individual soul and the Supreme Soul, Lord Kṛṣṇa, whereas the proponents of twenty-five elements artificially merge the two transcendental categories of *jīva-tattva* and *viṣṇu-tattva*, hiding the eternal supremacy of the Personality of Godhead.

Knowledge based on the three modes of material nature cannot rise to the transcendental platform, where the Personality of Godhead exists as the supreme enjoyer of eternal spiritual varieties of form, color, flavor, musical sounds and loving affairs. Mundane philosophers simply bounce back and

forth between material enjoyment and material renunciation. Being victims of Māyāvāda (impersonal) perception of the Absolute Truth, they cannot achieve the shelter of the Personality of Godhead and thus cannot understand Him. Because foolish, impersonal philosophers consider themselves supreme, they are unable to appreciate that loving service exists on the spiritual platform. Stubbornly rejecting subservience to the Personality of Godhead, the impersonalists are eventually overwhelmed by the illusory potency of the Lord and undergo the miseries of material existence. The Vaiṣṇavas, on the other hand, are not envious of the Personality of Godhead. They gladly accept His shelter and supremacy, and thus the Lord personally takes charge of His devotees and enlightens them, filling them with His own transcendental bliss. Spiritual service to the Supreme Lord is in this way free from the disappointment and repression of material service.

TEXT 22.11

*puruṣeśvarayor atra
na vailakṣaṇyam aṇv api
tat-anya-kalpanāpārthā
jñānaṁ ca prakṛter guṇaḥ*

puruṣa - between the enjoyer; *īśvarayoḥ* - and the supreme controller; *atra* - herein; *na* - there is no; *vailakṣaṇyam* - dissimilarity; *aṇu* - minute; *api* - even; *tat* - of them; *anya* - as being completely different; *kalpanā* - the imagined idea; *apārthā* - useless; *jñānam* - knowledge; *ca* - and; *prakṛteḥ* - of material nature; *guṇaḥ* - a quality.

TRANSLATION

According to knowledge in the material mode of goodness, there is no qualitative difference between the living entity and the supreme controller. The imagination of qualitative difference between them is useless speculation.

PURPORT

According to certain philosophers there are twenty-five elements, among which a single category is stipulated for both the individual living entity and the Supreme Lord. Such impersonal knowledge is declared by the Lord to be material: *jñānaṁ ca prakṛter guṇaḥ*. Such knowledge can, however, be accepted to establish the qualitative identity of the Supreme Lord and the living entities who expand from Him. Materialistic persons sometimes believe that there is a supreme spirit in heaven but also think that human beings are identical with their material bodies and thus qualitatively and perpetually separated from the Supreme Lord. Knowledge of the Lord's qualitative oneness with the living entity, as described in this verse, refutes the materialistic concept of life and partially establishes the Absolute Truth. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu described the actual situation as *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*: the supreme controller and the controlled living entities are simultaneously one and different. In the material mode of goodness the

oneness is perceived. As one proceeds further, to the stage of *viśuddha-sattva*, or purified spiritual goodness, one finds spiritual variety within the qualitative oneness, completing one's knowledge of the Absolute Truth. The words *na vailakṣaṇyam aṅv api* boldly affirm that the individual living entity is indisputably part and parcel of the Supreme Lord and qualitatively one with Him. Any philosophical attempt to separate the living entity from the Supreme Lord and deny his eternal servitude to the Lord is thus refuted. Speculation arriving at the conclusion that the living entity has independent existence separate from the Lord is described here as *apārthā*, useless. Nevertheless, the theory of twenty-five elements is acceptable to the Lord as a preliminary phase in the evolution of spiritual knowledge.

TEXT 22.12

*prakṛtir guṇa-sāmyam vai
prakṛter nātmano guṇāḥ
sattvaṁ rajas tama iti
sthity-utpatty-anta-hetavaḥ*

prakṛtiḥ - material nature; *guṇa* - of the three modes; *sāmyam* - the original equilibrium; *vai* - indeed; *prakṛteḥ* - of nature; *na ātmanaḥ* - not of the spirit soul; *guṇāḥ* - these modes; *sattvam* - goodness; *rajaḥ* - passion; *tamaḥ* - ignorance; *iti* - thus called; *sthiti* - of the maintenance of universal creation; *utpatti* - its production; *anta* - and its annihilation; *hetavaḥ* - the causes.

TRANSLATION

Nature exists originally as the equilibrium of the three material modes, which pertain only to nature, not to the transcendental spirit soul. These modes - goodness, passion and ignorance - are the effective causes of the creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe.

PURPORT

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.27) it is stated:

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

“The bewildered spirit soul, under the influence of the three modes of material nature, thinks himself to be the doer of activities, which are in actuality carried out by nature.”

The three modes of nature, in their original state of equilibrium, as well as the subsequent creation generated from the modes, are vastly more powerful than the tiny living entity who is controlled by them. The living entity thus cannot be accepted as the actual doer or creator within the material world. The mode of goodness is symptomized by the experience of knowledge, the mode of passion by the experience of work, and the mode of ignorance by the experience of darkness. These modes of material knowledge, work and darkness have no real relation with the transcendental

spirit soul, who exhibits his own qualities of eternality, bliss and knowledge (the *sandhinī*, *saṁvit* and *hlādinī* potencies of the Supreme Lord). The material modes have no access within the kingdom of God, in the unbounded atmosphere of which the eternal living entity is meant to live.

TEXT 22.13

*sattvaṁ jñānaṁ rajaḥ karma
tamo'jñānam ihocyate
guṇa-vyatikaraḥ kālaḥ
svabhāvaḥ sūtram eva ca*

sattvam – the mode of goodness; *jñānam* – knowledge; *rajaḥ* – the mode of passion; *karma* – fruitive work; *tamaḥ* – the mode of ignorance; *ajñānam* – foolishness; *iha* – in this world; *ucyate* – is called; *guṇa* – of the modes; *vyatikaraḥ* – the agitated transformation; *kālaḥ* – time; *svabhāvaḥ* – innate tendency, nature; *sūtram* – the *mahat-tattva*; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also.

TRANSLATION

In this world the mode of goodness is recognized as knowledge, the mode of passion as fruitive work, and the mode of darkness as ignorance. Time is perceived as the agitated interaction of the material modes, and the totality of functional propensity is embodied by the primeval sūtra, or mahat-tattva.

PURPORT

The impetus for the interaction of the material elements is the forward movement of time. Because time is passing, the embryo grows within the womb, gradually comes out, grows up, produces by-products, dwindles and dies. All of this is due to the pushing of time. In the absence of the time factor, the material elements do not interact but remain inert in the form of *pradhāna*. Lord Kṛṣṇa is establishing the basic categories of the material world so that human beings can conceive of the Lord's creation. Were the categories not condensed, analysis and conceptualization would be impossible, since the Lord's potencies are infinite. Although there are numerous divisions of material elements within the basic divisions, the spirit soul is always to be understood as a distinct transcendental element, meant for residence in the kingdom of God.

TEXT 22.14

*puruṣaḥ prakṛtir vyaktam
ahaṅkāro nabho'nilaḥ
jyotir āpaḥ kṣitir iti
tattvāny uktāni me nava*

puruṣaḥ – the enjoyer; *prakṛtiḥ* – nature; *vyaktam* – the primeval manifestation of matter; *ahaṅkāraḥ* – false ego; *nabhaḥ* – ether; *anilaḥ* – air; *jyotiḥ* – fire; *āpaḥ* – water; *kṣitiḥ* – earth; *iti* – thus; *tattvāni* – the elements of creation; *uktāni* – have been described; *me* – by Me; *nava* – nine.

TRANSLATION

I have described the nine basic elements as the enjoying soul, nature, nature's primeval manifestation of the mahat-tattva, false ego, ether, air, fire, water and earth.

PURPORT

Prakṛti, or nature, is originally unmanifest and later becomes manifest as the *mahat-tattva*. Although the living entity is *puruṣa*, an enjoyer, the real process by which he can enjoy is by satisfying the transcendental senses of the Lord, just as the hand eats by supplying food to the stomach. Within material nature the living entity becomes a false enjoyer, forgetting his subservience to the Lord. The material elements as well as the living entity and the Supersoul are thus systematically analyzed to demonstrate to the conditioned soul his actual constitutional position beyond material nature.

TEXT 22.15

*śrotram tvag darśanam ghrāṇo
jihveti jñāna-śaktayaḥ
vāk-pāṇy-upastha-pāyvaṅghriḥ
karmāṇy aṅgobhayam manaḥ*

śrotram – the sense of hearing; *tvag* – the sense of touch, experienced upon the skin; *darśanam* – sight; *ghrāṇaḥ* – smell; *jihvā* – the sense of taste, experienced upon the tongue; *iti* – thus; *jñāna-śaktayaḥ* – the knowledge-acquiring senses; *vāk* – speech; *pāṇi* – the hands; *upastha* – the genitals; *pāyu* – the anus; *aṅghriḥ* – and the legs; *karmāṇi* – the working senses; *aṅga* – My dear Uddhava; *ubhayam* – belonging to both these categories; *manaḥ* – the mind.

TRANSLATION

Hearing, touch, sight, smell and taste are the five knowledge-acquiring senses, My dear Uddhava, and speech, the hands, the genitals, the anus and the legs constitute the five working senses. The mind belongs to both these categories.

PURPORT

Eleven elements are mentioned in this verse.

TEXT 22.16

*śabdaḥ sparśo raso gandho
rūpaṁ cety artha-jātayaḥ
gaty-ukty-utsarga-śilpāni
karmāyatana-siddhayaḥ*

śabdaḥ – sound; *sparśaḥ* – touch; *rasaḥ* – taste; *gandhaḥ* – fragrance; *rūpaṁ* – form; *ca* – and; *iti* – thus; *artha* – of sense objects; *jātayaḥ* – the categories; *gati* – movement; *ukti* – speech; *utsarga* – excretion (by both the genitals and anus); *śilpāni* – and manufacture; *karma-āyatana* – by the above-mentioned working senses; *siddhayaḥ* – accomplished.

TRANSLATION

Sound, touch, taste, smell and form are the objects of the knowledge-acquiring senses, and movement, speech, excretion and manufacture are functions of the working senses.

PURPORT

Here the word *utsarga* refers to evacuation by the genitals and anus, and thus constitutes two elements. In this way ten elements are listed here in two sets of five.

TEXT 22.17

*sargādau prakṛtir hy asya
kārya-kāraṇa-rūpiṇī
sattvādibhir guṇair dhatte
puruṣo'vyakta īkṣate*

sarga - of creation; *ādau* - in the beginning; *prakṛtiḥ* - the material nature; *hi* - indeed; *asya* - of this universe; *kārya* - the manifest products; *kāraṇa* - and subtle causes; *rūpiṇī* - embodying; *sattva-ādibhiḥ* - by means of goodness, passion and ignorance; *guṇaiḥ* - the modes; *dhatte* - assumes its position; *puruṣaḥ* - the Supreme Lord; *avyaktaḥ* - not involved in material manifestation; *īkṣate* - witnesses.

TRANSLATION

In the beginning of creation nature assumes, by the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance, its form as the embodiment of all subtle causes and gross manifestations within the universe. The Supreme Personality of Godhead does not enter the interaction of material manifestation but merely glances upon nature.

PURPORT

The Personality of Godhead is not subject to transformation like the subtle and gross material elements. Thus the Lord is *avyakta*, or not materially manifest at any stage of cosmic evolution. Regardless of the specific method of cataloging the material elements, the Lord remains the ultimate creator, maintainer and annihilator of the total cosmic situation.

TEXT 22.18

*vyaktādayo vikurvāṇā
dhātavaḥ puruṣekṣayā
labdha-vīryāḥ sṛjanty aṇḍam
saṁhatāḥ prakṛter balāt*

vyakta-ādayaḥ - the *mahat-tattva* and so on; *vikurvāṇāḥ* - undergoing transformation; *dhātavaḥ* - the elements; *puruṣa* - of the Lord; *īkṣayā* - by the glance; *labdha* - having attained; *vīryāḥ* - their potencies; *sṛjanti* - they create; *aṇḍam* - the egg of the universe; *saṁhatāḥ* - amalgamated; *prakṛteḥ* - of nature; *balāt* - by the power.

TRANSLATION

As the material elements, headed by the mahat-tattva, are transformed, they receive their specific potencies from the glance of the Supreme Lord, and being amalgamated by the power of nature, they create the universal egg.

TEXT 22.19

*saptaiva dhātava iti
tatrārthāḥ pañca khādayaḥ
jñānam ātmobhayādhāras
tato dehendriyāsavaḥ*

sapta - seven; *eva* - indeed; *dhātavaḥ* - elements; *iti* - thus saying; *tatra* - therein; *arthāḥ* - the physical elements; *pañca* - five; *kha-ādayaḥ* - beginning with ether; *jñānam* - the spirit soul, who is the possessor of knowledge; *ātmā* - the Supreme Soul; *ubhaya* - of both (the seen nature and the *jīva* who is its seer); *ādhāraḥ* - the fundamental basis; *tataḥ* - from these; *deha* - the body; *indriya* - senses; *asavaḥ* - and vital airs.

TRANSLATION

According to some philosophers there are seven elements, namely earth, water, fire, air and ether, along with the conscious spirit soul and the Supreme Soul, who is the basis of both the material elements and the ordinary spirit soul. According to this theory, the body, senses, life air and all material phenomena are produced from these seven elements.

PURPORT

Having explained His own viewpoint, the Lord now summarizes various other analytic methodologies.

TEXT 22.20

*ṣaḍ ity atrāpi bhūtāni
pañca ṣaṣṭhaḥ paraḥ pumān
tair yukta ātma-sambhūtaiḥ
sṛṣṭvedaṁ samapāviśat*

ṣaḍ - six; *iti* - thus; *atra* - in this theory; *api* - also; *bhūtāni* - the elements; *pañca* - five; *ṣaṣṭhaḥ* - the sixth; *paraḥ* - the transcendental; *pumān* - Supreme Personality; *taiḥ* - with those (five gross elements); *yuktaḥ* - conjoined; *ātma* - from Himself; *sambhūtaiḥ* - created; *sṛṣṭvā* - sending forth; *idam* - this creation; *samupāviśat* - He entered within it.

TRANSLATION

Other philosophers state that there are six elements - the five physical elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether) and the sixth element, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That Supreme Lord, endowed with the elements that He has brought forth from Himself, creates this universe and then personally enters within it.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī states that according to this philosophy, the ordinary living entity is included within the category of the Supersoul. This theory thus accepts only the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the five physical elements.

TEXT 22.21

*catvāry eveti tatrāpi
teja āpo'nnam ātmanaḥ
jātāni tair idam jātam
janmāvayavinaḥ khalu*

catvāri - four; *eva* - also; *iti* - thus; *tatra* - in that case; *api* - even; *tejaḥ* - fire; *āpaḥ* - water; *annam* - earth; *ātmanaḥ* - from the Self; *jātāni* - all arising; *taiḥ* - by them; *idam* - this cosmos; *jātam* - has come about; *janma* - the birth; *avayavinaḥ* - of the manifest product; *khalu* - indeed.

TRANSLATION

Some philosophers propose the existence of four basic elements, of which three - fire, water and earth - emanate from the fourth, the Self. Once existing, these elements produce the cosmic manifestation, in which all material creation takes place.

TEXT 22.22

*saṅkhyāne saptadaśake
bhūta-mātrendriyāṇi ca
pañca pañcaika-manasā
ātmā saptadaśaḥ smṛtaḥ*

saṅkhyāne - in the enumeration; *saptadaśake* - in terms of seventeen elements; *bhūta* - the five gross elements; *mātra* - the five subtle perceptions pertaining to each; *indriyāṇi* - and the five corresponding senses; *ca* - also; *pañca pañca* - in groups of five; *eka-manasā* - along with the one mind; *ātmā* - the soul; *saptadaśaḥ* - as the seventeenth; *smṛtaḥ* - is so considered.

TRANSLATION

Some calculate the existence of seventeen basic elements, namely the five gross elements, the five objects of perception, the five sensory organs, the mind, and the soul as the seventeenth element.

TEXT 22.23

*tadvat ṣoḍaśa-saṅkhyāne
ātmaiva mana ucyate
bhūtendriyāṇi pañcaiva
mana ātmā trayodaśa*

tadvat - similarly; *ṣoḍaśa-saṅkhyāne* - in counting sixteen; *ātmā* - the soul; *eva* - indeed; *manaḥ* - as the mind; *ucyate* - is identified; *bhūta* - the five gross elements; *indriyāṇi* - the senses; *pañca* - five; *eva* - certainly; *manaḥ* -

the mind; *ātmā* - the soul (both the individual soul and the Supersoul); *trayodaśa* - thirteen.

TRANSLATION

According to the calculation of sixteen elements, the only difference from the previous theory is that the soul is identified with the mind. If we think in terms of five physical elements, five senses, the mind, the individual soul and the Supreme Lord, there are thirteen elements.

PURPORT

According to the theory of thirteen elements, the sense objects - aroma, taste, form, touch and sound - are considered by-products of the interaction of the senses and physical matter.

TEXT 22.24

*ekādaśatva ātmāsau
mahā-bhūtendriyāṇi ca
aṣṭau prakṛtayaś caiva
puruṣaś ca navety atha*

ekādaśatve - in the consideration of eleven; *ātmā* - the soul; *asau* - this; *mahā-bhūta* - the gross elements; *indriyāṇi* - the senses; *ca* - and; *aṣṭau* - eight; *prakṛtayaḥ* - natural elements (earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego); *ca* - also; *eva* - certainly; *puruṣaḥ* - the Supreme Lord; *ca* - and; *nava* - nine; *iti* - thus; *atha* - furthermore.

TRANSLATION

Counting eleven, there are the soul, the gross elements and the senses. Eight gross and subtle elements plus the Supreme Lord would make nine.

TEXT 22.25

*iti nānā-prasaṅkhyānaṁ
tattvānām ṛṣibhiḥ kṛtam
sarvaṁ nyāyyaṁ yuktimattvād
viduṣāṁ kim aśobhanam*

iti - in these ways; *nānā* - various; *prasaṅkhyānam* - enumeration; *tattvānām* - of the elements; *ṛṣibhiḥ* - by the sages; *kṛtam* - has been done; *sarvam* - all this; *nyāyyam* - logical; *yukti-mattvāt* - because of the presentation of rational arguments; *viduṣām* - of those who are learned; *kim* - what; *aśobhanam* - lack of brilliance.

TRANSLATION

Thus great philosophers have analyzed the material elements in many different ways. All of their proposals are reasonable, since they are all presented with ample logic. Indeed, such philosophical brilliance is expected of the truly learned.

PURPORT

The material world has been analyzed in innumerable ways by innumerable brilliant philosophers, but the conclusion is always one – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva. Aspiring philosophers need not waste their precious time showing off their intellectual brilliance, because there is little left to analyze on the material platform. One should simply surrender to the Absolute Truth, the supreme element, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and uncover one’s eternal consciousness of God.

TEXT 22.26

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
prakṛtiḥ puruṣaś cobhau
yady apy ātma-vilakṣaṇau
anyonyāpāśrayāt kṛṣṇa
dṛśyate na bhidā tayoh
prakṛtau lakṣyate hy ātmā
prakṛtiś ca tathātmāni*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *prakṛtiḥ* – nature; *puruṣaḥ* – the enjoyer, or living entity; *ca* – and; *ubhau* – both; *yady api* – although; *ātma* – constitutionally; *vilakṣaṇau* – distinct; *anyonya* – mutual; *apāśrayāt* – because of shelter; *kṛṣṇa* – O Lord Kṛṣṇa; *dṛśyate na* – it does not appear; *bhidā* – any difference; *tayoh* – between them; *prakṛtau* – within nature; *lakṣyate* – is apparently seen; *hi* – indeed; *ātmā* – the soul; *prakṛtiḥ* – nature; *ca* – and; *tathā* – also; *ātmāni* – in the soul.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava inquired: Although nature and the living entity are constitutionally distinct, O Lord Kṛṣṇa, there appears to be no difference between them, because they are found residing within one another. Thus the soul appears to be within nature and nature within the soul.

PURPORT

Śrī Uddhava here expresses the doubt that arises in the heart of an ordinary conditioned soul. Although the Vedic scriptures declare that the material body is a temporary fabrication of the material modes of nature, the conscious living entity within the body is actually an eternal spirit soul. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa has declared the material elements constituting the body to be His separated, inferior energy, whereas the living entity is the superior, conscious energy of the Lord. Still, in conditioned life the material body and conditioned soul appear inseparable and thus nondifferent. Because the living entity enters the womb of a mother and gradually comes out in a developed body, the soul appears to have entered deeply within material nature. Similarly, by the soul’s identification with the material body, the body appears to enter deeply within the consciousness of the soul. What is more, the body cannot exist without the presence of the soul. By this apparent mutual dependence, the difference between the body and soul is

obscured. Śrī Uddhava therefore questions the Lord in order to clarify this issue.

TEXT 22.27

*evam me puṇḍarīkākṣa
mahāntam saṁśayaṁ hṛdi
chettum arhasi sarva-jñā
vacobhir naya-naipuṇaiḥ*

evam – thus; *me* – my; *puṇḍarīka-akṣa* – O lotus-eyed Lord; *mahāntam* – great; *saṁśayam* – doubt; *hṛdi* – within my heart; *chettum* – cut; *arhasi* – You should please; *sarva-jñā* – O omniscient one; *vacobhiḥ* – with Your words; *naya* – in reasoning; *naipuṇaiḥ* – very expert.

TRANSLATION

O lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, O omniscient Lord, kindly cut this great doubt out of my heart with Your own words, which exhibit Your great skill in reasoning.

PURPORT

Śrī Uddhava requests Lord Kṛṣṇa to clearly demonstrate the difference between the material body and the spirit soul.

TEXT 22.28

*tvatto jñānam hi jīvānām
pramoṣas te'tra śaktiḥ
tvam eva hy ātma-māyāyā
gatim vettha na cāparaḥ*

tvattaḥ – from You; *jñānam* – knowledge; *hi* – indeed; *jīvānām* – of the living beings; *pramoṣaḥ* – stealing away; *te* – Your; *atra* – in this knowledge; *śaktiḥ* – by the potency; *tvam* – You; *eva* – alone; *hi* – indeed; *ātma* – Your own; *māyāyā* – of the illusory potency; *gatim* – the real nature; *vettha* – You know; *na* – not; *ca* – and; *aparaḥ* – any other person.

TRANSLATION

From You alone the knowledge of the living beings arises, and by Your potency that knowledge is stolen away. Indeed, no one but Yourself can understand the real nature of Your illusory potency.

PURPORT

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanam ca*: “From Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness.” By the Lord’s causeless mercy one is enlightened with knowledge, and by the Lord’s illusory potency that knowledge vanishes and one is merged into ignorance. Those bewildered by *māyā* cannot understand the difference between the material body and the spirit soul and thus should hear from the Lord Himself to remove this illusory covering.

TEXT 22.29

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
prakṛtiḥ puruṣaś ceti
vikalpaḥ puruṣarṣabha
eṣa vaikārikaḥ sarga
guṇa-vyatikarātmakaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *prakṛtiḥ* – nature; *puruṣaḥ* – the enjoyer, living entity; *ca* – and; *iti* – thus; *vikalpaḥ* – complete distinction; *puruṣa-ṛṣabha* – O best among men; *eṣaḥ* – this; *vaikārikaḥ* – subject to transformation; *sargaḥ* – creation; *guṇa* – of the modes of nature; *vyatikara* – the agitation; *ātmakaḥ* – based upon.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best among men, material nature and its enjoyer are clearly distinct. This manifest creation undergoes constant transformation, being founded upon the agitation of the modes of nature.

PURPORT

The word *puruṣa* indicates the living entity and also the Supreme Lord, who is the supreme living entity. Material nature, subject to transformation, is full of duality, whereas the Lord is one and absolute. Material nature is dependent on its creator, maintainer and annihilator; the Lord, however, is completely self-reliant and independent. In the same way, material nature is unconscious and dull, lacking self-awareness, whereas the Supreme Lord is self-sufficient omniscience. The individual living entity shares the eternality, bliss and knowledge of the Personality of Godhead and is also completely distinct from material nature.

The word *sarga* here refers to the material amalgamation of the body, which covers the living entity. The material body undergoes constant transformation and is thus clearly different from the living entity, who is eternally the same. In the transcendental kingdom of God there is no conflict or agitation caused by creation, maintenance and destruction as exhibited in the material world. There all variety is resolved in the transcendental loving experience of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the natural constitutional position of the soul.

TEXT 22.30

*mamāṅga māyā guṇa-mayy anekadhā
vikalpa-buddhīś ca guṇair vidhatte
vaikārikas tri-vidho'dhyātmam ekam
athādhidaivam adhibhūtam anyat*

mama – My; *aṅga* – My dear Uddhava; *māyā* – material energy; *guṇa-mayī* – consisting of the three modes; *anekadhā* – manifold; *vikalpa* – different manifestations; *buddhīḥ* – and perceptions of these differences; *ca* – and; *guṇaiḥ* – by the modes; *vidhatte* – establishes; *vaikārikaḥ* – the full-blown manifestation of transformations; *tri-vidhaḥ* – having three aspects;

adhyātmam – called *adhyātma*; *ekam* – one; *atha* – and; *adhidaivam* – *adhidaiva*; *adhibhūtam* – *adhibhūta*; *anyat* – another.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, My material energy, comprising three modes and acting through them, manifests the varieties of creation along with varieties of consciousness for perceiving them. The manifest result of material transformation is understood in three aspects: adhyātmic, adhidaivic and adhibhautic.

PURPORT

The word *vikalpa-buddhīḥ* indicates that consciousness within various material bodies reveals different aspects of the Lord's creation. Birds such as seagulls glide on the ocean breezes, experiencing the Lord's creation of wind and altitude. The fish experience life within the water, and other creatures intimately experience life within trees or within the earth. Human society affords its own varieties of awareness, and similarly in heaven and hell different experiences are available. All types of material consciousness are transformations of the three modes of material nature, the expansions of the Lord's illusory energy.

TEXT 22.31

*dṛg rūpam ārkam vapur atra randhre
parasparam sidhyati yaḥ svataḥ khe
ātmā yad eṣām aparo ya ādyaḥ
svayānubhūtyākḥhila-siddha-siddhiḥ*

dṛk – the function of sight (as *adhyātma*); *rūpam* – visible form (as *adhibhūta*); *ārkam* – of the sun; *vapuḥ* – the partial image (as *adhidaiva*); *atra* – in this; *randhre* – aperture (of the eyeball); *parasparam* – mutually; *sidhyati* – cause the manifestation of each other; *yaḥ* – which; *svataḥ* – by its own power; *khe* – in the sky; *ātmā* – the Supersoul; *yat* – which; *eṣām* – of these (three features); *aparaḥ* – separate; *yaḥ* – who; *ādyaḥ* – the original cause; *svayā* – by His own; *anubhūtyā* – transcendental experience; *ākḥhila* – of all; *siddha* – manifest phenomena; *siddhiḥ* – the source of manifestation.

TRANSLATION

Sight, visible form and the reflected image of the sun within the aperture of the eye all work together to reveal one another. But the original sun standing in the sky is self-manifested. Similarly, the Supreme Soul, the original cause of all entities, who is thus separate from all of them, acts by the illumination of His own transcendental experience as the ultimate source of manifestation of all mutually manifesting objects.

PURPORT

Form is recognized by the function of the eye, and the eye's function is understood by the presence of perceivable form. This interaction of sight and form further depends on the presence of light provided by the demigods, whose service of universal management depends on the presence of those

who are to be managed, namely the living entities experiencing form with their eyes. Thus the three factors – *adhyātma*, represented by the senses such as the eye; *adhibhūta*, the sense objects such as form; and *adhidaiva*, the influence of the controlling deities – exist in an interdependent relationship.

The sun globe itself is said to be self-manifest, self-luminous and self-experiencing; it does not share the interdependence of the senses and sense objects although facilitating their function. Similarly, the Supreme Personality of Godhead facilitates the interdependent experiences of all living entities. For example, newspapers, radio and television reveal world events to the mass of people. Parents reveal facts about life to their children, teachers to their students, friends to friends, and so on. The government manifests its will to the people and the people to their government. The sun and moon reveal the visual forms of all objects, and the perception of sound reveals audible form. The vibrations of particular types of music or rhetoric reveal the inner feelings of other living beings, and other types of knowledge are revealed by aroma, touch and taste. In this way, through the interaction of the senses and mind with innumerable sense objects, different types of knowledge are acquired. All such informative interactions, however, depend upon the supreme illuminating power of the Personality of Godhead. As stated in *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.52), *yac-caṅṣur eṣa savitā sakala-grahāṇām*: “Among all the planets the sun is considered the eye of the Supreme Lord.” The Personality of Godhead is eternally omniscient by His own transcendental potency, and thus no one can reveal anything to the Lord about anything. Still, Lord Kṛṣṇa humbly accepts our prayers offered in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In conclusion, Lord Kṛṣṇa clearly explains here that His sublime characteristics are completely different from those of the manifest universe. The Lord is therefore the supreme transcendental entity, free from all material influence.

TEXT 22.32

*evam tvag-ādi śravaṇādi caṅṣur
jihvādi nāsādi ca citta-yuktam*

evam – in the same way; *tvag-ādi* – the skin, the sensation of touch and the demigod of the wind, Vāyu; *śravaṇa-ādi* – the ears, the sensation of sound and the demigods of the directions; *caṅṣuḥ* – the eyes (described in the previous verse); *jihvā-adi* – the tongue, the sensation of taste and the god of water, Varuṇa; *nāsa-ādi* – the nose, the sensation of smell and the Aśvinī-kumāras; *ca* – also; *citta-yuktam* – along with consciousness (implying not only conditioned consciousness together with the object of that consciousness and the presiding Deity Vāsudeva, but also the mind together with the object of thought and the moon-god Candra, intelligence with the object of intelligence and Lord Brahmā, and false ego together with the identification of false ego and Lord Rudra).

TRANSLATION

Similarly, the sense organs, namely the skin, ears, eyes, tongue and nose - as well as the functions of the subtle body, namely conditioned consciousness, mind, intelligence and false ego - can all be analyzed in terms of the threefold distinction of sense, object of perception and presiding deity.

PURPORT

The individual soul has no permanent relationship with the inter- dependent material functions of the senses, sense objects and controlling deities. The living entity is originally pure spirit soul and is meant to depend on the Personality of Godhead in the spiritual world. It is useless to try to analyze matter and spirit within the same categories, since they belong to different potencies of the Supreme Lord. Thus the act of spiritually perceiving the Supreme Lord, His abode and one's own self is an entirely antimaterial process realized within pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 22.33

*yo'sau guṇa-kṣobha-kṛto vikāraḥ
pradhāna-mūlān mahataḥ prasūtaḥ
ahaṁ tri-vṛt moha-vikalpa-hetur
vaikārikas tāmāsa aindriyaś ca*

yaḥ asau - this; *guṇa* - of the modes of nature; *kṣobha* - by the agitation; *kṛtaḥ* - caused; *vikāraḥ* - transformation; *pradhāna-mūlāt* - which is generated from the *pradhāna*, the unmanifest form of the total material nature; *mahataḥ* - from the *mahat-tattva*; *prasūtaḥ* - generated; *ahaṁ* - false ego; *tri-vṛt* - in three phases; *moha* - of bewilderment; *vikalpa* - and material variety; *hetuḥ* - the cause; *vaikārikaḥ* - in the mode of goodness; *tāmāsaḥ* - in the mode of ignorance; *aindriyaḥ* - in the mode of passion; *ca* - and.

TRANSLATION

When the three modes of nature are agitated, the resultant transformation appears as the element false ego in three phases - goodness, passion and ignorance. Generated from the mahat-tattva, which is itself produced from the unmanifest pradhāna, this false ego becomes the cause of all material illusion and duality.

PURPORT

By giving up one's false ego of identification with the three modes of nature, one can achieve Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the pure, original state of existence. The word *moha-vikalpa-hetuḥ* indicates that because of false ego one considers himself to be the enjoyer of nature and thus develops a false sense of material duality in terms of material happiness and distress. False ego is removed by identifying oneself as the Lord's eternal servitor in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 22.34

*ātmāparijñāna-mayo vivādo
hy astīti nāstīti bhidārtha-niṣṭhaḥ
vyartha'pi naivoparameta puṁsām
mattaḥ parāvṛtta-dhiyām sva-lokāt*

ātma – of the Supreme Soul; *aparijñāna-mayaḥ* – based on lack of full knowledge; *vivādaḥ* – speculative argument; *hi* – indeed; *asti* – (this world) is real; *iti* – thus saying; *na asti* – it is not real; *iti* – thus saying; *bhidā* – material differences; *artha-niṣṭhaḥ* – having as its focus of discussion; *vyarthaḥ* – worthless; *api* – although; *na* – does not; *eva* – certainly; *uparameta* – cease; *puṁsām* – for persons; *mattaḥ* – from Me; *parāvṛtta* – who have turned; *dhiyām* – their attention; *sva-lokāt* – who am nondifferent from them.

TRANSLATION

The speculative argument of philosophers - “This world is real,” “No, it is not real” - is based upon incomplete knowledge of the Supreme Soul and is simply aimed at understanding material dualities. Although such argument is useless, persons who have turned their attention away from Me, their own true Self, are unable to give it up.

PURPORT

If one doubts the existence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one will inevitably doubt the reality of the Lord’s creation. Thus, without understanding Lord Kṛṣṇa, mere argument and debate over the reality and nonreality of the material world are useless. The material world is real specifically because it emanates from the supreme reality, Lord Kṛṣṇa. Without understanding the reality of Lord Kṛṣṇa one can never definitely ascertain the reality of His creation; one will always wonder if he is actually seeing something or merely thinking that he is seeing it. This kind of speculation can never be resolved without taking shelter of the Supreme Lord and is therefore useless. The devotees of the Lord are not inclined to such argument, because they are factually advancing in spiritual enlightenment and are fully satisfied with their progressively more beautiful experience of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXTS 22.35-36

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
tvattaḥ parāvṛtta-dhiyaḥ
sva-kṛtaiḥ karmabhiḥ prabho
uccāvacān yathā dehān
gṛhṇanti visṛjanti ca
tan mamākhyāhi govinda
durvibhāvyam anātmabhiḥ
na hy etat prāyaśo loka
vidvāmsaḥ santi vañcitāḥ*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *tvattaḥ* – from You; *parāvṛtta* – diverted; *dhiyaḥ* – whose minds; *sva-kṛtaiḥ* – done by them; *karmabhiḥ* – by

the fruitive activities; *prabho* – O supreme master; *ucca-avacān* – higher and lower; *yathā* – in which way; *dehān* – material bodies; *grhṇanti* – they accept; *visrjanti* – give up; *ca* – and; *tat* – that; *mama* – to me; *ākhyāhi* – please explain; *govinda* – O Govinda; *durvibhāvyaṃ* – impossible to understand; *anātmabhiḥ* – by those who are not intelligent; *na* – not; *hi* – indeed; *etat* – about this; *prāyaśaḥ* – for the most part; *loke* – in this world; *vidvāmsaḥ* – knowledgeable; *santi* – they are; *vañcitāḥ* – who are cheated (by material illusion).

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: O supreme master, the intelligence of those dedicated to fruitive activities is certainly deviated from You. Please explain to me how such persons accept superior and inferior bodies by their materialistic activities and then give up such bodies. O Govinda, this topic is very difficult for foolish persons to understand. Being cheated by illusion in this world, they generally do not become aware of these facts.

PURPORT

No one can be considered intelligent without understanding the science of God, which includes a description of the negative results of those who have forgotten their eternal relationship with Him. There are many so-called wise men in the world, but although considering themselves to be most intelligent, they generally do not surrender to the supreme intelligence of the Lord. Thus they concoct varieties of philosophies according to their positions within the modes of nature. However, one cannot escape the influence of material nature through philosophy generated from that same illusory nature. Liberation is achieved by perfect knowledge coming from the spiritual platform, the kingdom of God. By faithfully hearing from Lord Kṛṣṇa and His authorized representatives one can easily achieve liberation and go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 22.37

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
manaḥ karma-mayaṃ nṛṇāṃ
indriyaiḥ pañcabhir yutam
lokāl lokam prayāty anya
ātmā tad anuvartate

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *manaḥ* – the mind; *karma-mayaṃ* – shaped by fruitive work; *nṛṇāṃ* – of persons; *indriyaiḥ* – along with the senses; *pañcabhiḥ* – five; *yutam* – conjoined; *lokāt* – from one world; *lokam* – to another world; *prayāti* – travels; *anyaḥ* – separate; *ātmā* – the soul; *tat* – that mind; *anuvartate* – follows.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kṛṣṇa said: The material mind of men is shaped by the reactions of fruitive work. Along with the five senses, it travels from

one material body to another. The spirit soul, although different from this mind, follows it.

TEXT 22.38

*dhyāyan mano'nu viṣayān
dṛṣṭān vānuśrutān atha
udyat sīdat karma-tantram
smṛtis tad anu śāmyati*

dhyāyat – meditating; *manaḥ* – the mind; *anu* – regularly; *viṣayān* – on the sense objects; *dṛṣṭān* – seen; *vā* – or; *anuśrutān* – heard from Vedic authority; *atha* – subsequently; *udyat* – rising; *sīdat* – dissolving; *karma-tantram* – bound to the reactions of fruitive work; *smṛtiḥ* – remembrance; *tad anu* – after that; *śāmyati* – is destroyed.

TRANSLATION

The mind, bound to the reactions of fruitive work, always meditates on the objects of the senses, both those that are seen in this world and those that are heard about from Vedic authority. Consequently, the mind appears to come into being and to suffer annihilation along with its objects of perception, and thus its ability to distinguish past and future is lost.

PURPORT

One may ask how the subtle body, or mind, gives up its connection with one physical body and enters another. Such entering and leaving of physical bodies is called birth and death by conditioned souls. One utilizes his present senses to meditate on the visible objects of this world – beautiful women, palatial estates, and so on – and similarly one daydreams about the heavenly planets described in the *Vedas*. As death occurs, the mind is pulled away from the objects of its immediate experience and enters another body to experience a new set of sense objects. As the mind undergoes total reorientation there is the apparent loss of one's previous mentality and creation of a new mind, though actually the same mind is experiencing, but in a different way.

The conditioned soul is overwhelmed by the constant flow of material experience consisting of direct perception and abstract contemplation of the objects of this world. One thereby loses his transcendental memory of his relationship with God. As soon as one identifies with this world he forgets his eternal identity and surrenders to the false ego created by *māyā*.

TEXT 22.39

*viṣayābhiniveśena
nātmānam yat smaret punaḥ
jantor vai kasyacid dhetor
mṛtyur atyanta-vismṛtiḥ*

viṣaya – in (new) objects of perception; *abhiniveśena* – because of absorption; *na* – not; *ātmānam* – his previous self; *yat* – the situation in

which; *smaret* – remembers; *punaḥ* – any more; *jantoḥ* – of the living entity; *vai* – indeed; *kasyacit hetoḥ* – for any reason or other; *mṛtyuḥ* – known as death; *atyanta* – total; *vismṛtiḥ* – forgetfulness.

TRANSLATION

When the living entity passes from the present body to the next body, which is created by his own karma, he becomes absorbed in the pleasurable and painful sensations of the new body and completely forgets the experience of the previous body. This total forgetfulness of one's previous material identity, which comes about for one reason or another, is called death.

PURPORT

Depending on one's *karma*, or fruitive activities, one may achieve a beautiful, wealthy or powerful body or be degraded to an abominable condition of life. Taking birth in heaven or in hell, the living entity learns to completely identify his ego with the new body and thus becomes absorbed in the pleasure, fear, opulence or suffering of the new body, completely forgetting the experiences of the previous body. Death occurs when the specific *karma* allotted to a physical body is finished. Since that particular body's *karma* is used up, it can no longer act upon one's mind; in that way one forgets the previous body. The new body is created by nature so that one can experience the *karma* currently in effect. Consequently one's entire consciousness becomes absorbed in one's current body in order that one can fully experience the results of his previous activities. Because the living entity falsely identifies himself as the body, bodily death is experienced as death of the soul. Actually, however, the soul is eternal and is never subject to creation or annihilation. This analytic knowledge of self-realization is easily understood in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 22.40

*janma tv ātmatayā puṁsaḥ
sarva-bhāvena bhūri-da
viṣaya-svīkṛtiṁ prāhur
yathā svapna-manorathaḥ*

janma – birth; *tu* – and; *ātmatayā* – by identification with oneself; *puṁsaḥ* – of a person; *sarva-bhāvena* – completely; *bhūri-da* – O most charitable Uddhava; *viṣaya* – of the body; *svī-kṛtim* – the acceptance; *prāhuḥ* – is called; *yathā* – just as; *svapna* – a dream; *manaḥ-rathaḥ* – or a mental fantasy.

TRANSLATION

O most charitable Uddhava, what is called birth is simply a person's total identification with a new body. One accepts the new body just as one completely accepts the experience of a dream or a fantasy as reality.

PURPORT

Identification with one's material body surpasses the mere affection and attachment one feels for the bodies of relatives or friends. The word *sarva-*

bhāvena here shows that one totally accepts the material body to be oneself, just as one completely accepts the experience of a dream as real. Mere imagination without practical action is called a daydream; the mental concoction that occurs in a sleeping state is called a dream. Our identification with our own body and our blind acceptance of bodily relationships as permanent constitute a prolonged form of dreaming or fantasy in which one imagines oneself to be separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The term birth, therefore, does not refer to the generation of a new entity but to the blind acceptance by the spirit soul of a new material body.

TEXT 22.41

*svapnaṁ manorathaṁ cetthaṁ
prāktanaṁ na smaraty asau
tatra pūrvam ivātmānam
apūrvam cānupaśyati*

svapnam – a dream; *manaḥ-ratham* – a daydream; *ca* – and; *ittham* – thus; *prāktanam* – previous; *na smarati* – does not remember; *asau* – he; *tatra* – in that (present body); *pūrvam* – the previous; *iva* – as if; *ātmānam* – himself; *apūrvam* – having no past; *ca* – and; *anupaśyati* – he views.

TRANSLATION

Just as a person experiencing a dream or daydream does not remember his previous dreams or daydreams, a person situated in his present body, although having existed prior to it, thinks that he has only recently come into being.

PURPORT

The objection may be raised that sometimes when experiencing a dream one actually remembers a previous dream. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura replies that by the mystic power of *jāti-smara* one can remember one’s previous body, and as is well known, “The exception establishes the rule.” Normally, conditioned souls do not perceive their past existence; they think, “I am six years old” or “I am thirty years old,” and “previous to this birth I did not exist.” In such material ignorance one cannot understand the actual situation of the soul.

TEXT 22.42

*indriyāyana-sṛṣṭyedaṁ
trai-vidhyaṁ bhāti vastuni
bahir-antar-bhidā-hetur
jano’saj-jana-kṛd yathā*

indriya-ayana – by the resting place of the senses (the mind); *sṛṣṭyā* – because of the creation (of identification with a new body); *idam* – this; *trai-vidhyam* – threefold variety (of high, middle and low class); *bhāti* – appears; *vastuni* – in the reality (the soul); *bahiḥ* – external; *antaḥ* – and internal;

bhidā – of the differences; *hetuḥ* – the cause; *janaḥ* – a person; *asat-jana* – of a bad person; *kṛt* – the progenitor; *yathā* – as.

TRANSLATION

Because the mind, which is the resting place of the senses, has created the identification with a new body, the threefold material variety of high, middle and low class appears as if present within the reality of the soul. Thus the self creates external and internal duality, just as a man might give birth to a bad son.

PURPORT

The wealth, beauty, strength, intelligence, fame and detachment of different bodies are considered to be excellent, normal or inferior according to the material situation. The spirit soul acquires a particular body and thus judges himself and others to be high, middle or low class according to their material situation. Actually, the eternal soul exists beyond material duality but falsely mistakes the material situation to be his own. The words *asaj-jana-kṛd yathā* are significant. A father may by nature be peaceful, but because his bad son gets into trouble the father is forced to defend his son and consider his son's enemies to be enemies of the entire family. Thus the bad son implicates the father in troublesome conflicts. Similarly, the spirit soul has no intrinsic problems, but by creating a false identification with the material body the soul becomes involved in the happiness and distress of the body. With this verse the Lord summarizes His discussion of the difference between the body and the soul.

TEXT 22.43

*nityadā hy aṅga bhūtāni
bhavanti na bhavanti ca
kālenālakṣya-vegena
sūkṣmatvāt tan na dṛśyate*

nityadā – constantly; *hi* – indeed; *aṅga* – My dear Uddhava; *bhūtāni* – created bodies; *bhavanti* – come into being; *na bhavanti* – go out of being; *ca* – and; *kālena* – by time; *alakṣya* – imperceptible; *vegena* – whose speed; *sūkṣmatvāt* – because of being very subtle; *tat* – that; *na dṛśyate* – is not seen.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, material bodies are constantly undergoing creation and destruction by the force of time, whose swiftness is imperceptible. But because of the subtle nature of time, no one sees this.

TEXT 22.44

*yathārciṣāṁ srotasāṁ ca
phalānām vā vanaspateḥ
tathaiva sarva-bhūtānām
vayo-'vasthādayaḥ kṛtāḥ*

yathā – as; *arciṣām* – of the flames of a candle; *srotasām* – of the currents of a river; *ca* – and; *phalānām* – of fruits; *vā* – or; *vanaspateḥ* – of a tree; *tathā* – thus; *eva* – certainly; *sarva-bhūtānām* – of all material bodies; *vayaḥ* – of different ages; *avasthā* – situations; *ādayaḥ* – and so on; *kṛtāḥ* – are created.

TRANSLATION

The different stages of transformation of all material bodies occur just like those of the flame of a candle, the current of a river, or the fruits of a tree.

PURPORT

The wavering flame of a candle sometimes waxes brightly and again becomes weak. Finally it vanishes altogether. The waves of a flowing river rise and fall, creating innumerable shapes and patterns. The fruits of a tree gradually take birth, grow, ripen, sweeten and eventually rot and die. Similarly, one can easily understand that one’s own body is undergoing constant transformation, and that the body is certainly subject to old age, disease and death. At different times of life the body exhibits degrees of sexual potency, physical strength, desire, wisdom and so on. As the body grows old, physical strength diminishes, but one’s knowledge may increase even as the body undergoes such transformation.

Material birth and death occur within the realm of segmented time. The birth, creation or production of a material object immediately connects it with a segmented sequence of subtle time within the material world. Thus its destruction or death is inevitable. The irresistible force of time moves so subtly that only the most intelligent can perceive it. Just as the candle flame gradually diminishes, as the flowing currents move within the river or as fruits gradually ripen on a tree, the material body is steadily moving toward inevitable death. The temporary body should therefore never be confused with the eternal, unchanging spirit soul.

TEXT 22.45

*so’yaṁ dīpo’rciṣāṁ yadvat
srotasāṁ tad idam jālam
so’yaṁ pumān iti nṛṇām
mṛṣā gīr dhīr mṛṣāyuṣām*

saḥ – this; *ayam* – the same; *dīpaḥ* – light; *arciṣām* – of the radiation of a lamp; *yadvat* – just as; *srotasām* – of the currents flowing in a river; *tad* – that; *idam* – the same; *jālam* – water; *saḥ* – this; *ayam* – the same; *pumān* – person; *iti* – thus; *nṛṇām* – of men; *mṛṣā* – false; *gīḥ* – statement; *dhīḥ* – thought; *mṛṣā-āyuṣām* – of those who are wasting their life.

TRANSLATION

Although the illumination of a lamp consists of innumerable rays of light undergoing constant creation, transformation and destruction, a person with illusory intelligence who sees the light for a moment will speak falsely, saying, “This is the light of the lamp.” As one observes a flowing river, ever-new water passes by and goes far

away, yet a foolish person, observing one point in the river, falsely states, “This is the water of the river.” Similarly, although the material body of a human being is constantly undergoing transformation, those who are simply wasting their lives falsely think and say that each particular stage of the body is the person’s real identity.

PURPORT

Although one may say, “This is *the* light of the lamp,” there are innumerable rays of light being created, transformed and destroyed at every moment; and although one may speak of *the* water of the river, there is an ever-new supply of different water molecules passing by. Similarly, when one meets a young child, one accepts that particular transitory phase of the body as the actual identity of the person, considering him to be a child. One also considers an old body to be an old person. In fact, however, the material body of a human being, just like the waves of a river or the radiation of a lamp, is merely a transformation of the three modes of material nature, the potency of the Supreme Lord. The real identity of a person is spirit soul, part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but as Lord Kṛṣṇa proves in this verse, a conditioned soul is incapable of observing or understanding the subtle movements of time. With the gross vision of material consciousness one cannot ascertain the subtle segments of material manifestation, which are impelled by the Lord Himself as time. The word *mṛṣāyuṣām* in this verse indicates those who are uselessly wasting their time in ignorance without understanding the instructions of the Lord. Such persons gullibly accept any particular phase of the body to be the actual identity of the spirit soul within the body. Because the spirit soul is not subject to material transformation, when he engages himself in the eternal variegated pleasure of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, loving service to the Supreme Lord, he will experience no further ignorance and suffering.

TEXT 22.46

*mā svasya karma-bījena
jāyate so’py ayam pumān
mriyate vāmaro bhrāntyā
yathāgnir dāru-saṁyutaḥ*

mā – does not; *svasya* – of the self; *karma-bījena* – by the seed of his activities; *jāyate* – take birth; *saḥ* – he; *api* – indeed; *ayam* – this; *pumān* – personality; *mriyate* – dies; *vā* – or; *amaraḥ* – immortal; *bhrāntyā* – because of illusion; *yathā* – as; *agniḥ* – fire; *dāru* – with wood; *saṁyutaḥ* – joined.

TRANSLATION

A person does not actually take birth out of the seed of past activities, nor, being immortal, does he die. By illusion the living being appears to be born and to die, just as fire in connection with firewood appears to begin and then cease to exist.

PURPORT

The element fire exists perpetually within the material creation, but in connection with a particular piece of wood fire apparently comes into existence and ceases to exist. Similarly, the living entity is eternal, but in connection with a particular body apparently takes birth and dies. The reactions of *karma* thus impose an illusory suffering or enjoyment upon the living entity, but they do not cause the entity himself to change his eternal nature. In other words, *karma* represents a cycle of illusion in which each illusory activity produces another. Kṛṣṇa consciousness stops this cycle of *karma* by engaging the living being in spiritual activities in the loving service of the Lord. By such Kṛṣṇa consciousness one can escape the illusory chain of fruitive reactions.

TEXT 22.47

*niṣeka-garbha-janmāni
bālya-kaumāra-yauvanam
vayo-madhyam̐ jarā mṛtyur
ity avasthās tanor nava*

niṣeka - impregnation; *garbha* - gestation; *janmāni* - and birth; *bālya* - infancy; *kaumāra* - childhood; *yauvanam* - and youth; *vayaḥ-madhyam* - middle age; *jarā* - old age; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *iti* - thus; *avasthāḥ* - ages; *tanor* - of the body; *nava* - nine.

TRANSLATION

Impregnation, gestation, birth, infancy, childhood, youth, middle age, old age and death are the nine ages of the body.

TEXT 22.48

*etā manoratha-mayīr
hānyasyoccāvacās tanūḥ
guṇa-saṅgād upādatte
kvacit kaścij jahāti ca*

etāḥ - these; *manaḥ-rathaḥ-mayīḥ* - achieved by meditation of the mind; *ha* - certainly; *anyasya* - of the body (who is separate from the self); *ucca* - greater; *avacāḥ* - and lesser; *tanūḥ* - bodily conditions; *guṇa-saṅgāt* - because of associating with the modes of nature; *upādatte* - he accepts; *kvacit* - sometimes; *kaścit* - someone; *jahāti* - gives up; *ca* - and.

TRANSLATION

Although the material body is different from the self, because of the ignorance due to material association one falsely identifies oneself with the superior and inferior bodily conditions. Sometimes a fortunate person is able to give up such mental concoction.

PURPORT

One who has received the special mercy of the Supreme Lord is able to give up the mental concoction of bodily identification. Thus there is always a chance of escaping the cycle of birth and death.

TEXT 22.49

*ātmanaḥ pitṛ-putrābhyām
anumeyau bhavāpyayau
na bhavāpyaya-vastūnām
abhijñō dvaya-lakṣaṇaḥ*

ātmanaḥ – one’s own; *pitṛ* – from the father or ancestors; *putrābhyām* – and the son; *anumeyau* – can be surmised; *bhava* – birth; *apyayau* – and death; *na* – is no longer; *bhava-apyaya-vastūnām* – of all that is subject to generation and destruction; *abhijñāḥ* – one who is in proper knowledge; *dvaya* – by these dualities; *lakṣaṇaḥ* – characterized.

TRANSLATION

By the death of one’s father or grandfather one can surmise one’s own death, and by the birth of one’s son one can understand the condition of one’s own birth. A person who thus realistically understands the creation and destruction of material bodies is no longer subject to these dualities.

PURPORT

The Lord has described the nine stages of the material body, beginning with impregnation, gestation and birth. One may argue that a living entity cannot remember his presence in the mother’s womb nor his birth and early infancy. The Lord therefore states here that one can experience these phases of bodily existence by studying one’s own child. Similarly, although one may hope to live forever, by experiencing the death of one’s father, grandfather or great-grandfather, one has definite proof that the material body will die. A sober person, knowing the soul to be eternal, therefore gives up false identification with the temporary, unreliable body and takes shelter of the devotional service of the Lord. By this process one can escape the artificial imposition of birth and death.

TEXT 22.50

*taror bīja-vipākābhyām
yo vidvāñ janma-saṁyamau
taror vilakṣaṇo draṣṭā
evam draṣṭā tanoḥ pṛthak*

taroḥ – of a tree; *bīja* – (birth from) its seed; *vipākābhyām* – (destruction subsequent to) maturity; *yaḥ* – one who; *vidvān* – in knowledge; *janma* – of birth; *saṁyamau* – and death; *taroḥ* – from the tree; *vilakṣaṇaḥ* – distinct; *draṣṭā* – the witness; *evam* – in the same way; *draṣṭā* – the witness; *tanoḥ* – of the material body; *pṛthak* – is separate.

TRANSLATION

One who observes the birth of a tree from its seed and the ultimate death of the tree after maturity certainly remains a distinct

observer separate from the tree. In the same way, the witness of the birth and death of the material body remains separate from it.

PURPORT

As a reference to trees, *vipāka* indicates the final transformation called death. In reference to other types of plants such as rice, *vipāka* indicates the stage of maturity, in which death also occurs. Thus by common observation one can understand the actual position of one's material body and one's own position as the transcendental observer.

TEXT 22.51

*prakṛter evam ātmānam
avivicyābudhaḥ pumān
tattvena sparśa-sammūḍhaḥ
saṁsāram pratipadyate*

prakṛteḥ – from material nature; *evam* – in this way; *ātmānam* – the self; *avivicya* – failing to distinguish; *abudhaḥ* – the unintelligent; *pumān* – person; *tattvena* – because of thinking (material things) to be real; *sparśa* – by material contact; *sammūḍhaḥ* – completely bewildered; *saṁsāram* – the cycle of material existence; *pratipadyate* – attains.

TRANSLATION

An unintelligent man, failing to distinguish himself from material nature, thinks nature to be real. By contact with it he becomes completely bewildered and enters into the cycle of material existence.

PURPORT

A similar verse is found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.7.5):

*yayā sammohito jīva
ātmānam tri-guṇātmakam
paro'pi manute'nartham
tat-kṛtam cābhipadyate*

“Due to this external energy, the living entity, although transcendental to the three modes of material nature, thinks of himself as a material product and thus undergoes the reactions of material miseries.”

TEXT 22.52

*sattva-saṅgād ṛṣin devān
rajasāsura-mānuṣān
tamasā bhūta-tiryaktvaṁ
bhrāmito yāti karmabhiḥ*

sattva-saṅgāt – by association with the mode of goodness; *ṛṣin* – to the sages; *devān* – to the demigods; *rajasā* – by the mode of passion; *asura* – to the demons; *mānuṣān* – and to human beings; *tamasā* – by the mode of ignorance; *bhūta* – to the ghostly spirits; *tiryaktvaṁ* – or the animal kingdom; *bhrāmitaḥ* – made to wander; *yāti* – he goes; *karmabhiḥ* – because of his fruitive activities.

TRANSLATION

Made to wander because of his fruitive work, the conditioned soul, by contact with the mode of goodness, takes birth among the sages or demigods. By contact with the mode of passion he becomes a demon or human being, and by association with the mode of ignorance he takes birth as a ghost or in the animal kingdom.

PURPORT

The word *tiryaktvam* means “the status of an animal,” which includes all lower forms of life, such as beasts, birds, insects, fish and plants.

TEXT 22.53

*nṛtyato gāyataḥ paśyan
yathaivānukaroti tān
evam buddhi-guṇān paśyann
anīho'py anukāryate*

nṛtyataḥ – persons who are dancing; *gāyataḥ* – and singing; *paśyan* – observing; *yathā* – just as; *eva* – indeed; *anukaroti* – imitates; *tān* – them; *evam* – thus; *buddhi* – of the material intelligence; *guṇān* – the acquired qualities; *paśyan* – seeing; *anīhaḥ* – although not himself engaged in activity; *api* – nevertheless; *anukāryate* – is made to imitate.

TRANSLATION

Just as one may imitate persons whom one sees dancing and singing, similarly the soul, although never the doer of material activities, becomes captivated by material intelligence and is thus forced to imitate its qualities.

PURPORT

Sometimes people are captivated by professional singers and dancers and imitate within their minds the musical rhythms and melodies of the performers along with their romantic, humorous or heroic emotions. People sing songs heard on the radio and imitate dances and dramatic performances seen on television or in movies and theaters, entering into the emotions and art of the performer. The conditioned soul is similarly captivated by the concoctions of the material mind and intelligence, which convince him that he can become the enjoyer of the material world. Although different from the material body and never the actual performer of its activities, the conditioned soul is induced to engage his body in material activities, which entangle him in the cycle of birth and death. One should not accept the illicit propositions of material intelligence, but rather should engage himself fully in the service of the Lord in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXTS 22.54-55

*yathāmbhasā pracalatā
taravo'pi calā iva
cakṣuṣā bhrāmyamāṇena
dṛśyate bhramatīva bhūḥ*

*yathā manoratha-dhiyo
viṣayānubhavo mṛṣā
svapna-dṛṣṭāś ca dāśārha
tathā saṁsāra ātmanaḥ*

yathā - as; *ambhasā* - by water; *pracalatā* - moving, agitated; *taravaḥ* - trees; *api* - indeed; *calāḥ* - moving; *iva* - as if; *cakṣuṣā* - by the eyes; *bhrāmyamāṇena* - which are being turned about; *dṛśyate* - appears; *bhramatī* - moving; *iva* - as if; *bhūḥ* - the earth; *yathā* - as; *manaḥ-ratha* - of a mental fantasy; *dhiyaḥ* - the ideas; *viṣaya* - of sense gratification; *anubhavaḥ* - the experience; *mṛṣā* - false; *svapna-dṛṣṭāḥ* - things seen in a dream; *ca* - and; *dāśārha* - O descendant of Daśārha; *tathā* - thus; *saṁsāraḥ* - the material life; *ātmanaḥ* - of the soul.

TRANSLATION

The soul's material life, his experience of sense gratification, is actually false, O descendant of Daśārha, just like trees' appearance of quivering when the trees are reflected in agitated water, or like the earth's appearance of spinning due to one's spinning his eyes around, or like the world of a fantasy or dream.

PURPORT

Trees appear to be swaying when reflected in agitated water, and similarly, when one is sitting on a moving boat the trees on the shore appear to be moving. When the wind whips up the water, creating waves, the water appears to have movement of its own, although it is actually being moved by the wind. The conditioned soul in material life does not perform any activities, but rather the material body, with the consent of the illusioned living entity, is being moved by the modes of nature. One imposes this external movement upon oneself, considering oneself to be dancing, singing, running, dying, conquering and so on, although these are merely interactions of the external body with the modes of nature.

TEXT 22.56

*arthe hy avidyamāne'pi
saṁsṛtir na nivartate
dhyāyato viṣayān asya
svapne'narthāgamo yathā*

arthe - in truth; *hi* - certainly; *avidyamāne* - not existing; *api* - even though; *saṁsṛtiḥ* - material existence; *na nivartate* - does not stop; *dhyāyataḥ* - who is meditating; *viṣayān* - on the objects of sense gratification; *asya* - for him; *svapne* - in a dream; *anartha* - of unwanted things; *āgamaḥ* - the coming; *yathā* - just as.

TRANSLATION

For one who is meditating on sense gratification, material life, although lacking factual existence, does not go away, just as the unpleasant experiences of a dream do not.

PURPORT

One may object that if Lord Kṛṣṇa insists that material life is false, then why should one endeavor to stop it? The Lord therefore explains here that although not factual, material life stubbornly continues for one addicted to sense gratification, just as a frightening dream continues for one merged in sleep. The word *avidyamāna*, “not existing,” means that material life is based on mental concoction, in which one thinks, “I am a man,” “I am a woman,” “I am a doctor,” “I am a senator,” “I am a street sweeper” and so on. A conditioned soul enthusiastically performs his activities based on the imaginary identification with the body. Thus although the spirit soul exists and the body exists, the false identification with the body does not exist. Material life, based on a false idea, has no factual existence.

After one awakens from a dream, the dim reflection of the dream may linger in one’s memory. Similarly, one engaging in the devotional service of the Lord may be troubled sometimes by the dim reflection of sinful life. One should therefore become strong in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by hearing the Lord’s instructions to Śrī Uddhava.

TEXT 22.57

*tasmād uddhava mā bhuñkṣva
viṣayān asad-indriyaiḥ
ātmāgrahaṇa-nirbhātam
paśya vaikalpikam bhramam*

tasmāt – therefore; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *mā bhuñkṣva* – do not enjoy; *viṣayān* – the objects of sense gratification; *asad* – impure; *indriyaiḥ* – with senses; *ātma* – of the self; *agrahaṇa* – inability to realize; *nirbhātam* – in which is manifest; *paśya* – see it; *vaikalpikam* – based on material duality; *bhramam* – the illusion.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O Uddhava, do not try to enjoy sense gratification with the material senses. See how illusion based on material dualities prevents one from realizing the self.

PURPORT

Everything that exists is the potency and property of the Supreme Lord, meant to be used in His loving service. Seeing material objects as separate from the Lord and thus meant to be possessed and enjoyed by oneself is called *vaikalpikam bhramam*, the illusion of material duality. When selecting one’s personal object of enjoyment, such as food, clothing, residence or vehicle, one considers the relative quality of the object to be acquired. Consequently, in material life one is in constant anxiety, trying to acquire the most excellent sense gratification for one’s personal pleasure. If one realizes everything as the property of the Lord, however, he will see everything as meant for the Lord’s pleasure. He will feel no personal anxiety, because he is satisfied simply to be engaged in the Lord’s loving service. It is not possible

to exploit the property of the Lord and at the same time advance in self-realization.

TEXTS 22.58-59

*kṣipto'vamānito'sadbhiḥ
pralabdho'sūyito'tha vā
tāḍitaḥ sanniruddho vā
vṛttyā vā parihāpitaḥ
niṣṭhyuto mūtrito vājñair
bahudhaivaṁ prakampitaḥ
śreyas-kāmaḥ kṛcchra-gata
ātmanātmānam uddharet*

kṣiptaḥ - insulted; *avamānitaḥ* - neglected; *asadbhiḥ* - by bad men; *pralabdhaḥ* - ridiculed; *asūyitaḥ* - envied; *atha vā* - or else; *tāḍitaḥ* - chastised; *sanniruddhaḥ* - tied up; *vā* - or; *vṛttyā* - of his means of livelihood; *vā* - or; *parihāpitaḥ* - deprived; *niṣṭhyutaḥ* - spat upon; *mūtritaḥ* - polluted with urine; *vā* - or; *vājñair* - by foolish men; *bahudhā* - repeatedly; *evam* - thus; *prakampitaḥ* - agitated; *śreyaḥ-kāmaḥ* - one who desires the highest goal in life; *kṛcchra-gataḥ* - experiencing difficulty; *ātmanā* - by his intelligence; *ātmānam* - himself; *uddharet* - should save.

TRANSLATION

Even though neglected, insulted, ridiculed or envied by bad men, or even though repeatedly agitated by being beaten, tied up or deprived of one's occupation, spat upon or polluted with urine by ignorant people, one who desires the highest goal in life should in spite of all these difficulties use his intelligence to keep himself safe on the spiritual platform.

PURPORT

Throughout history many of the above-mentioned inconveniences have been experienced by devotees of the Lord. One who is advanced in God consciousness does not allow himself to become obsessed with the material body even in such conditions, but rather keeps the mind fixed on the spiritual platform through proper intelligence.

TEXT 22.60

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
yathāivam anubudhyeyam
vada no vadatām vara*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca - Śrī Uddhava said; *yathā* - how; *evam* - thus; *anubudhyeyam* - I may properly understand; *vada* - please speak; *naḥ* - to us; *vadatām* - of all speakers; *vara* - O You who are the best.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: O best of all speakers, please explain to me how I may properly understand this.

TEXT 22.61

*su-duḥsaham imaṁ manya
ātmany asad-atikramam
viduṣām api viśvātman
prakṛtir hi balīyasī
ṛte tvad-dharma-niratān
śāntāṁs te caraṇālayān*

su-duḥsaham - most difficult to tolerate; *imaṁ* - this; *manya* - I consider; *ātmani* - upon oneself; *asad* - by ignorant people; *atikramam* - the attacks; *viduṣām* - for those who are learned; *api* - even; *viśva-ātman* - O soul of the universe; *prakṛtiḥ* - one's conditioned personality; *hi* - certainly; *balīyasī* - very strong; *ṛte* - except for; *tvad-dharma* - in Your devotional service; *niratān* - those who are fixed; *śāntān* - peaceful; *te* - Your; *caraṇa-ālayān* - who reside at the lotus feet.

TRANSLATION

O soul of the universe, the conditioning of one's personality in material life is very strong, and therefore it is very difficult even for learned men to tolerate the offenses committed against them by ignorant people. Only Your devotees, who are fixed in Your loving service and who have achieved peace by residing at Your lotus feet, are able to tolerate such offenses.

PURPORT

Unless one becomes advanced in the process of hearing and chanting the glories of the Supreme Lord, theoretical learning cannot make one actually saintly. One's conditioned personality, the result of long material association, is very difficult to overcome. Therefore we should humbly take shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, who has so wonderfully explained to Śrī Uddhava the real meaning of knowledge.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-second Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Enumeration of the Elements of Material Creation."

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

The Song of the Avantī Brāhmaṇa

This chapter tells the story of a mendicant *sannyāsī* from the Avantī country as an example of how one should tolerate the disturbances and offenses created by evil persons.

The harsh words of uncouth persons pierce the heart even more severely than arrows. Yet a mendicant *brāhmaṇa* from the city of Avantī, even while being attacked by wicked men, considered this trouble to be simply the consequence of his own past deeds and tolerated it with utmost sobriety. Previously the *brāhmaṇa* had been an agriculturalist and merchant. He had been extremely greedy, miserly and prone to anger. As a result, his wife, sons, daughters, relatives and servants were all deprived of every kind of enjoyment and gradually came to behave unaffectionately toward him. In due course of time, thieves, family members and providence took away the sum total of his wealth. Finding himself without any property and abandoned by everyone, the *brāhmaṇa* developed a deep sense of renunciation.

He considered how the earning and preservation of wealth involve great effort, fear, anxiety and confusion. Because of wealth, there arise fifteen unwanted items – thievery, violence, lying, deception, lust, anger, pride, feverishness, disagreement, hatred, distrust, conflict, attachment to women, gambling and intoxication. When this meditation arose in his heart, the *brāhmaṇa* could understand that the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari had somehow become satisfied with him. He felt that only because the Lord was pleased with him had the apparently unfavorable turn of events in his life occurred. He was grateful that a sense of detachment had arisen in his heart and considered it the factual means for delivering his soul. In this condition he determined to engage the duration of his life in the worship of Lord Hari and thus accepted the mendicant order of *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa*. Subsequently, he would enter different villages to beg charity, but the people would harass and disturb him. But he simply tolerated all this, remaining firm as a mountain. He remained fixed in his chosen spiritual practice and sang a song renowned as the *Bhikṣu-gīta*.

Neither mortal persons, the demigods, the soul, the ruling planets, the reactions of work nor time are the causes of one's happiness and distress. Rather, the mind alone is their cause, because it is the mind that makes the spirit soul wander in the cycle of material life. The real purpose of all charity, religiosity and so forth is to bring the mind under control. A person who has already composed his mind in meditation has no need for these other processes, and for a person who is incapable of fixing his mind they are of no practical use. The false conception of material ego binds the transcendental soul to material sense objects. The Avantī *brāhmaṇa* therefore became determined to bring himself over the insurmountable ocean of material existence by rendering service to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, Mukunda, with the same perfect faith in the Lord exhibited by the great devotees of the past.

Only when one can focus his intelligence on the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead can the mind be completely subdued; this is the essence of all practical prescriptions for spiritual advancement.

TEXT 23.1

*śrī-bādarāyaṇir uvāca
sa evam āśaṁsita uddhavana
bhāgavata-mukhyena dāśārha-mukhyaḥ
sabhājayan bhṛtya-vaco mukundaś
tam ābabhāṣe śravaṇīya-vīryaḥ*

śrī-bādarāyaṇiḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *saḥ* – He; *evam* – thus; *āśaṁsitaḥ* – respectfully requested; *uddhavana* – by Uddhava; *bhāgavata* – of the devotees; *mukhyena* – by the greatest; *dāśārha* – of the dynasty of Dāśārha (the Yadus); *mukhyaḥ* – the chief; *sabhājayan* – praising; *bhṛtya* – of His servant; *vacaḥ* – the words; *mukundaḥ* – Lord Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa; *tam* – to him; *ābabhāṣe* – began to speak; *śravaṇīya* – most worthy of hearing about; *vīryaḥ* – whose omnipotency.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Lord Mukunda, the chief of the Dāśārhas, having thus been respectfully requested by the best of His devotees, Śrī Uddhava, first acknowledged the fitness of his servant’s statements. Then the Lord, whose glorious exploits are most worthy of being heard, began to reply to him.

TEXT 23.2

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
bārhaspatya sa nāsty atra
sādhur vai durjaneritaiḥ
duraktair bhinnam ātmānam
yaḥ samādhātum īśvaraḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *bārhaspatya* – O disciple of Bṛhaspati; *saḥ* – he; *na asti* – there is not; *atra* – in this world; *sādhur* – a saintly person; *vai* – indeed; *durjana* – by uncivilized men; *īritaiḥ* – used; *duruktaiḥ* – by insulting words; *bhinnam* – disturbed; *ātmānam* – his mind; *yaḥ* – who; *samādhātum* – to compose; *īśvaraḥ* – is capable.

TRANSLATION

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: O disciple of Bṛhaspati, there is virtually no saintly man in this world capable of resettling his own mind after it has been disturbed by the insulting words of uncivilized men.

PURPORT

In the modern age there is widespread propaganda ridiculing the path of spiritual realization, and thus even saintly devotees are disturbed to see the progress of human society being obstructed. Still, a devotee of the Lord must tolerate any personal insult, though he cannot tolerate offense against the Lord Himself or the Lord’s pure devotee.

TEXT 23.3

*na tathā tapyate viddhaḥ
pumān bāṇaiḥ tu marma-gaiḥ
yathā tudanti marma-sthā
hy asatām paruṣeṣavaḥ*

na – not; *tathā* – in the same way; *tapyate* – is caused pain; *viddhaḥ* – pierced; *pumān* – a person; *bāṇaiḥ* – by arrows; *tu* – however; *marma-gaiḥ* – going to the heart; *yathā* – as; *tudanti* – prick; *marma-sthāḥ* – attaching within the heart; *hi* – indeed; *asatām* – of evil persons; *paruṣa* – harsh (words); *iṣavaḥ* – the arrows.

TRANSLATION

Sharp arrows which pierce one's chest and reach the heart do not cause as much suffering as the arrows of harsh, insulting words that become lodged within the heart when spoken by uncivilized men.

TEXT 23.4

*kathayanti mahat puṇyam
itihāsam ihoddhava
tam ahaṁ varṇayiṣyāmi
nibodha su-samāhitaḥ*

kathayanti – they tell; *mahat* – greatly; *puṇyam* – pious; *itihāsam* – story; *iha* – in this regard; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *tam* – that; *ahaṁ* – I; *varṇayiṣyāmi* – will describe; *nibodha* – please listen; *su-samāhitaḥ* – with careful attention.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, in this regard a most pious story is told, and I shall now describe it to you. Please listen with careful attention.

PURPORT

The Lord will now relate to Uddhava a historical account which teaches how to tolerate the insults of others.

TEXT 23.5

*kenacid bhikṣuṇā gītaṁ
paribhūtena durjanaiḥ
smaratā dhṛti-yuktena
vipākam nija-karmaṇām*

kenacit – by a certain; *bhikṣuṇā* – *sannyāsī*; *gītam* – sung; *paribhūtena* – who was insulted; *durjanaiḥ* – by impious persons; *smaratā* – remembering; *dhṛti-yuktena* – fixing his resolution; *vipākam* – the consequences; *nija-karmaṇām* – of his own past activities.

TRANSLATION

Once a certain sannyāsī was insulted in many ways by impious men. However, with determination he remembered that he was suffering the fruit of his own previous karma. I will narrate to you his story and that which he spoke.

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments as follows. “Often those who give up the materialistic path and devote themselves to renunciation are attacked by impious persons. This analysis, however, is superficial, since the punishment is actually the cumulative result of one’s past *karma*. Some renunciants show lack of tolerance when presented with the remnants of their previous sins and thus are forced to enter again onto the path of impious life. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu therefore instructs that one should become as tolerant as a tree. If a neophyte on the path of devotional service to the Lord’s pure devotees is attacked by envious persons, he must accept it as a consequence of his previous fruitive activities. One should be intelligent and avoid future unhappiness by rejecting the ethic of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. If one refuses to enter into enmity with envious men, they will automatically leave him alone.”

TEXT 23.6

*avantiṣu dvijaḥ kaścid
āsīt āḍhyatamaḥ śriyā
vārtā-vṛttiḥ kadaryaḥ tu
kāmī lubdho’ti-kopanaḥ*

avantiṣu – in the Avantī country; *dvijaḥ* – brāhmaṇa; *kaścit* – a certain; *āsīt* – there was; *āḍhya-tamaḥ* – very rich; *śriyā* – with opulences; *vārtā* – by business; *vṛttiḥ* – earning his livelihood; *kadaryaḥ* – miserly; *tu* – but; *kāmī* – lusty; *lubdhaḥ* – greedy; *ati-kopanaḥ* – very prone to anger.

TRANSLATION

In the country of Avantī there once lived a certain brāhmaṇa who was very rich and gifted with all opulences, and who was engaged in the occupation of commerce. But he was a miserly person - lusty, greedy and very prone to anger.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the Avantī country is the district of Malwa. This *brāhmaṇa* was extremely wealthy, doing business in agriculture, banking and so on. Being a miser, he suffered agony when his hard-earned wealth was lost, as will be described by the Lord Himself.

TEXT 23.7

*jñātayo’tithayas tasya
vān-mātreṇāpi nārcitāḥ
śūnyāvasatha ātmāpi
kāle kāmair anarcitaḥ*

jñātayaḥ – the relatives; *atithayaḥ* – and guests; *tasya* – his; *vāk-mātreṇa api* – even by words; *na arcitāḥ* – were not shown respect; *śūnya-avasathe* – in his home deprived of religiosity and sense gratification; *ātmā* – himself; *api* – even; *kāle* – at the suitable times; *kāmaiḥ* – with sensory enjoyment; *anarcitaḥ* – not gratified.

TRANSLATION

In his home, devoid of religiosity and lawful sense gratification, the family members and guests were never properly respected, even with words. He would not even allow sufficient gratification for his own body at the suitable times.

TEXT 23.8

*duḥśīlasya kadaryasya
druhyante putra-bāndhavāḥ
dārā duhitaro bhṛtyā
viṣaṇṇā nācaran priyam*

duḥśīlasya – having a bad character; *kadaryasya* – toward the miser; *druhyante* – they developed enmity; *putra* – his sons; *bāndhavāḥ* – and in-laws; *dārāḥ* – his wife; *duhitaraḥ* – his daughters; *bhṛtyāḥ* – the servants; *viṣaṇṇāḥ* – disgusted; *na ācaran* – they did not act; *priyam* – affectionately.

TRANSLATION

Since he was so hardhearted and miserly, his sons, in-laws, wife, daughters and servants began to feel inimical toward him. Becoming disgusted, they would never treat him with affection.

TEXT 23.9

*tasyaivaṁ yakṣa-vittasya
cyutasyobhaya-lokataḥ
dharma-kāma-vihīnasya
cukrudhuḥ pañca-bhāgiṇaḥ*

tasya – at him; *evam* – in this way; *yakṣa-vittasya* – who simply kept his wealth without spending it, like the Yakṣas, who guard the treasury of Kuvera; *cyutasya* – who was deprived; *ubhaya* – of both; *lokataḥ* – worlds (this life and the next); *dharma* – religiosity; *kāma* – and sense gratification; *vihīnasya* – lacking; *cukrudhuḥ* – they became angry; *pañca-bhāgiṇaḥ* – the deities of the five prescribed household sacrifices.

TRANSLATION

In this way the presiding deities of the five family sacrifices became angry at the brāhmaṇa, who, being niggardly, guarded his wealth like a Yakṣa, who had no good destination either in this world or the next, and who was totally deprived of religiosity and sense enjoyment.

TEXT 23.10

*tad-avadhyāna-visrasta-
puṇya-skandhasya bhūri-da
artho'py agacchan nidhanam
bahv-āyāsa-pariśramaḥ*

tat – of them; *avadhyāna* – because of his neglect; *visrasta* – depleted; *puṇya* – of piety; *skandhasya* – whose portion; *bhūri-da* – O magnanimous Uddhava; *arthaḥ* – the wealth; *api* – indeed; *agacchat nidhanam* – became lost; *bahu* – much; *āyāsa* – of endeavor; *pariśramaḥ* – which consisted only of the labor.

TRANSLATION

O magnanimous Uddhava, by his neglect of these demigods he depleted his stock of piety and all his wealth. The accumulation of his repeated exhaustive endeavors was totally lost.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇa*'s stock of piety became like a withered branch that no longer gives fruits or flowers. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments that the *brāhmaṇa* had a trace of piety directed at the Supreme Lord with hopes of liberation. That pure portion of the branch of his piety remained unwithered, eventually giving the fruit of knowledge.

TEXT 23.11

*jñātyo jagṛhuḥ kiñcit
kiñcid dasyava uddhava
daivataḥ kālataḥ kiñcid
brahma-bandhor nṛ-pārthivāt*

jñātayaḥ – the relatives; *jagṛhuḥ* – took away; *kiñcit* – some; *kiñcid* – some; *dasyavaḥ* – thieves; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *daivataḥ* – by providence; *kālataḥ* – by time; *kiñcid* – some; *brahma-bandhoḥ* – of the so-called *brāhmaṇa*; *nṛ* – by common men; *pārthivāt* – and by elevated government officials.

TRANSLATION

Some of the wealth of this so-called brāhmaṇa was taken away by his relatives, My dear Uddhava, some by thieves, some by the whims of providence, some by the effects of time, some by ordinary men and some by government authorities.

PURPORT

It appears that even though the so-called *brāhmaṇa* was determined not to spend his money, his wife and other relatives managed to squeeze out a portion. According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, *providence* here refers to fires in the home and other types of occasional misfortune. *Effects of time* here refers to the destruction of agricultural crops through seasonal irregularities and other such occurrences. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura points out that one should not merely proclaim oneself to be a *brāhmaṇa* but should actually understand one's original identity as a servant of the Lord. One declaring himself to be a *brāhmaṇa* but maintaining a materialistic

mentality is not a real *brāhmaṇa*, but rather a *brahma-bandhu*, or so-called *brāhmaṇa*. The humble devotees of Lord Viṣṇu, following the indications of the Vedic scriptures, refer to themselves as unfortunate and unable to understand the kingdom of God; they do not proudly proclaim themselves to be *brāhmaṇas*. Those who are wise, however, know that such humble devotees are actually *brāhmaṇas* whose hearts are cleansed by the pure mode of goodness.

TEXT 23.12

*sa evaṁ draviṇe naṣṭe
dharma-kāma-vivarjitaḥ
upekṣitaś ca sva-janaiś
cintām āpa duratyayām*

saḥ – he; *evam* – thus; *draviṇe* – when his property; *naṣṭe* – was lost; *dharma* – religiosity; *kāma* – and sense enjoyment; *vivarjitaḥ* – devoid of; *upekṣitaḥ* – neglected; *ca* – and; *sva-janaiḥ* – by his family members; *cintām* – anxiety; *āpa* – he obtained; *duratyayām* – insurmountable.

TRANSLATION

Finally, when his property was completely lost, he who never engaged in religiosity or sense enjoyment became ignored by his family members. Thus he began to feel unbearable anxiety.

TEXT 23.13

*tasyaivaṁ dhyāyato dīrgham
naṣṭa-rāyas tapasvinaḥ
khidyato bāṣpa-kaṅṭhasya
nirvedaḥ su-mahān abhūt*

tasya – of him; *evam* – thus; *dhyāyataḥ* – thinking; *dīrgham* – for a long time; *naṣṭa-rāyaḥ* – his wealth lost; *tapasvinaḥ* – experiencing agony; *khidyataḥ* – lamenting; *bāṣpa-kaṅṭhasya* – his throat choked with tears; *nirvedaḥ* – a sense of renunciation; *su-mahān* – very great; *abhūt* – arose.

TRANSLATION

Having lost all his wealth, he felt great pain and lamentation. His throat choked up with tears, and he meditated for a long time on his fortune. Then a powerful feeling of renunciation came over him.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇa* had previously been trained in pious life, but his past goodness was covered by his offensive behavior. Finally, his previous purity was reawakened within him.

TEXT 23.14

*sa cāhedam aho kaṣṭam
vṛthātmā me'nutāpitaḥ
na dharmāya na kāmāya
yasyārthāyāsa īdṛśaḥ*

saḥ – he; *ca* – and; *āha* – spoke; *idam* – this; *aho* – alas; *kaṣṭam* – the painful misfortune; *vṛthā* – vainly; *ātmā* – the self; *me* – my; *anutāpitaḥ* – distressed; *na* – not; *dharmāya* – for religiosity; *na* – nor; *kāmāya* – for sense gratification; *yasya* – whose; *artha* – for wealth; *āyāsaḥ* – labor; *īdṛśaḥ* – such as this.

TRANSLATION

The brāhmaṇa spoke as follows: O what great misfortune! I have simply tormented myself uselessly, struggling so hard for money that was not even intended for religiosity or material enjoyment.

TEXT 23.15

*prāyeṇārthāḥ kadaryāṇām
na sukhāya kadācana
iha cātmapatāpāya
mṛtasya narakāya ca*

prāyeṇa – generally; *arthāḥ* – items of wealth; *kadaryāṇām* – of those who are misers; *na* – do not; *sukhāya* – lead to happiness; *kadācana* – at any time; *iha* – in this life; *ca* – both; *ātma* – of himself; *upatāpāya* – result in the torment; *mṛtasya* – and of him when he has died; *narakāya* – in the attainment of hell; *ca* – and.

TRANSLATION

Generally, the wealth of misers never allows them any happiness. In this life it causes their self-torment, and when they die it sends them to hell.

PURPORT

A miser is afraid to spend his money even for obligatory religious and social duties. Offending God and people in general, he goes to hell.

TEXT 23.16

*yaśo yaśasvinām śuddham
ślāghyā ye guṇinām guṇāḥ
lobhaḥ sv-alpo’pi tān hanti
śvitro rūpam ivepsitam*

yaśaḥ – the fame; *yaśasvinām* – of those who are famous; *śuddham* – pure; *ślāghyāḥ* – praiseworthy; *ye* – which; *guṇinām* – of those endowed with good qualities; *guṇāḥ* – the qualities; *lobhaḥ* – greed; *su-alpaḥ* – a little; *api* – even; *tān* – these; *hanti* – destroys; *śvitraḥ* – white leprosy; *rūpam* – physical beauty; *iva* – just as; *īpsitam* – enchanting.

TRANSLATION

Whatever pure fame is possessed by the famous and whatever praiseworthy qualities are found in the virtuous are destroyed by even a small amount of greed, just as one’s attractive physical beauty is ruined by a trace of white leprosy.

TEXT 23.17

*arthasya sādhanē siddhe
utkarṣe rakṣaṇe vyaye
nāśopabhoga āyāsaś
trāsaś cintā bhramo nṛṇām*

arthasya - of wealth; *sādhanē* - in the earning; *siddhe* - in the attainment; *utkarṣe* - in the increasing; *rakṣaṇe* - in the protecting; *vyaye* - in the expending; *nāśa* - in the loss; *upabhoge* - and in the enjoyment; *āyāsaḥ* - labor; *trāsaḥ* - fear; *cintā* - anxiety; *bhramaḥ* - confusion; *nṛṇām* - for men.

TRANSLATION

In the earning, attainment, increase, protection, expense, loss and enjoyment of wealth, all men experience great labor, fear, anxiety and delusion.

TEXTS 23.18-19

*steyam himsānṛtam dambhaḥ
kāmaḥ krodhaḥ smayo madaḥ
bhedo vairam aviśvāsaḥ
saṁspardhā vyasanāni ca
ete pañcadaśānarthā
hy artha-mūlā matā nṛṇām
tasmād anartham arthākhyam
śreyo-'rthī dūrataś tyajet*

steyam - theft; *himsā* - violence; *anṛtam* - lying; *dambhaḥ* - duplicity; *kāmaḥ* - lust; *krodhaḥ* - anger; *smayaḥ* - perplexity; *madaḥ* - pride; *bhedaḥ* - disagreement; *vairam* - enmity; *aviśvāsaḥ* - lack of faith; *saṁspardhā* - rivalry; *vyasanāni* - the dangers (coming from women, gambling and intoxication); *ca* - and; *ete* - these; *pañcadaśā* - fifteen; *anarthāḥ* - unwanted things; *hi* - indeed; *artha-mūlāḥ* - based on wealth; *matāḥ* - are known; *nṛṇām* - by men; *tasmāt* - therefore; *anartham* - that which is undesirable; *artha-ākhyam* - wealth, spoken of as if desirable; *śreyaḥ-arthī* - one who desires the ultimate benefit of life; *dūrataḥ* - at a great distance; *tyajet* - should leave.

TRANSLATION

Theft, violence, speaking lies, duplicity, lust, anger, perplexity, pride, quarreling, enmity, faithlessness, envy and the dangers caused by women, gambling and intoxication are the fifteen undesirable qualities that contaminate men because of greed for wealth. Although these qualities are undesirable, men falsely ascribe value to them. One desiring to achieve the real benefit of life should therefore remain aloof from undesirable material wealth.

PURPORT

The words *anartham arthākhyam*, or “undesirable wealth,” indicate wealth that cannot be efficiently engaged in the loving service of the Lord. Such superfluous money or property will undoubtedly pollute a man with all of the above-mentioned qualities and therefore should be given up.

TEXT 23.20

*bhidyanṭe bhrātaro dārāḥ
pitarāḥ suhr̥daḥ tathā
ekāsnigdḥāḥ kākiṇinā
sadyaḥ sarve'rayaḥ kṛtāḥ*

bhidyanṭe – they break off; *bhrātaraḥ* – the brothers; *dārāḥ* – wife; *pitarāḥ* – parents; *suhṛdaḥ* – friends; *tathā* – and; *eka* – as if one; *āsnigdḥāḥ* – very dear; *kākiṇinā* – by a small coin; *sadyaḥ* – immediately; *sarve* – all of them; *arayaḥ* – enemies; *kṛtāḥ* – made.

TRANSLATION

Even a man's brothers, wife, parents and friends united with him in love will immediately break off their affectionate relationships and become enemies over a single coin.

TEXT 23.21

*arthenālpīyasā hy ete
samrabdhā dīpta-manyavaḥ
tyajanty āśu spr̥dho ghnanti
sahasotsṛjya sauhṛdam*

arthena – by wealth; *alpīyasā* – insignificant; *hi* – even; *ete* – they; *samrabdhāḥ* – agitated; *dīpta* – inflamed; *manyavaḥ* – their anger; *tyajanti* – they give up; *āśu* – very quickly; *spr̥dhaḥ* – becoming quarrelsome; *ghnanti* – they destroy; *sahasā* – quickly; *utsṛjya* – rejecting; *sauhṛdam* – goodwill.

TRANSLATION

For even a small amount of money these relatives and friends become very agitated and their anger is inflamed. Acting as rivals, they quickly give up all sentiments of goodwill and will reject one at a moment's notice, even to the point of committing murder.

TEXT 23.22

*labdhvā janmāmara-prārthyam
mānuṣyam tad dvijāgryatām
tad anādṛtya ye svārtham
ghnanti yānti aśubhām gatim*

labdhvā – having attained; *janma* – the birth; *amara* – by the demigods; *prārthyam* – prayed for; *mānuṣyam* – human; *tat* – and in that; *dvija-āgryatām* – the status of being the best of the twice-born; *tad* – that; *anādṛtya* – not appreciating; *ye* – those who; *sva-artham* – their own best interest; *ghnanti* – destroy; *yānti* – they go; *aśubhām* – to an inauspicious; *gatim* – destination.

TRANSLATION

Those who obtain human life, which is prayed for even by the demigods, and in that human birth become situated as first-class brāhmaṇas, are extremely fortunate. If they disregard this important opportunity, they are certainly killing their own self-interest and thus achieve a most unfortunate end.

PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments as follows. “Human birth is better than that of the demigods, ghosts, spirits, animals, trees, lifeless stones, and so forth, because the demigods simply enjoy celestial pleasures, and in other forms of life there is excessive suffering. It is only in human life that one deeply considers one’s ultimate benefit in life. Human birth is therefore more desirable than even that of the demigods.” Within human life the position of a high-class *brāhmaṇa* is certainly most desirable. If a *brāhmaṇa*, however, gives up the devotional service of the Lord and works hard like a *śūdra* simply for the prestige of his community, he is certainly on the platform of material sense gratification. The special qualification of the *brāhmaṇas* is the spiritual knowledge by which they recognize every living entity to be an eternal servant of the Lord. A *brāhmaṇa*, free from false ego, thus feels himself lower than a blade of grass and tolerantly offers respect to all living entities. All human beings, and especially the *brāhmaṇas*, should avoid becoming killers of their own self-interest by neglecting Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the loving service of the Lord. Such neglect paves the way for future suffering.

TEXT 23.23

*svargāpavargayor dvāram
prāpya lokam imam pumān
draviṇe ko’nuṣajjeta
martyo’narthasya dhāmani*

svarga – of heaven; *apavargayoḥ* – and liberation; *dvāram* – the gateway; *prāpya* – achieving; *lokam* – the human life; *imam* – this; *pumān* – a person; *draviṇe* – to property; *kaḥ* – who; *anuṣajjeta* – will become attached; *martyaḥ* – prone to death; *anarthasya* – of worthlessness; *dhāmani* – in the realm.

TRANSLATION

What mortal man, having achieved this human life, which is the very gateway to both heaven and liberation, would willingly become attached to that abode of worthlessness, material property?

PURPORT

That which one intends to use for one’s personal sense gratification is called material property, whereas paraphernalia to be used in the Lord’s loving service is understood to be spiritual. One should give up all one’s material property by utilizing it completely in the devotional service of the Lord. A person who owns a luxurious mansion should install the Deity of the Lord and hold regular programs to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Similarly, wealth

should be used to build temples of the Lord and publish literature scientifically explaining the Personality of Godhead. One who blindly renounces material property without utilizing it in the service of the Lord does not understand that everything belongs to the Personality of Godhead. Such blind renunciation is based on the material idea that “This property could belong to me, but I don’t want it.” Everything, in fact, belongs to God; knowing this one neither tries to enjoy nor to reject the things of this world, but peacefully engages them in the service of the Lord.

TEXT 23.24

*devarṣi-pitr-bhūtāni
jñātīn bandhūnś ca bhāgīnaḥ
asamvibhajya cātmānam
yakṣa-vittaḥ pataty adhaḥ*

deva – the demigods; *ṛṣi* – sages; *pitr* – departed forefathers; *bhūtāni* – and living entities in general; *jñātīn* – one’s immediate relatives; *bandhūn* – extended family; *ca* – and; *bhāgīnaḥ* – to the shareholders; *asamvibhajya* – not distributing; *ca* – and; *ātmānam* – to oneself; *yakṣa-vittaḥ* – whose wealth is simply like that of a Yakṣa; *pataty* – he falls; *adhaḥ* – down.

TRANSLATION

One who fails to distribute his wealth to the proper shareholders - the demigods, sages, forefathers and ordinary living entities, as well as his immediate relatives, in-laws and own self - is maintaining his wealth simply like a Yakṣa and will fall down.

PURPORT

One who does not share his wealth with the above-mentioned authorized persons and does not even enjoy the wealth himself will certainly suffer unlimited problems in life.

TEXT 23.25

*vyarthayārthehayā vittam
pramattasya vayo balam
kuśalā yena sidhyanti
jaraṭhaḥ kim nu sādhye*

vyarthayā – useless; *artha* – for wealth; *īhayā* – by the endeavor; *vittam* – money; *pramattasya* – of the maddened; *vayaḥ* – youth; *balam* – strength; *kuśalāḥ* – those who are discriminating; *yena* – by means of which; *sidhyanti* – become perfect; *jaraṭhaḥ* – an old man; *kim* – what; *nu* – indeed; *sādhye* – can I achieve.

TRANSLATION

Discriminating persons are able to utilize their money, youth and strength to achieve perfection. But I have feverishly squandered these in the useless endeavor for further wealth. Now that I am an old man, what can I achieve?

TEXT 23.26

*kasmāt saṅkliśyate vidvān
vyarthayārthehayāsakṛt
kasyacin māyayā nūnaṁ
loko'yaṁ su-vimohitaḥ*

kasmāt – why; *saṅkliśyate* – suffers; *vidvān* – one who is wise; *vyarthayā* – vain; *artha-īhayā* – in the pursuit of wealth; *asakṛt* – constantly; *kasyacit* – of someone; *māyayā* – by the illusory potency; *nūnaṁ* – certainly; *lokaḥ* – the world; *ayaṁ* – this; *su-vimohitaḥ* – very much bewildered.

TRANSLATION

Why must an intelligent man suffer by his constant vain efforts to get wealth? Indeed, this whole world is most bewildered by someone's illusory potency.

TEXT 23.27

*kim dhanair dhana-dair vā kim
kāmair vā kāma-dair uta
mṛtyunā grasyamānasya
karmabhir vota janma-daiḥ*

kim – of what use; *dhanaiḥ* – are different kinds of wealth; *dhana-daiḥ* – the givers of wealth; *vā* – or; *kim* – what is the use; *kāmaiḥ* – of the objects of sense gratification; *vā* – or; *kāma-daiḥ* – those who give such sense gratification; *uta* – or; *mṛtyunā* – by death; *grasyamānasya* – for one who is being seized; *karmabhiḥ* – by fruitive activities; *vā uta* – or else; *janma-daiḥ* – which give him his next birth.

TRANSLATION

For one who is in the grips of death, what is the use of wealth or those who offer it, sense gratification or those who offer it, or, for that matter, any type of fruitive activity, which simply causes one to again take birth in the material world?

TEXT 23.28

*nūnaṁ me bhagavāṁs tuṣṭaḥ
sarva-deva-mayo hariḥ
yena nīto daśām etām
nirvedaś cātmanaḥ plavaḥ*

nūnaṁ – certainly; *me* – with Me; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tuṣṭaḥ* – is satisfied; *sarva-deva-mayaḥ* – who comprises all the demigods; *hariḥ* – Lord Viṣṇu; *yena* – by whom; *nītaḥ* – I have been brought; *daśām* – to the condition; *etām* – this; *nirvedaḥ* – detachment; *ca* – and; *ātmanaḥ* – of the self; *plavaḥ* – the boat (to carry me over the ocean of material suffering).

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, who contains within Himself all the demigods, must be satisfied with me. Indeed, He has brought me to this suffering condition and forced me to experience detachment, which is the boat to carry me over this ocean of material life.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇa* could understand that the demigods, who award different types of sense gratification as the result of one's fruitive activities, cannot bestow the highest benefit in life. When the *brāhmaṇa* lost all his property he could understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who comprises all the demigods, had given him the highest perfection, not by awarding sense gratification but by saving him from the ocean of material enjoyment. Being thus deprived of the opportunity to cultivate religiosity, wealth, sense gratification and liberation, the *brāhmaṇa* became detached, and transcendental knowledge awakened within his heart.

TEXT 23.29

*so'ham kālāvaśeṣeṇa
śoṣayiṣye'ṅgam ātmanaḥ
apramatto'khila-svārthe
yadi syāt siddha ātmani*

saḥ aham - I; *kāla-avaśeṣeṇa* - with whatever time remains; *śoṣayiṣye* - shall reduce to the minimum; *aṅgam* - this body; *ātmanaḥ* - my; *apramattaḥ* - unbewildered; *akhila* - entire; *sva-arthe* - in the real self-interest; *yadi* - if; *syāt* - there remains any (time); *siddhaḥ* - satisfied; *ātmani* - within myself.

TRANSLATION

If there is any time remaining in my life, I will perform austerities and force my body to subsist on the bare necessities. Without further confusion I shall pursue that which constitutes my entire self-interest in life, and I shall remain satisfied within the self.

TEXT 23.30

*tatra mām anumoderan
devās tri-bhuvaneśvarāḥ
muhūrtena brahma-lokaṁ
khaṭvāṅgaḥ samasādhayat*

tatra - in this regard; *mām* - with me; *anumoderan* - may they kindly be pleased; *devāḥ* - the demigods; *tri-bhuvana* - of the three worlds; *īśvarāḥ* - the controllers; *muhūrtena* - in a single moment; *brahmalokam* - the spiritual world; *khaṭvāṅga* - King Khaṭvāṅga; *samasādhayat* - achieved.

TRANSLATION

Thus may the presiding demigods of these three worlds kindly show their mercy upon me. Indeed, Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga was able to achieve the spiritual world in a single moment.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇa* of Avantī thought that although he was an old man who might die at any moment he could follow the example of Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga, who achieved the Lord's mercy in a single moment. Mahārāja Khaṭvāṅga, as described in the Second Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, fought valiantly on behalf of the demigods, and they offered the king any benediction he might desire. Khaṭvāṅga Mahārāja chose to find out the remaining duration of his life, which unfortunately was a single moment. The king therefore immediately surrendered to Lord Kṛṣṇa and achieved the spiritual world. The *brāhmaṇa* of Avantī desired to follow this example; with the blessings of the demigods, who are all devotees of the Lord, he hoped to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious before giving up his body.

TEXT 23.31

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ity abhipretya manasā
hy āvantyo dvija-sattamaḥ
unmucya hṛdaya-granthīn
śānto bhikṣur abhūn muniḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Lord said; *iti* - thus; *abhipretya* - concluding; *manasā* - within his mind; *hi* - indeed; *āvantyaḥ* - of the district of Avantī; *dvija-sat-tamaḥ* - now the most pious *brāhmaṇa*; *unmucya* - untying; *hṛdaya* - in his heart; *granthīn* - the knots (of desire); *śāntaḥ* - peaceful; *bhikṣuḥ* - a mendicant *sannyāsī*; *abhūt* - he became; *muniḥ* - silent.

TRANSLATION

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa continued: His mind thus determined, that most excellent Avantī brāhmaṇa was able to untie the knots of desire within his heart. He then assumed the role of a peaceful and silent sannyāsī mendicant.

TEXT 23.32

sa cacāra mahīm etām
saṁyatātmendriyānilaḥ
bhikṣārthaṁ nagara-grāmān
asaṅgo 'lakṣito' viśat

saḥ - he; *cacāra* - wandered; *mahīm* - the earth; *etām* - this; *saṁyata* - controlled; *ātma* - his consciousness; *indriya* - senses; *anilaḥ* - and vital air; *bhikṣā-arthaṁ* - for the purpose of taking charity; *nagara* - the cities; *grāmān* - and villages; *asaṅgaḥ* - without any association; *alakṣitaḥ* - not making himself prominent, thus unrecognized; *aviśat* - he entered.

TRANSLATION

He wandered about the earth, keeping his intelligence, senses and life air under control. To beg charity he traveled alone to various

cities and villages. He did not advertise his advanced spiritual position and thus was not recognized by others.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the acceptance of the *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsa* order of life is the chief indication that one has actually taken shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The three rods of the *daṇḍa*, or staff, of the Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī* indicate control of the body, mind and words by engaging them only in the loving service of the Lord. This procedure helps one to become more tolerant than a tree, as recommended by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. By strict control of one's body, mind and speech, the quality of tolerance becomes strengthened, and thus one manifests the further qualities of forgiving others, never wasting one's time, detachment from sense gratification, lack of false pride in one's work and not hankering for liberation. One in this way gives up the mentality of materialistic persons, who establish so-called affectionate relationships of mutual flattery and exploit each other for sense gratification. One who adopts the strict path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, following in the footsteps of great souls, can achieve the shelter of the Lord.

TEXT 23.33

*taṁ vai pravayasam bhikṣum
avadhūtam asaj-janāḥ
dṛṣṭvā paryabhavan bhadra
bahvībhiḥ paribhūtibhiḥ*

taṁ – him; *vai* – indeed; *pravayasam* – old; *bhikṣum* – the beggar; *avadhūtam* – unclean; *asaj* – low-class; *janāḥ* – persons; *dṛṣṭvā* – seeing; *paryabhavan* – dishonored; *bhadra* – O kind Uddhava; *bahvībhiḥ* – with many; *paribhūtibhiḥ* – insults.

TRANSLATION

O kind Uddhava, seeing him as an old, dirty beggar, rowdy persons would dishonor him with many insults.

TEXT 23.34

*kecit tri-veṇum jagṛhur
eke pātram kamaṇḍalum
pīṭham caike'kṣa-sūtram ca
kanthām cīrāṇi kecana
pradāya ca punas tāni
darśitāny ādadur muneḥ*

kecit – some of them; *tri-veṇum* – his *sannyāsī* triple staff; *jagṛhuḥ* – they took away; *eke* – some; *pātram* – his begging bowl; *kamaṇḍalum* – waterpot; *pīṭham* – seat; *ca* – and; *eke* – some; *akṣa-sūtram* – chanting beads; *ca* – and; *kanthām* – rags; *cīrāṇi* – torn; *kecana* – some of them; *pradāya* – offering back; *ca* – and; *punaḥ* – again; *tāni* – they; *darśitāni* – which were being shown; *ādaduḥ* – they took away; *muneḥ* – of the sage.

TRANSLATION

Some of these persons would take away his sannyāsī rod, and some the waterpot which he was using as a begging bowl. Some took his deerskin seat, some his chanting beads, and some would steal his torn, ragged clothing. Displaying these things before him, they would pretend to offer them back but would then hide them again.

TEXT 23.35

*annam ca bhaikṣya-sampannam
bhuñjānasya sarit-taṭe
mūtrayanti ca pāpiṣṭhāḥ
ṣṭhīvanti asya ca mūrdhani*

annam – food; *ca* – and; *bhaikṣya* – by his begging; *sampannam* – acquired; *bhuñjānasya* – of him who was about to partake; *sarit* – of a river; *taṭe* – on the shore; *mūtrayanti* – they urinate upon; *ca* – and; *pāpiṣṭhāḥ* – most sinful persons; *ṣṭhīvanti* – they spit; *asya* – his; *ca* – and; *mūrdhani* – on his head.

TRANSLATION

When he was sitting on the bank of a river about to partake of the food that he had collected by his begging, such sinful rascals would come and pass urine on it, and they would dare to spit on his head.

TEXT 23.36

*yata-vācam vācayanti
tāḍayanti na vakti cet
tarjayanty apare vāgbhiḥ
steno'yam iti vādinaḥ
badhnanti rajjvā tam kecid
badhyatām badhyatām iti*

yata-vācam – who had taken a vow of silence; *vācayanti* – they try to make speak; *tāḍayanti* – they beat; *na vakti* – he does not speak; *cet* – if; *tarjayanti* – they cajole; *apare* – others; *vāgbhiḥ* – with their words; *stenaḥ* – thief; *ayam* – this person; *iti* – thus; *vādinaḥ* – saying; *badhnanti* – they bind up; *rajjvā* – with rope; *tam* – him; *kecid* – some; *badhyatām badhyatām* – “Bind him up! Bind him up!”; *iti* – thus saying.

TRANSLATION

Although he had taken a vow of silence, they would try to make him speak, and if he did not speak they would beat him with sticks. Others would chastise him, saying, “This man is just a thief.” And others would bind him up with rope, shouting, “Tie him up! Tie him up!”

TEXT 23.37

*kṣipanty eke'vajānanta
eṣa dharmadhvaḥ śaṭhaḥ*

*kṣīṇa-vitta imāṃ vṛttim
agrahīt sva-janojjhitaḥ*

kṣīpanti – they criticize; *eke* – some; *avajānantaḥ* – committing insults; *eṣaḥ* – this person; *dharma-dhvajaḥ* – a religious hypocrite; *śaṭhaḥ* – a cheater; *kṣīṇa-vittaḥ* – having lost his wealth; *imāṃ* – this; *vṛttim* – occupation; *agrahīt* – has taken; *sva-jana* – by his family; *ujjhitaḥ* – turned out.

TRANSLATION

They would criticize and insult him, saying, “This man is just a hypocrite and a cheat. He makes a business of religion simply because he lost all his wealth and his family threw him out.”

TEXTS 23.38-39

*aho eṣa mahā-sāro
dhṛtimān giri-rāḍ iva
maunena sādhayaty artham
baka-vad dṛḍha-niścayaḥ
ity eke vihasanty enam
eke durvātayanti ca
tam babandhur nirurudhur
yathā krīḍanakam dvijam*

aho – just see; *eṣaḥ* – this person; *mahā-sāraḥ* – very powerful; *dhṛtimān* – steadfast; *giri-rāḍ* – the Himālaya Mountains; *iva* – just like; *maunena* – with his vow of silence; *sādhayati* – he is striving; *artham* – for his goal; *baka-vat* – just like a heron; *dṛḍha* – firm; *niścayaḥ* – his determination; *iti* – thus speaking; *eke* – some; *vihasanti* – ridicule; *enam* – him; *eke* – some; *durvātayanti* – pass foul air; *ca* – and; *tam* – him; *babandhuḥ* – they bound in chains; *nirurudhuḥ* – kept captive; *yathā* – as; *krīḍanakam* – a pet animal; *dvijam* – that *brāhmaṇa*.

TRANSLATION

Some would ridicule him by saying, “Just see this greatly powerful sage! He is as steadfast as the Himālaya Mountains. By practice of silence he strives for his goal with great determination, just like a heron.” Other persons would pass foul air upon him, and sometimes others would bind this twice-born brāhmaṇa in chains and keep him captive like a pet animal.

TEXT 23.40

*evam sa bhautikam duḥkham
daivikam daihikam ca yat
bhoktavyam ātmano diṣṭam
prāptam prāptam abudhyata*

evam – thus; *saḥ* – he; *bhautikam* – due to other living entities; *duḥkham* – suffering; *daivikam* – due to higher powers; *daihikam* – due to his own body; *ca* – and; *yat* – whatever; *bhoktavyam* – destined to be suffered; *ātmanaḥ* –

his own; *diṣṭam* – allotted by destiny; *prāptam prāptam* – whatever was received; *abudhyata* – he understood.

TRANSLATION

The brāhmaṇa understood that all his suffering - from other living beings, from the higher forces of nature and from his own body - was unavoidable, being allotted to him by providence.

PURPORT

Many cruel persons harassed the *brāhmaṇa*, and his own body caused him suffering in the form of fever, hunger, thirst, fatigue, etc. The higher forces of nature are those that cause excessive heat, cold, wind and rain. The *brāhmaṇa* realized that his suffering was due to his false identification with his material body, and not to the interaction of his body with external phenomena. Rather than try to adjust his external situation, he tried to adjust his Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thus realize his actual identity as eternal spirit soul.

TEXT 23.41

*paribhūta imām gāthām
agāyata narādhamaiḥ
pātayadbhiḥ sva dharma-stho
dhṛtim āsthāya sāttvikīm*

paribhūtaḥ – insulted; *imām* – this; *gāthām* – song; *agāyata* – he sang; *nara-adhamaiḥ* – by low-class men; *pātayadbhiḥ* – who were trying to make him fall down; *sva-dharma* – in his own duty; *sthaḥ* – remaining firm; *dhṛtim* – his resolution; *āsthāya* – fixing; *sāttvikīm* – in the mode of goodness.

TRANSLATION

Even while being insulted by these low-class men who were trying to effect his downfall, he remained steady in his spiritual duties. Fixing his resolution in the mode of goodness, he began to chant the following song.

PURPORT

Resolution in the mode of goodness is described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.33):

*dhṛtyā yayā dhārayate
manaḥ-prāṇendriya-kriyāḥ
yogenāvyabhicāriṇyā
dhṛtiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī*

“O son of Pṛthā, that determination which is unbreakable, which is sustained with steadfastness by *yoga* practice, and thus controls the mind, life and the acts of the senses, is in the mode of goodness.”

Atheists who are envious of the devotees of the Supreme Lord are called *narādhamas*, or the lowest of men, and undoubtedly are enroute to hell. By all means at their disposal they disturb the devotional service of the Lord, sometimes by direct attack and sometimes by mockery. The devotees, however, remain tolerant, fixing their determination in the mode of goodness. As described by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* (1):

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*

“A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind’s demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.”

TEXT 23.42

*dvija uvāca
nāyam jano me sukha-duḥkha-hetur
na devatātmā graha-karma-kālāḥ
manaḥ param kāraṇam āmananti
saṁsāra-cakram parivartayed yat*

dvijaḥ uvāca - the *brāhmaṇa* said; *na* - not; *ayam* - these; *janaḥ* - people; *me* - my; *sukha* - of happiness; *duḥkha* - and distress; *hetuḥ* - the cause; *na* - nor; *devatā* - the demigods; *ātmā* - my own body; *graha* - the controlling planets; *karma* - my past work; *kālāḥ* - or time; *manaḥ* - the mind; *param* - rather only; *kāraṇam* - the cause; *āmananti* - is called by standard authorities; *saṁsāra* - of material life; *cakram* - the cycle; *parivartayet* - causes to rotate; *yat* - which.

TRANSLATION

The brāhmaṇa said: These people are not the cause of my happiness and distress. Neither are the demigods, my own body, the planets, my past work, or time. Rather, it is the mind alone that causes happiness and distress and perpetuates the rotation of material life.

TEXT 23.43

*mano guṇān vai sṛjate balīyas
tataś ca karmāṇi vilakṣaṇāni
śuklāni kṛṣṇāny atha lohītāni
tebhyaḥ sa-varṇāḥ sṛtayo bhavanti*

manaḥ - the mind; *guṇān* - the activities of the modes of nature; *vai* - indeed; *sṛjate* - manifests; *balīyaḥ* - very strong; *tataḥ* - by those qualities; *ca* - and; *karmāṇi* - material activities; *vilakṣaṇāni* - of different varieties; *śuklāni* - white (in the mode of goodness); *kṛṣṇāni* - black (in the mode of ignorance); *atha* - and; *lohītāni* - red (in the mode of passion); *tebhyaḥ* - from those activities; *sa-varṇāḥ* - having the same corresponding colors; *sṛtayaḥ* - created conditions; *bhavanti* - arise.

TRANSLATION

The powerful mind actuates the functions of the material modes, from which evolve the different kinds of material activities in the modes of goodness, ignorance and passion. From the activities in each of these modes develop the corresponding statuses of life.

PURPORT

In the mode of goodness one considers oneself to be a saintly or wise person, in the mode of passion one struggles for material success, and in the mode of ignorance one becomes cruel, lazy and sinful. By the combination of the material modes one identifies oneself as a demigod, a king, a rich capitalist, a wise scholar, etc. These conceptions are material designations generated from the modes of nature, and they arrange themselves according to the tendency of the powerful mind to enjoy temporary sense gratification. The word *balīyas* in this verse, meaning “very strong,” indicates that the material mind becomes insensitive to intelligent advice. Even if we are informed that we are committing many sins and offenses in order to earn money, we may still think that money should be acquired at all costs, since without it one can neither perform religious ceremonies nor gratify the senses with beautiful women, mansions and vehicles. Once the money is achieved, one suffers further problems, but the stubborn mind will never heed good advice in this regard. One must therefore give up mental concoction and control the mind in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as exemplified here by the *brāhmaṇa* from Avantī.

TEXT 23.44

*anīha ātmā manasā samīhatā
hiraṇ-mayo mat-sakha udvicaṣṭe
manaḥ sva-liṅgaṁ pariḡrhya kāmān
juṣan nibaddho guṇa-saṅgato'sau*

anīhaḥ – not endeavoring; *ātmā* – the Supreme Soul; *manasā* – along with the mind; *samīhatā* – which is struggling; *hiraṇ-mayaḥ* – exhibiting transcendental enlightenment; *mat-sakhaḥ* – my friend; *udvicaṣṭe* – looks down from above; *manaḥ* – the mind; *sva-liṅgam* – which projects the image of the material world upon him (the soul); *pariḡrhya* – embracing; *kāmān* – objects of desire; *juṣan* – engaging with; *nibaddhaḥ* – becomes bound; *guṇa-saṅgataḥ* – because of association with the modes of nature; *asau* – that infinitesimal spirit soul.

TRANSLATION

Although present along with the struggling mind within the material body, the Supersoul is not endeavoring, because He is already endowed with transcendental enlightenment. Acting as my friend, He simply witnesses from His transcendental position. I, the infinitesimal spirit soul, on the other hand, have embraced this mind, which is the mirror reflecting the image of the material world. Thus I have become engaged in enjoying objects of desire and am entangled due to contact with the modes of nature.

TEXT 23.45

*dānaṁ sva-dharmo niyamo yamaś ca
śrutaṁ ca karmāṇi ca sad-vratāni*

*sarve mano-nigraha-lakṣaṇāntāḥ
paro hi yogo manasaḥ samādhiḥ*

dānam – giving of charity; *sva-dharmaḥ* – carrying out one’s prescribed duties; *niyamaḥ* – the regulations of day-to-day life; *yamaḥ* – the major regulations of spiritual practice; *ca* – and; *śrutam* – listening to scripture; *ca* – and; *karmāṇi* – pious work; *ca* – and; *sat* – pure; *vratāni* – vows; *sarve* – all; *manaḥ-nigrahaḥ* – the subduing of the mind; *lakṣaṇa* – consisting of; *antāḥ* – their aim; *paraḥ* – supreme; *hi* – indeed; *yogaḥ* – transcendental knowledge; *manasaḥ* – of the mind; *samādhiḥ* – meditation on the Supreme in trance.

TRANSLATION

Charity, prescribed duties, observance of major and minor regulative principles, hearing from scripture, pious works and purifying vows all have as their final aim the subduing of the mind. Indeed, concentration of the mind on the Supreme is the highest yoga.

TEXT 23.46

*samāhitam yasya manaḥ praśāntam
dānādibhiḥ kim vada tasya kṛtyam
asaṁyatham yasya mano vinaśyat
dānādibhiś ced aparam kim ebhiḥ*

samāhitam – perfectly fixed; *yasya* – whose; *manaḥ* – mind; *praśāntam* – pacified; *dāna-ādibhiḥ* – by charity and the other processes; *kim* – what; *vada* – please tell; *tasya* – of those processes; *kṛtyam* – use; *asaṁyatham* – uncontrolled; *yasya* – whose; *manaḥ* – mind; *vinaśyat* – dissolving; *dāna-ādibhiḥ* – by these processes of charity and so on; *ced* – if; *aparam* – further; *kim* – what use; *ebhiḥ* – of these.

TRANSLATION

If one’s mind is perfectly fixed and pacified, then tell me what need does one have to perform ritualistic charity and other pious rituals? And if one’s mind remains uncontrolled, lost in ignorance, then of what use are these engagements for him?

TEXT 23.47

*mano-vaśe’nye hy abhavan sma devā
manaś ca nānyasya vaśam sameti
bhīṣmo hi devaḥ sahasaḥ sahiyān
yuñjyād vaśe tam sa hi deva-devaḥ*

manaḥ – of the mind; *vaśe* – under the control; *anye* – others; *hi* – indeed; *abhavan* – have become; *sma* – in the past; *devāḥ* – the senses (represented by their presiding deities); *manaḥ* – the mind; *ca* – and; *na* – never; *anyasya* – of another; *vaśam* – under the control; *sameti* – comes; *bhīṣmaḥ* – fearsome; *hi* – indeed; *devaḥ* – the godlike power; *sahasaḥ* – than the strongest; *sahiyaṇ* – stronger; *yuñjyāt* – can fix; *vaśe* – under control; *tam* –

that mind; *saḥ* – such a person; *hi* – indeed; *deva-devaḥ* – the master of all the senses.

TRANSLATION

All the senses have been under the control of the mind since time immemorial, and the mind himself never comes under the sway of any other. He is stronger than the strongest, and his godlike power is fearsome. Therefore, anyone who can bring the mind under control becomes the master of all the senses.

TEXT 23.48

*tam durjayam śatrum asahya-vegam
arun-tudam tan na vijitya kecit
kurvanty asad-vigraham atra martyair
mitrāṇy udāsīna-ripūn vimūḍhāḥ*

tam – that; *durjayam* – difficult to conquer; *śatrum* – enemy; *asahya* – intolerable; *vegam* – whose urges; *arun-tudam* – capable of tormenting the heart; *tat* – therefore; *na vijitya* – failing to conquer over; *kecit* – some people; *kurvanti* – they create; *asad* – useless; *vigraham* – quarrel; *atra* – in this world; *martyair* – with mortal living beings; *mitrāṇi* – friends; *udāsīna* – indifferent persons; *ripūn* – and rivals; *vimūḍhāḥ* – completely bewildered.

TRANSLATION

Failing to conquer this irrepressible enemy, the mind, whose urges are intolerable and who torments the heart, many people are completely bewildered and create useless quarrel with others. Thus they conclude that other people are either their friends, their enemies or parties indifferent to them.

PURPORT

Falsely identifying oneself as the material body, and accepting bodily expansions such as children and grandchildren to be one's eternal property, one completely forgets that every living being is qualitatively one with God. There is no essential difference between one individual being and another, since all are eternal expansions of the Supreme Lord. The mind absorbed in false ego creates the material body, and by identification with the body, the conditioned soul is overwhelmed by false pride and ignorance, as described here.

TEXT 23.49

*deham mano-mātram imam grhītvā
mamāham ity andha-dhiyo manuṣyāḥ
eṣo'ham anyo'yam iti bhrameṇa
duranta-pāre tamasi bhramanti*

deham – the material body; *manaḥ-mātram* – coming simply from the mind; *imam* – this; *grhītvā* – having accepted; *mama* – mine; *aham* – I; *iti* – thus; *andha* – blinded; *dhiyaḥ* – their intelligence; *manuṣyāḥ* – human beings; *eṣaḥ* – this; *aham* – I am; *anyaḥ* – someone else; *ayam* – this is; *iti* – thus;

bhrameṇa – by the illusion; *duranta-pāre* – unsurpassable; *tamasi* – within the darkness; *bhramanti* – they wander.

TRANSLATION

Persons who identify with this body, which is simply the product of the material mind, are blinded in their intelligence, thinking in terms of “I” and “mine.” Because of their illusion of “this is I, but that is someone else,” they wander in endless darkness.

TEXT 23.50

*janas tu hetuḥ sukha-duḥkhayoś cet
kim ātmanaś cātra hi bhaumayos tat
jihvām kvacit sandaśati sva-dadbhis
tad-vedanāyām katamāya kupyet*

janaḥ – these people; *tu* – but; *hetuḥ* – the cause; *sukha-duḥkhayoḥ* – of my happiness and distress; *cet* – if; *kim* – what; *ātmanaḥ* – for the self; *ca* – and; *atra* – in this conception; *hi* – indeed; *bhaumayoḥ* – they pertain to the material bodies; *tat* – that (status of being the performer and the sufferer); *jihvām* – the tongue; *kvacit* – sometimes; *sandaśati* – is bitten; *sva* – by one’s own; *dadbhiḥ* – teeth; *tat* – of that; *vedanāyām* – in the distress; *katamāya* – with whom; *kupyet* – can one get angry.

TRANSLATION

If you say that these people are the cause of my happiness and distress, then where is the place of the soul in such a conception? This happiness and distress pertain not to the soul but to the interactions of material bodies. If someone bites his tongue with his own teeth, at whom can he become angry in his suffering?

PURPORT

Although bodily pleasure and pain are felt by the soul, one must tolerate such duality, understanding it to be a creation of one’s own material mind. If one accidentally bites his own tongue or lip, he cannot become angry and pull out his own teeth. Similarly, all living beings are individual parts and parcels of God, and thus nondifferent from each other. All of them are meant to serve the Supreme Lord in spiritual equality. If the living beings give up their master’s service and instead quarrel among themselves, they will be forced to suffer by the laws of nature. If the conditioned souls establish artificial relationships of affection based on the material body and having nothing to do with God, then time itself will destroy such relationships, and they will be subjected to further suffering. But if the individual living entities understand each other to be of the same family, all having connection with the Supreme Lord, their mutual friendship will develop. Thus one should not exhibit anger that will be harmful to oneself and others. Although the *brāhmaṇa* was receiving kind offerings of charity from some people and being harassed and beaten by others, he denied that these people were the ultimate cause of his happiness and distress, for he was fixed on the platform of self-realization beyond the material body and mind.

TEXT 23.51

*duḥkhasya hetur yadi devatās tu
kim ātmanas tatra vikārayos tat
yad aṅgam aṅgena nihanyate kvacit
krudhyeta kasmai puruṣaḥ sva-dehe*

duḥkhasya - of suffering; *hetuḥ* - the cause; *yadi* - if; *devatāḥ* - the demigods (who rule over the different senses within the body); *tu* - but; *kim* - what; *ātmanaḥ* - for the soul; *tatra* - in that connection; *vikārayoḥ* - which pertain to the transformable (senses and their deities); *tat* - that (acting and being acted upon); *yat* - when; *aṅgam* - a limb; *aṅgena* - by another limb; *nihanyate* - is hurt; *kvacit* - ever; *krudhyeta* - should become angry; *kasmai* - at whom; *puruṣaḥ* - the living entity; *sva-dehe* - within his own body.

TRANSLATION

If you say that the demigods who rule the bodily senses cause suffering, still, how can such suffering apply to the spirit soul? This acting and being acted upon are merely interactions of the changeable senses and their presiding deities. When one limb of the body attacks another, with whom can the person in that body be angry?

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇa* is elaborately explaining the condition of self-realization, in which one understands oneself to be totally distinct from the material body and mind and the demigods who control them. By cultivating bodily happiness we are forced to accept bodily pain. Foolish conditioned souls endeavor to eliminate distress and enjoy happiness, but material happiness and distress are two sides of the same coin. One cannot relish bodily happiness without identifying oneself as the body. But as soon as such identification occurs, one is harassed by the innumerable pains and sufferings also inevitably present within the same body. Bodily happiness and distress are administered by the demigods, who can never be brought under our control; thus one remains subject to the whims of providence on the material platform. If, however, one surrenders to the Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of all pleasure, one can reach the spiritual platform, where transcendental bliss enlivens the liberated souls without any interrupting anxiety or unhappiness.

TEXT 23.52

*ātmā yadi syāt sukha-duḥkha-hetuḥ
kim anyatas tatra nija-svabhāvaḥ
na hy ātmano'nyad yadi tan mṛṣā syāt
krudhyeta kasmān na sukhaṁ na duḥkham*

ātmā – the soul himself; *yadi* – if; *syāt* – should be; *sukha-duḥkha* – of happiness and distress; *hetuḥ* – the cause; *kim* – what; *anyataḥ* – other; *tatra* – in that theory; *nija* – his own; *svabhāvaḥ* – nature; *na* – not; *hi* – indeed; *ātmanaḥ* – than the soul; *anyat* – anything separate; *yadi* – if; *tat* – that; *mṛṣā* – false; *syāt* – would be; *krudhyeta* – one can become angry; *kasmāt* – at whom; *na* – there is no; *sukham* – happiness; *na* – nor; *duḥkham* – misery.

TRANSLATION

If the soul himself were the cause of happiness and distress, then we could not blame others, since happiness and distress would be simply the nature of the soul. According to this theory, nothing except the soul actually exists, and if we were to perceive something besides the soul, that would be illusion. Therefore, since happiness and distress do not actually exist in this concept, why become angry at oneself or others?

PURPORT

Because a dead body does not feel pleasure or pain, our happiness and distress are due to our own consciousness, which is the nature of the soul. It is not, however, the original function of the soul to enjoy material happiness and suffer material distress. These are produced by ignorant material affection and enmity based on false ego. Our involvement in sense gratification drags our consciousness into the material body, where it is shocked by the inevitable bodily pains and problems.

On the spiritual platform there is neither material happiness nor distress because there the living consciousness is fully engaged, without personal desire, in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord. This is the actual position of happiness, aloof from false bodily identification. Rather than uselessly becoming enraged with others for one's own foolishness, one should take to self-realization and solve the problems of life.

TEXT 23.53

*grahā nimittam sukha-duḥkhayoś cet
kim ātmano'jasya janasya te vai
grahair grahasyaiva vadanti pīḍām
krudhyeta kasmāi puruṣas tato'nyaḥ*

grahāḥ – the controlling planets; *nimittam* – the immediate cause; *sukha-duḥkhayoḥ* – of happiness and distress; *cet* – if; *kim* – what; *ātmanaḥ* – for the soul; *ajasya* – who is unborn; *janasya* – of that which is born; *te* – those planets; *vai* – indeed; *grahaiḥ* – by other planets; *grahasya* – of a planet; *eva* – only; *vadanti* – (expert astrologers) say; *pīḍām* – suffering; *krudhyeta* – should become angry; *kasmāi* – at whom; *puruṣaḥ* – the living entity; *tataḥ* – from that material body; *anyaḥ* – distinct.

TRANSLATION

And if we examine the hypothesis that the planets are the immediate cause of suffering and happiness, then also where is the relationship with the soul, who is eternal? After all, the effect of the

planets applies only to things that have taken birth. Expert astrologers have moreover explained how the planets are only causing pain to each other. Therefore, since the living entity is distinct from these planets and from the material body, against whom should he vent his anger?

TEXT 23.54

*karmāstu hetuḥ sukha-duḥkhayoś cet
kim ātmanas tad dhi jaḍājaḍatve
dehas tv acit puruṣo'yaṁ su-parṇaḥ
krudhyeta kasmai na hi karma mūlam*

karma - one's fruitive activities; *astu* - hypothetically granted; *hetuḥ* - the cause; *sukha-duḥkhayoḥ* - of happiness and distress; *cet* - if; *kim* - what; *ātmanaḥ* - for the soul; *tat* - that *karma*; *hi* - certainly; *jaḍa-ajaḍatve* - in being both material and not material; *dehaḥ* - the body; *tu* - on the one hand; *acit* - not living; *puruṣaḥ* - the person; *ayaṁ* - this; *su-parṇaḥ* - endowed with living consciousness; *krudhyeta* - one should become angry; *kasmai* - at whom; *na* - are not; *hi* - certainly; *karma* - fruitive activities; *mūlam* - the root cause.

TRANSLATION

If we assume that fruitive work is the cause of happiness and distress, we still are not dealing with the soul. The idea of material work arises when there is a spiritual actor who is conscious and a material body that undergoes the transformation of happiness and distress as a reaction to such work. Since the body has no life, it cannot be the actual recipient of happiness and distress, nor can the soul, who is ultimately completely spiritual and aloof from the material body. Since karma thus has no ultimate basis in either the body or the soul, at whom can one become angry?

PURPORT

The material body is composed of earth, water, fire and air, just like bricks, stones and other objects. Our consciousness, falsely absorbed in the body, experiences happiness and distress, and fruitive work (*karma*) is performed when we falsely consider ourselves to be the enjoyers of the material world. False ego is thus the illusory combination within our minds of the self and the body, which are actually two separate objects. Since *karma*, or material work, is based on illusory consciousness, these activities are also illusory and have no factual basis in either the body or the soul. When a conditioned soul falsely considers himself to be the body, and consequently the enjoyer of the material world, he tries to find pleasure in illicit connection with women. Such sinful activity is based on his false concept of being the body and thus the enjoyer of women and of the world. Since he is not the body, his activity of enjoying a woman does not actually exist. There is merely the interaction of two machines, namely the two bodies, and the interaction of the illusory consciousness of the man and woman. The sensation of illicit sex occurs

within the material body and is falsely assimilated by the false ego as its own experience. Thus the miserable or pleasurable reactions of *karma* ultimately act upon the false ego and not upon the body, which is composed of dull matter, nor upon the soul, which has nothing to do with matter. False ego is the illusory concoction of the mind; it is specifically this false ego that is suffering happiness and distress. The soul cannot become angry at others, since he is not personally enjoying or suffering. Rather, the false ego is doing this.

TEXT 23.55

*kālas tu hetuḥ sukha-duḥkhaḥ cet
kim ātmanas tatra tad-ātmako'sau
nāgner hi tāpo na himasya tat syāt
krudhyeta kasmai na parasya dvandvam*

kālaḥ - time; *tu* - but; *hetuḥ* - the cause; *sukha-duḥkhaḥ* - of happiness and distress; *cet* - if; *kim* - what; *ātmanaḥ* - for the soul; *tatra* - in that idea; *tad-ātmako'sau* - based on time; *asau* - the soul; *na* - not; *agneḥ* - from fire; *hi* - indeed; *tāpaḥ* - burning; *na* - not; *himasya* - of snow; *tat* - that; *syāt* - becomes; *krudhyeta* - should become angry; *kasmai* - at whom; *na* - there is not; *parasya* - for the transcendental soul; *dvandvam* - duality.

TRANSLATION

If we accept time as the cause of happiness and distress, that experience still cannot apply to the spirit soul, since time is a manifestation of the Lord's spiritual potency and the living entities are also expansions of the Lord's spiritual potency manifesting through time. Certainly a fire does not burn its own flames or sparks, nor does the cold harm its own snowflakes or hail. In fact, the spirit soul is transcendental and beyond the experience of material happiness and distress. At whom, therefore, should one become angry?

PURPORT

The material body is dull matter and does not experience happiness, distress or anything else. Because the spirit soul is completely transcendental, he should fix his consciousness on the transcendental Lord, who is beyond material happiness and distress. It is only when transcendental consciousness falsely identifies with dull matter that the living entity imagines he is enjoying and suffering in the material world. This illusory identification of consciousness with matter is called false ego and is the cause of material existence.

TEXT 23.56

*na kenacit kvāpi kathañcanāsyā
dvandvoparāgaḥ parataḥ parasya
yathāhamaḥ saṁsṛti-rūpiṇaḥ syād
evaṁ prabuddho na bibhetti bhūtaiḥ*

na – there is not; *kenacit* – by the agency of anyone; *kva api* – anywhere; *kathañcana* – by any means; *asya* – for him, the soul; *dvandva* – of the duality (of happiness and distress); *uparāgaḥ* – the influence; *parataḥ parasya* – who is transcendental to material nature; *yathā* – in the same way as; *ahamaḥ* – for the false ego; *sañsṛti* – to material existence; *rūpiṇaḥ* – which give shape; *syāt* – arises; *evam* – thus; *prabuddhaḥ* – one whose intelligence is awakened; *na bibheti* – does not fear; *bhūtaiḥ* – on the basis of material creation.

TRANSLATION

The false ego gives shape to illusory material existence and thus experiences material happiness and distress. The spirit soul, however, is transcendental to material nature; he can never actually be affected by material happiness and distress in any place, under any circumstance or by the agency of any person. A person who understands this has nothing whatsoever to fear from the material creation.

PURPORT

The *brāhmaṇa* has refuted six specific explanations of the happiness and distress of the living entity, and now he refutes any other explanation that might be given. On the basis of false ego, the bodily covering factually overwhelms the spirit soul, and thus one falsely enjoys and suffers that which has no real relationship with oneself. One who can understand this sublime teaching of the *brāhmaṇa*, spoken by the Lord to Uddhava, will never again suffer the terrible anxiety of fear within the material world.

TEXT 23.57

*etāṁ sa āsthāya parātma-niṣṭhām
adhyāsītām pūrvatamair maharṣibhiḥ
aham tariṣyāmi duranta-pāram
tamo mukundañghri-niṣevayaiva*

etāṁ – this; *saḥ* – such; *āsthāya* – becoming completely fixed in; *para-ātma-niṣṭhām* – devotion to the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa; *adhyāsītām* – worshiped; *pūva-tamaiḥ* – by previous; *mahā-ṛṣibhiḥ* – ācāryas; *aham* – I; *tariṣyāmi* – shall cross over; *duranta-pāram* – the insurmountable; *tamaḥ* – the ocean of nescience; *mukunda-añghri* – of the lotus feet of Mukunda; *niṣevayā* – by worship; *eva* – certainly.

TRANSLATION

I shall cross over the insurmountable ocean of nescience by being firmly fixed in the service of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. This was approved by the previous ācāryas, who were fixed in firm devotion to the Lord, Paramātmā, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

This verse is quoted by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja in his *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya-līlā* 3.6). Śrīla Prabhupāda comments as follows. “In connection with this verse, which is a quotation from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.23.57), Śrīla

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura says that of the sixty-four items required for rendering devotional service, acceptance of the symbolic marks of *sannyāsa* is a regulative principle. If one accepts the *sannyāsa* order, his main business is to devote his life completely to the service of Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa. If one does not completely devote his mind and body to the service of the Lord, he does not actually become a *sannyāsī*. It is not simply a matter of changing dress. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.1) it is also stated, *anāśritaḥ karma-phalaṁ kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ/ sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca*: one who works devotedly for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa is a *sannyāsī*. The dress is not *sannyāsa*, but the attitude of service to Kṛṣṇa is.

“The word *parātma-niṣṭhā* means being a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. *Parātmā*, the Supreme Person, is Kṛṣṇa. *Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*. Those who are completely dedicated to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa in service are actually *sannyāsīs*. As a matter of formality, the devotee accepts the *sannyāsa* dress as previous *ācāryas* did. He also accepts the three *daṇḍas*. Later Viṣṇusvāmī considered that accepting the dress of a *tridaṇḍī* was *parātma-niṣṭhā*. Therefore sincere devotees add another *daṇḍa*, the *jīva-daṇḍa*, to the three existing *daṇḍas*. The Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī* is known as a *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsī*. The Māyāvādī *sannyāsī* accepts only one *daṇḍa*, not understanding the purpose of *tridaṇḍa*. Later, many persons in the community of Śiva Svāmī gave up the *ātma-niṣṭhā* (devotional service) of the Lord and followed the path of Śaṅkarācārya. Instead of accepting 108 names, those in the Śiva Svāmī *sampradāya* follow the path of Śaṅkarācārya and accept the ten names of *sannyāsa*. Although Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted the then-existing order of *sannyāsa* (namely *ekadaṇḍa*), He still recited a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* about the *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* accepted by the *brāhmaṇa* of Avantīpura. Indirectly He declared that within that *ekadaṇḍa* (one *daṇḍa*), four *daṇḍas* existed as one. Accepting *ekadaṇḍa sannyāsa* without *parātma-niṣṭhā* (devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa) is not acceptable to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In addition, according to the exact regulative principles, one should add the *jīva-daṇḍa* to the *tridaṇḍa*. These four *daṇḍas*, bound together as one, are symbolic of unalloyed devotional service to the Lord. Because the *ekadaṇḍī-sannyāsīs* of the Māyāvāda school are not devoted to the service of Kṛṣṇa, they try to merge into the Brahman effulgence, which is a marginal position between material and spiritual existence. They accept this impersonal position as liberation. Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, not knowing that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was a *tridaṇḍī*, think of Caitanya Mahāprabhu as an *ekadaṇḍī-sannyāsī*. This is due to their *vivarta*, bewilderment. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there is no such thing as an *ekadaṇḍī-sannyāsī*; indeed, the *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsī* is accepted as the symbolic representation of the *sannyāsa* order. By citing this verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted the *sannyāsa* order recommended in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, who are enamored of the external energy of the Lord, cannot understand the mind of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

“To date, all the devotees of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, following in His footsteps, accept the *sannyāsa* order and keep the sacred thread and tuft of unshaved hair. The *ekadaṇḍi-sannyāsīs* of the Māyāvādī school give up the sacred thread and do not keep any tuft of hair. Therefore they are unable to understand the purport of *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa*, and as such they are not inclined to dedicate their lives to the service of Mukunda. They simply think of merging into the existence of Brahman because of their disgust with the material existence. The *ācāryas* who advocate the *daiva-varṇāśrama* (the social order of *cātur-varṇyam* mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā*) do not accept the proposition of *āśura-varṇāśrama*, which maintains that the social order of *varṇa* is indicated by birth.

“The most intimate devotee of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, namely Gadādhara Paṇḍita, accepted the *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* and also accepted Mādhava Upādhyāya as his *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsī* disciple. It is said that from this Mādhvācārya the *sampradāya* known in western India as the Vallabhācārya *sampradāya* has begun. Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Vasu, who is known as a *smṛty-ācārya* in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*, later accepted the *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* order from Tridaṇḍipāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī. Although acceptance of *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* is not distinctly mentioned in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literature, the first verse of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *Upadeśāmṛta* advocates that one should accept the *tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa* order by controlling the six forces:

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmān pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*

‘One who can control the forces of speech, mind, anger, belly, tongue and genitals is known as a *gosvāmī* and is competent to accept disciples all over the world.’ The followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu never accepted the Māyāvāda order of *sannyāsa*, and for this they cannot be blamed. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted Śrīdhara Svāmī, who was a *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsī*, but the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*, not understanding Śrīdhara Svāmī, sometimes think that Śrīdhara Svāmī belonged to the Māyāvāda *ekadaṇḍa-sannyāsa* community. Actually this was not the case.”

TEXT 23.58

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
nirvidya naṣṭa-draviṇe gata-klamaḥ
pravrajya gām paryaṭamāna ittham
nirākṛto’sadbhir api sva-dharmād
akampito’mūn munir āha gāthām*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *nirvidya* – becoming detached; *naṣṭa-draviṇe* – his wealth having been destroyed; *gata-klamaḥ* – free from moroseness; *pravrajya* – leaving home; *gām* – the earth; *paryaṭamānaḥ* – traveling; *ittham* – in this way; *nirākṛtaḥ* – insulted;

asadbhiḥ – by rascals; *api* – even though; *sva-dharmāt* – from his prescribed duties; *akampitaḥ* – unswerved; *amūm* – this; *muniḥ* – the sage; *āha* – spoke; *gāthām* – song.

TRANSLATION

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Thus becoming detached upon the loss of his property, this sage gave up his moroseness. He left home, taking sannyāsa, and began to travel about the earth. Even when insulted by foolish rascals he remained unswerved from his duty and chanted this song.

PURPORT

Those becoming free from the materialistic way of life, which involves grueling austerities performed to acquire money, may chant the preceding song of the Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura states that if one is not capable of listening to the song of this *sannyāsī*, then one will certainly remain an obedient servant of material illusion.

TEXT 23.59

*sukha-duḥkha-prado nānyaḥ
puruṣasyātma-vibhramaḥ
mitrodāsīna-ripavaḥ
saṁsāras tamasaḥ kṛtaḥ*

sukha-duḥkha-pradaḥ – giver of happiness and distress; *na* – there is no; *anyaḥ* – other; *puruṣasya* – of the soul; *ātma* – of the mind; *vibhramaḥ* – bewilderment; *mitra* – friends; *udāsīna* – indifferent parties; *ripavaḥ* – and enemies; *saṁsāraḥ* – material life; *tamasaḥ* – out of ignorance; *kṛtaḥ* – created.

TRANSLATION

No other force besides his own mental confusion makes the soul experience happiness and distress. His perception of friends, neutral parties and enemies and the whole material life he builds around this perception are simply created out of ignorance.

PURPORT

Everyone is working hard to please their friends, defeat their enemies and maintain the status quo with neutral parties. These relations are certainly based on the material body and do not exist beyond the body's inevitable demise. They are called ignorance, or material illusion.

TEXT 23.60

*tasmāt sarvātmanā tāta
niḡṛhāṇa mano dhiyā
mayy āveśitayā yukta
etāvān yoga-saṅgrahaḥ*

tasmāt – therefore; *sarva-ātmanā* – in all respects; *tāta* – My dear Uddhava; *niḡṛhāṇa* – bring under control; *manaḥ* – the mind; *dhiyā* – with intelligence;

mayi – in Me; *āveśitayā* – which is absorbed; *yuktaḥ* – linked up; *etāvān* – thus; *yoga-saṅgrahaḥ* – the essence of spiritual practice.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, fixing your intelligence on Me, you should thus completely control the mind. This is the essence of the science of yoga.

TEXT 23.61

*ya etāṁ bhikṣuṇā gītāṁ
brahma-niṣṭhāṁ samāhitaḥ
dhārayaṅ chrāvayaṅ chrṇvan
dvandvair naivābhibhūyate*

yaḥ – whoever; *etām* – this; *bhikṣuṇā* – by the *sannyāsī*; *gītām* – sung; *brahma* – knowledge of the Absolute; *niṣṭhām* – based upon; *samāhitaḥ* – with full attention; *dhārayan* – meditating; *śrāvayan* – causing others to hear; *śrṇvan* – himself hearing; *dvandvaiḥ* – by dualities; *na* – never; *eva* – indeed; *abhibhūyate* – will become overwhelmed.

TRANSLATION

Anyone who listens to or recites to others this song of the sannyāsī, which presents scientific knowledge of the Absolute, and who thus meditates upon it with full attention, will never again be overwhelmed by the dualities of material happiness and distress.

PURPORT

The Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī* took shelter of the devotional service of the Lord and thus could overcome the illusory potency of his worshipable object, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He himself meditated upon and heard this song, and also taught it to others. Having received the Lord’s mercy, he enlightened other conditioned souls with transcendental intelligence so that they could also follow in the footsteps of the devotees of the Lord. Religion actually means to become a pure devotee of the Supreme Lord in loving service. Those who are trying to enjoy the material world or merely renounce it to avoid personal inconvenience cannot actually understand love of Godhead, in which the only objective is the satisfaction of the Lord. *Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-third Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Song of the Avanti Brāhmaṇa.”*

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

The Philosophy of Sāṅkhya

In this chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa gives instruction how bewilderment of the mind can be dispelled by the science of Sāṅkhya. Herein the Supreme Lord again imparts to Uddhava instruction about the analysis of material nature. By assimilating this knowledge the spirit soul can drive away his confusion based on false dualities.

In the beginning of creation, the seer and seen are one and indistinguishable. This Supreme Absolute Truth, one without a second and inaccessible to words and mind, then separates into two – the seer, which means consciousness or personality, and the seen, which means substance or nature. The material nature, which comprises the three modes of matter, is agitated by the controlling male factor. The *mahat-tattva* then becomes manifest together with the energies of consciousness and activity. From these come the principle of false ego in its three aspects of goodness, passion and ignorance. From false ego in the mode of ignorance arise fifteen subtle forms of sense perception, followed by the fifteen physical elements. From false ego in the mode of passion come the ten senses, and from false ego in the mode of goodness come the mind and the eleven demigods who preside over the senses. By the conglomeration of all of these elements grows the universal egg, in the midst of which the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the creating Lord of the universe takes up residence in the role of indwelling Supersoul. From the navel of this ultimate creator comes a lotus, upon which Brahmā takes birth. Lord Brahmā, invested with the mode of passion, executes austerities by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and on the strength of these penances he is able to create all the planets of the universe. The region of heaven is meant for the demigods, that of inner space for ghostly spirits and that of the earth for human beings and others. In the region above these three planetary systems are the places of advanced sages, and in the lower worlds are those of the demons, Nāga serpents and so forth. The goals achieved by activities based on the three modes of material nature are all within the three mortal worlds. The destinations of *yoga*, severe austerity and the renounced order of life are the worlds known as Mahar, Janas, Tapas and Satya. The goal of devotional service to the Supreme Lord, on the other hand, is the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead in His abode, Vaikuṅṭha. This universe of material action and reaction is constituted under the control of time and the three modes of material nature. Moreover, whatever exists in this universe is simply the product of the combination of material nature and her Lord. In the same way that creation proceeds gradually from the one and supremely subtle to the multitudinous and very gross, the process of annihilation proceeds from the grossest to the subtlest manifestation of nature, leaving only the eternal spiritual substance. This ultimate Soul remains situated within Himself, alone and without end. The mind of a person who meditates on these ideas does not become bewildered by material dualities. This science of Sāṅkhya, narrated in alternating sequences of creation and annihilation, serves to cut off all doubts and bondage.

TEXT 24.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
atha te sampravakṣyāmi
sāṅkhyam pūrvair viniścitam
yad vijñāya pumān sadyo
jahyād vaikalpikam bhramam*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *atha* – now; *te* – unto you; *sampravakṣyāmi* – I shall speak; *sāṅkhyam* – the knowledge of the evolution of the elements of creation; *pūrvaiḥ* – by previous authorities; *viniścitam* – ascertained; *yad* – which; *vijñāya* – knowing; *pumān* – a person; *sadyaḥ* – immediately; *jahyāt* – can give up; *vaikalpikam* – based on false duality; *bhramam* – the illusion.

TRANSLATION

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: Now I shall describe to you the science of Sāṅkhya, which has been perfectly established by ancient authorities. By understanding this science a person can immediately give up the illusion of material duality.

PURPORT

In the previous chapter the Lord explained that one can give up material duality by controlling the mind and fixing it in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This chapter describes the Sāṅkhya system, in which the difference between matter and spirit is elaborately explained. By hearing this knowledge one can easily separate the mind from material contamination and fix it on the spiritual platform in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The Sāṅkhya philosophy system mentioned here is that presented by Lord Kapila in the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and not the atheistic Sāṅkhya presented later by materialists and Māyāvādīs. The material elements, which emanate from the potency of the Lord, evolve in a progressive sequence. One should not foolishly think that such evolution begins from an original material element without the assistance of the Lord. This speculative theory is generated from the false ego of conditioned life and constitutes gross ignorance, unacceptable to the Personality of Godhead and His followers.

TEXT 24.2

*āsīj jñānam atho artha
ekam evāvikalpitam
yadā viveka-nipuṇā
ādau kṛta-yuge'yuge*

āsīt – there existed; *jñānam* – the seer; *atha u* – thus; *arthaḥ* – the seen; *ekam* – one; *eva* – simply; *avikalpitam* – undifferentiated; *yadā* – when; *viveka* – in discrimination; *nipuṇāḥ* – persons who were expert; *ādau* – in the

beginning; *kṛta-yuge* – in the age of purity; *ayuge* – and before that, during the time of annihilation.

TRANSLATION

Originally, during the Kṛta-yuga, when all men were very expert in spiritual discrimination, and also previous to that, during the period of annihilation, the seer existed alone, nondifferent from the seen object.

PURPORT

Kṛta-yuga is the first age, also known as Satya-yuga, in which knowledge, being perfect, is not different from its object. In modern society, knowledge is highly speculative and constantly changing. There is often a vast difference between people’s theoretical ideas and actual reality. In Satya-yuga, however, people are *viveka-nipuṇāḥ*, or expert in intelligent discrimination, and thus there is no difference between their vision and reality. In Satya-yuga, the population in general is self-realized. Seeing everything as the potency of the Supreme Lord, they do not artificially create duality between themselves and other living entities. This is a further aspect of the oneness of Satya-yuga. At the time of annihilation, everything merges to rest within the Lord, and at that time also there is no difference between the Lord, who becomes the only seer, and the objects of knowledge, which are contained within the Lord. The liberated living entities in the eternal spiritual world are never subject to such merging but remain forever undisturbed in their spiritual forms. Because they are voluntarily one with the Lord in love, their abode is never annihilated.

TEXT 24.3

*tan māyā-phala-rūpeṇa
kevalam nirvikalpitam
vāñ-mano-'gocaram satyam
dvidhā samabhavat bṛhat*

tat – that (Supreme); *māyā* – of the material nature; *phala* – and the enjoyer of its manifestations; *rūpeṇa* – in the two forms; *kevalam* – one; *nirvikalpitam* – nondifferentiated; *vāñ* – to speech; *manaḥ* – and the mind; *agocaram* – inaccessible; *satyam* – true; *dvidhā* – twofold; *samabhavat* – He became; *bṛhat* – the Absolute Truth.

TRANSLATION

That one Absolute Truth, remaining free from material dualities and inaccessible to ordinary speech and mind, divided Himself into two categories – the material nature and the living entities who are trying to enjoy the manifestations of that nature.

PURPORT

Both material nature and the living entity are potencies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 24.4

*tayor ekataro hy arthaḥ
prakṛtiḥ sobhayātmikā
jñānaṁ tv anyatamo bhāvaḥ
puruṣaḥ so'bhidhīyate*

tayoḥ - of the two; *ekataraḥ* - one; *hi* - indeed; *arthaḥ* - entity; *prakṛtiḥ* - nature; *sā* - she; *ubhaya-ātmikā* - consisting of both the subtle causes and their manifest products; *jñānam* - (who possesses) consciousness; *tu* - and; *anyatamaḥ* - the other; *bhāvaḥ* - entity; *puruṣaḥ* - the living soul; *saḥ* - he; *abhidhīyate* - is called.

TRANSLATION

Of these two categories of manifestation, one is material nature, which embodies both the subtle causes and manifest products of matter. The other is the conscious living entity, designated as the enjoyer.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, *prakṛti* here refers to the subtle *pradhāna*, which later becomes manifest as *mahat-tattva*.

TEXT 24.5

*tamo rajaḥ sattvam iti
prakṛter abhavan guṇāḥ
mayā prakṣobhyamāṇāyāḥ
puruṣānumatena ca*

tamaḥ - ignorance; *rajaḥ* - passion; *sattvam* - goodness; *iti* - thus; *prakṛteḥ* - from nature; *abhavan* - became manifest; *guṇāḥ* - the modes; *mayā* - by Me; *prakṣobhyamāṇāyāḥ* - who was being agitated; *puruṣa* - of the living entity; *anumatena* - in order to fulfill the desires; *ca* - and.

TRANSLATION

When material nature was agitated by My glance, the three material modes - goodness, passion and ignorance - became manifest to fulfill the pending desires of the conditioned souls.

PURPORT

The Lord casts His glance over material nature to remind her that the conditioned souls have not worked out their chain of fruitive activity and mental speculation and that creation is therefore again necessary. The Lord desires that the conditioned souls get the opportunity to become Kṛṣṇa conscious in love of Godhead by understanding the futility of life without the Lord. The modes of nature arise after the glance of the Lord and become inimical to one another, each mode attempting to conquer the other two. There is constant competition between birth, maintenance and annihilation. Although a child desires to take birth, the cruel mother may desire to kill the child through abortion. Although we may desire to kill the weeds in a field, they stubbornly take birth again and again. Similarly, we often desire to maintain our physical status quo, but still deterioration sets in. Thus there is constant competition among the modes of nature, and by their combinations

and permutations the living entities try to enjoy innumerable material situations without Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The word *puruṣānumatena* indicates that the Lord sets the stage for such material futility so that the conditioned souls will eventually come back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 24.6

*tebhyaḥ samabhavat sūtram
mahān sūtreṇa saṁyutaḥ
tato vikurvato jāto
yo'haṅkāro vimohanaḥ*

tebhyaḥ – from those modes; *samabhavat* – arose; *sūtram* – the first transformation of nature, endowed with the potency of activity; *mahān* – primeval nature endowed with the potency of knowledge; *sūtreṇa* – with this *sūtra-tattva*; *saṁyutaḥ* – conjoined; *tataḥ* – from the *mahat*; *vikurvataḥ* – transforming; *jātaḥ* – was generated; *yaḥ* – which; *ahaṅkāraḥ* – false ego; *vimohanaḥ* – the cause of bewilderment.

TRANSLATION

From these modes arose the primeval sūtra, along with the mahat-tattva. By the transformation of the mahat-tattva was generated the false ego, the cause of the living entities' bewilderment.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, *sūtra* is the first transformation of material nature that manifests the potency of activity, and it is accompanied by the *mahat-tattva*, which is endowed with the potency of knowledge. In the material world, one's real knowledge is covered by fruitive activity and mental speculation. As one's devotional service to the Lord slackens, these two tendencies grow automatically, just as the diminishing of light automatically brings an increase in darkness.

TEXT 24.7

*vaikārikas taijasaś ca
tāmasaś cety ahaṁ tri-vṛt
tan-mātrendriya-manasām
kāraṇam cid-acin-mayaḥ*

vaikārikaḥ – in the mode of goodness; *taijasaḥ* – in the mode of passion; *ca* – and; *tāmasaḥ* – in the mode of ignorance; *ca* – also; *iti* – thus; *ahaṁ* – false ego; *tri-vṛt* – in three categories; *tat-mātra* – of the subtle forms of sense objects; *indriya* – of the senses; *manasām* – and of the mind; *kāraṇam* – the cause; *cit-acit* – both spirit and matter; *mayaḥ* – encompassing.

TRANSLATION

False ego, which is the cause of physical sensation, the senses and the mind, encompasses both spirit and matter and manifests in three varieties: in the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance.

PURPORT

The word *cid-acin-maya*, “encompassing both spirit and matter,” is significant in this regard. The false ego is the illusory combination of the eternal conscious soul and the temporary unconscious body. Because the spirit soul desires to exploit illicitly the creation of God, he is bewildered by the three modes of nature and assumes an illusory identity within the material world. Struggling to enjoy, he becomes more and more entangled in the complexities of illusion and only increases his anxiety. This hopeless situation can be overcome by taking to pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in which the pleasure of the Supreme Lord becomes the only goal of one’s life.

TEXT 24.8

*arthas tan-mātrikāj jajñe
tāmasād indriyāṇi ca
taijasād devatā āsann
ekādaśa ca vaikṛtāt*

arthaḥ – the gross elements; *tat-mātrikāt* – from the subtle sensations (which themselves are derived from false ego in the mode of goodness); *jajñe* – became generated; *tāmasāt* – from false ego in the mode of ignorance; *indriyāṇi* – the senses; *ca* – and; *taijasāt* – from false ego in the mode of passion; *devatāḥ* – the demigods; *āsan* – arose; *ekādaśa* – eleven; *ca* – and; *vaikṛtāt* – from false ego in the mode of goodness.

TRANSLATION

From false ego in the mode of ignorance came the subtle physical perceptions, from which the gross elements were generated. From false ego in the mode of passion came the senses, and from false ego in the mode of goodness arose the eleven demigods.

PURPORT

From false ego in the mode of ignorance, sound is generated along with the sense of hearing to receive it and the sky as its medium. Next, the sensation of touch, air and the sense of touch are generated, and thus from subtle to gross all of the elements and their perceptions are generated. The senses, because they are busily engaged in activity, are created from false ego in the mode of passion. From false ego in goodness come eleven demigods: the deities of the directions, the wind and the sun, Varuṇa, the Aśvinī deities, Agni, Indra, Upendra, Mitra, Brahmā and Candra.

TEXT 24.9

*mayā sañcoditā bhāvāḥ
sarve saṁhatya-kāriṇaḥ
aṇḍam utpādayām āsur
mamāyatanam uttamam*

mayā – by Me; *sañcoditāḥ* – impelled; *bhāvāḥ* – elements; *sarve* – all; *saṁhatya* – by amalgamation; *kāriṇaḥ* – functioning; *aṇḍam* – the egg of the

universe; *utpādayām āsuḥ* – they brought into being; *mama* – My; *āyatanam* – residence; *uttamam* – superior.

TRANSLATION

Impelled by Me, all these elements combined to function in an orderly fashion and together gave birth to the universal egg, which is My excellent place of residence.

TEXT 24.10

*tasminn ahaṁ samabhavam
aṅḍe salila-saṁsthitau
mama nābhyām abhūt padmaṁ
viśvākhyam tatra cātma-bhūḥ*

tasmin – within that; *ahaṁ* – I; *samabhavam* – appeared; *aṅḍe* – in the egg of the universe; *salila* – in the water of the Causal Ocean; *saṁsthitau* – which was situated; *mama* – My; *nābhyām* – from the navel; *abhūt* – arose; *padmam* – a lotus; *viśva-ākhyam* – known as universal; *tatra* – in that; *ca* – and; *ātma-bhūḥ* – self-born Brahmā.

TRANSLATION

I Myself appeared within that egg, which was floating on the causal water, and from My navel arose the universal lotus, the birthplace of self-born Brahmā.

PURPORT

The Supreme Lord here describes His appearance in His transcendental pastime form of Śrī Nārāyaṇa. Lord Nārāyaṇa enters within the universe but does not give up His purely transcendental body of knowledge and bliss. Lord Brahmā, however, born from the Lord's navel lotus, has a material body. Although Lord Brahmā is the most powerful mystic, his body, which pervades all material existence, is material, whereas the body of the Supreme Lord Hari, Nārāyaṇa, is always transcendental.

TEXT 24.11

*so'srjat tapasā yukto
rajasā mad-anugrahāt
lokān sa-pālān viśvātmā
bhūr bhuvaḥ svar iti tridhā*

saḥ – he, Brahmā; *asrjat* – created; *tapasā* – by his austerity; *yuktaḥ* – endowed; *rajasā* – with the potency of the mode of passion; *mat* – My; *anugrahāt* – because of the mercy; *lokān* – the different planets; *sa-pālān* – along with their presiding demigods; *viśva* – of the universe; *ātmā* – the soul; *bhūḥ bhuvaḥ svaḥ iti* – called Bhūr, Bhuvar and Svar; *tridhā* – three divisions.

TRANSLATION

Lord Brahmā, the soul of the universe, being endowed with the mode of passion, performed great austerities by My mercy and thus created the three planetary divisions, called Bhūr, Bhuvar and Svar, along with their presiding deities.

TEXT 24.12

*devānām oka āsīt svar
bhūtānām ca bhuvaḥ padam
martyādīnām ca bhūr lokaḥ
siddhānām tritayāt param*

devānām - of the demigods; *okaḥ* - the home; *āsīt* - became; *svaḥ* - heaven; *bhūtānām* - of ghostly spirits; *ca* - and; *bhuvaḥ* - Bhuvan; *padam* - the place; *martya-ādīnām* - of ordinary mortal humans and other beings; *ca* - and; *bhūr lokaḥ* - the planet called Bhūr; *siddhānām* - (the place) of those striving for liberation; *tritayāt* - these three divisions; *param* - beyond.

TRANSLATION

Heaven was established as the residence of the demigods, Bhuvanloka as that of the ghostly spirits, and the earth system as the place of human beings and other mortal creatures. Those mystics who strive for liberation are promoted beyond these three divisions.

PURPORT

Planets such as Indraloka and Candraloka are meant for the heavenly enjoyment of the most pious fruitive workers. The highest four planets, however, Satyaloka, Maharloka, Janoloka and Tapoloka, are meant for those who are most perfectly endeavoring for liberation. Caitanya Mahāprabhu is so inconceivably merciful that He is promoting the most fallen victims of Kali-yuga beyond these four planets and even beyond Vaikuṅṭha, to the supreme planet of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual sky, called Goloka Vṛndāvana. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that heaven is the residence of the demigods, the earth is the residence of the human beings, and in between is a temporary residence for both classes of beings.

TEXT 24.13

*adho'surāṇām nāgānām
bhūmer oko'sṛjat prabhuḥ
tri-lokyām gatayaḥ sarvāḥ
karmaṇām tri-guṇātmanām*

adhaḥ - below; *asurāṇām* - of the demons; *nāgānām* - of the celestial snakes; *bhūmeḥ* - from the earth; *okaḥ* - the residence; *asṛjat* - created; *prabhuḥ* - Lord Brahmā; *tri-lokyām* - of the three worlds; *gatayaḥ* - the destinations; *sarvāḥ* - all; *karmaṇām* - of fruitive activities; *tri-guṇa-ātmanām* - partaking of the three modes.

TRANSLATION

Lord Brahmā created the region below the earth for the demons and the Nāga snakes. In this way the destinations of the three worlds

were arranged as the corresponding reactions for different kinds of work performed within the three modes of nature.

TEXT 24.14

*yogasya tapasaś caiva
nyāsasya gatayo'malāḥ
mahar janas tapaḥ satyaṁ
bhakti-yogasya mad-gatiḥ*

yogasya – of mystic *yoga*; *tapasaḥ* – of great austerity; *ca* – and; *eva* – certainly; *nyāsasya* – of the renounced order of life; *gatayaḥ* – the destinations; *amalāḥ* – spotless; *mahaḥ* – Mahar; *janaḥ* – Janas; *tapaḥ* – Tapas; *satyam* – Satya; *bhakti-yogasya* – of devotional service; *mat* – My; *gatiḥ* – destination.

TRANSLATION

By mystic yoga, great austerities and the renounced order of life, the pure destinations of Maharloka, Janoloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka are attained. But by devotional yoga, one achieves My transcendental abode.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that the word *tapasaḥ* in this verse refers to austerities performed by *brahmacārīs* and *vānaprasthas*. A *brahmacārī* who practices celibacy perfectly in some particular stage of his life achieves Maharloka, and one who perfectly practices lifelong celibacy achieves Janoloka. By perfect execution of *vānaprastha* one may achieve Tapoloka, and one in the renounced order of life goes to Satyaloka. These different destinations certainly depend on one's seriousness in the *yoga* system. In the Third Canto of the *Bhāgavatam*, Lord Brahmā explains to the demigods, "The inhabitants of Vaikuṅṭha travel in their airplanes made of lapis lazuli, emeralds and gold. Although crowded by their consorts, who have large hips and beautiful smiling faces, they cannot be stimulated to passion by their mirth and beautiful charms." (*Bhāg.* 3.15.20) Thus in the spiritual world, the kingdom of God, the inhabitants have absolutely no desire for personal satisfaction, since they are completely satisfied in love of Godhead. Because they only think of the Lord's pleasure, there is no possibility of cheating, anxiety, lust, disappointment, and so on. As described in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.62):

*tam eva śaraṇaṁ gaccha
sarva-bhāvena bhārata
tat-prasādāt parāṁ śāntiṁ
sthānaṁ prāpsyasi śāśvatam*

"O scion of Bharata, surrender unto Him utterly. By His grace you will attain transcendental peace and the supreme and eternal abode."

TEXT 24.15

*mayā kālātmanā dhātrā
karma-yuktam idam jagat
guṇa-pravāha etasminn
unmajjati nimajjati*

mayā – by Me; *kāla-ātmanā* – who contains the energy of time; *dhātrā* – the creator; *karma-yuktam* – full of fruitive activities; *idam* – this; *jagat* – world; *guṇa-pravāhe* – in the mighty current of the modes; *etasmin* – in this; *unmajjati* – one rises up; *nimajjati* – one drowns.

TRANSLATION

All results of fruitive work have been arranged within this world by Me, the supreme creator acting as the force of time. Thus one sometimes rises up toward the surface of this mighty river of the modes of nature and sometimes again submerges.

PURPORT

Unmajjati refers to one's promotion to the higher planetary systems, as mentioned in previous verses, and *nimajjati* refers to being submerged in a miserable condition of life by impious activities. In both cases one is drowning within the mighty river of material existence, which carries one far away from one's real home in the kingdom of God.

TEXT 24.16

*aṇur bṛhat kṛśaḥ sthūlo
yo yo bhāvaḥ prasidhyati
sarvo'py ubhaya-samyuktaḥ
prakṛtyā puruṣeṇa ca*

aṇuḥ – small; *bṛhat* – great; *kṛśaḥ* – thin; *sthūlaḥ* – stout; *yaḥ yaḥ* – whatever; *bhāvaḥ* – manifestation; *prasidhyati* – is established; *sarvaḥ* – all; *api* – indeed; *ubhaya* – by both; *samyuktaḥ* – conjoined; *prakṛtyā* – by nature; *puruṣeṇa* – by the enjoying spirit soul; *ca* – and.

TRANSLATION

Whatever features visibly exist within this world – small or great, thin or stout – certainly contain both the material nature and its enjoyer, the spirit soul.

TEXT 24.17

*yas tu yasyādir antaś ca
sa vai madhyam ca tasya san
vikāro vyavahārārtho
yathā taijasa-pārthivāḥ*

yaḥ – which (cause); *tu* – and; *yasya* – of which (product); *ādiḥ* – the beginning; *antaḥ* – the end; *ca* – and; *saḥ* – that; *vai* – indeed; *madhyam* – the middle; *ca* – and; *tasya* – of that product; *san* – being (real); *vikāraḥ* – the transformation; *vyavahāra-arthaḥ* – for ordinary purposes; *yathā* – as; *taijasa* – things produced from gold (which is itself derived from fire); *pārthivāḥ* – and things produced from earth.

TRANSLATION

Gold and earth are originally existing as ingredients. From gold one may fashion golden ornaments such as bracelets and earrings, and from earth one may fashion clay pots and saucers. The original ingredients gold and earth exist before the products made from them, and when the products are eventually destroyed, the original ingredients, gold and earth, will remain. Thus, since the ingredients are present in the beginning and at the end, they must also be present in the middle phase, taking the form of a particular product to which we assign for convenience a particular name, such as bracelet, earring, pot or saucer. We can therefore understand that since the ingredient cause exists before the creation of a product and after the product's destruction, the same ingredient cause must be present during the manifest phase, supporting the product as the basis of its reality.

PURPORT

The Lord here explains that the original cause is certainly present in its effect, citing the example of gold and clay functioning as the causal ingredients of many different products in which gold and clay continue to be present. For our convenience, we assign different names to temporary products, although their essential nature continues to be that of the ingredient, and not of the temporary product.

TEXT 24.18

*yad upādāya pūrvas tu
bhāvo vikurute'param
ādir anto yadā yasya
tat satyam abhidhīyate*

yat - which (form); *upādāya* - accepting as the ingredient cause; *pūrvah* - the previous cause (such as the *mahat-tattva*); *tu* - and; *bhāvaḥ* - thing; *vikurute* - produces as transformation; *aparam* - the second thing (such as the element *ahankāra*); *ādiḥ* - the beginning; *antaḥ* - the end; *yadā* - when; *yasya* - of which (product); *tat* - that (cause); *satyam* - real; *abhidhīyate* - is called.

TRANSLATION

A material object, itself composed of an essential ingredient, creates another material object through transformation. Thus one created object becomes the cause and basis of another created object. A particular thing may thus be called real in that it possesses the basic nature of another object that constitutes its origin and final state.

PURPORT

One may understand the purport of this verse through the simple analogy of a clay pot. A clay pot is formed from a lump of clay, which is itself prepared from the earth. In this case earth is the original ingredient forming the clay

lump, and the clay lump is in a sense the original cause of the pot. When the pot is destroyed, it will again assume the designation clay and ultimately merge back into the earth, its original cause. In relation to the clay pot, clay is the beginning and final state; thus the pot is called real, for it possesses the essential characteristics of clay, which exists before and after the existence of the functioning instrument known as the pot. Similarly, earth exists before and after the clay, and thus clay may be considered real because it possesses the essential characteristics of earth, which exists before and after the existence of the clay. Similarly, earth and other elements are created from the *mahat-tattva*, which exists before and after the existence of the elements, which may be considered real because they possess the essential characteristics of the *mahat-tattva*. The *mahat-tattva* is ultimately the creation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, who exists after all is annihilated. The Absolute Truth is the Supreme Lord Himself, who step by step gives meaning and character to all that exists.

TEXT 24.19

*prakṛtir yasyopādānam
ādhāraḥ puruṣaḥ paraḥ
sato'bhivyañjakaḥ kālo
brahma tat tritayam tv aham*

prakṛtiḥ – material nature; *yasya* – of which (produced manifestation of the universe); *upādānam* – the ingredient cause; *ādhāraḥ* – the foundation; *puruṣaḥ* – the Personality of Godhead; *paraḥ* – Supreme; *sataḥ* – of the real (nature); *abhivyañjakaḥ* – the agitating agent; *kālaḥ* – time; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *tat* – this; *tritayam* – group of three; *tu* – but; *aham* – I.

TRANSLATION

The material universe may be considered real, having nature as its original ingredient and final state. Lord Mahā-Viṣṇu is the resting place of nature, which becomes manifest by the power of time. Thus nature, the almighty Viṣṇu and time are not different from Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth.

PURPORT

Material nature is the energy of the Lord, Mahā-Viṣṇu is His plenary portion, and time represents the Lord's activity. In this way, time and nature are always subservient to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who creates, maintains and annihilates all that exists through the agency of His potencies and plenary portions. In other words, Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth because He contains all existence within Himself.

TEXT 24.20

*sargaḥ pravartate tāvat
paurvāparyeṇa nityaśaḥ*

*mahān guṇa-visargārthaḥ
sthity-anto yāvad īkṣaṇam*

sargaḥ – the creation; *pravartate* – continues to exist; *tāvat* – to that extent; *paurva-aparyeṇa* – in the form of parents and children; *nityaśaḥ* – perpetually; *mahān* – bountiful; *guṇa-visarga* – of the variegated manifestation of the material modes; *arthaḥ* – for the purpose; *sthiti-antaḥ* – until the end of its maintenance; *yāvad* – as long as; *īkṣaṇam* – the glance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TRANSLATION

As long as the Supreme Personality of Godhead continues to glance upon nature, the material world continues to exist, perpetually manifesting through procreation the great and variegated flow of universal creation.

PURPORT

Although the *mahat-tattva*, impelled by the force of time, is the ingredient cause of this world, it is clearly explained here that the Supreme Lord is personally the only ultimate cause of all that exists. Time and nature are powerless to act without the glance of the Personality of Godhead. He creates unlimited material variety for the sense gratification of the conditioned souls, who try to enjoy life as the children of particular parents and as the parents of particular children, throughout the 8,400,000 species of life.

TEXT 24.21

*virāṇ mayāsādyamāno
loka-kalpa-vikalpakaḥ
pañcatvāya viśeṣāya
kalpate bhuvanaiḥ saha*

virāṇ – the universal form; *mayā* – by Me; *āsādyamānaḥ* – being pervaded; *loka* – of the planets; *kalpa* – of repeated creation, maintenance and destruction; *vikalpakaḥ* – manifesting the variety; *pañcatvāya* – the elemental manifestation of creation of the five elements; *viśeṣāya* – in varieties; *kalpate* – is capable of displaying; *bhuvanaiḥ* – with the different planets; *saha* – being endowed.

TRANSLATION

I am the basis of the universal form, which displays endless variety through the repeated creation, maintenance and destruction of the planetary systems. Originally containing within itself all planets in their dormant state, My universal form manifests the varieties of created existence by arranging the coordinated combination of the five elements.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the word *mayā* refers to the Lord in His form as eternal time.

TEXTS 24.22-27

*anne pralīyate martyam
annam dhānāsu līyate
dhānā bhūmau pralīyante
bhūmir gandhe pralīyate
apsu pralīyate gandha
āpaś ca sva-guṇe rase
līyate jyotiṣi raso
jyotī rūpe pralīyate
rūpaṁ vāyau sa ca sparśe
līyate so'pi cāmbare
ambaram śabda-tan-mātra
indriyāṇi sva-yoniṣu
yonir vaikārike saumya
līyate manasīśvare
śabdo bhūtādim apyeti
bhūtādir mahati prabhuḥ
sa līyate mahān sveṣu
guṇesu guṇa-vattamaḥ
te'vyakte sampralīyante
tat kāle līyate'vyaye
kālo māyā-maye jīve
jīva ātmani mayy aje
ātmā kevala ātma-stho
vikalpāpāya-lakṣaṇaḥ*

anne - in food; *pralīyate* - becomes merged; *martyam* - the mortal body; *annam* - food; *dhānāsu* - within the grains; *līyate* - becomes merged; *dhānāḥ* - the grains; *bhūmau* - in the earth; *pralīyante* - become merged; *bhūmiḥ* - the earth; *gandhe* - within fragrance; *pralīyate* - becomes merged; *apsu* - in water; *pralīyate* - becomes merged; *gandhaḥ* - fragrance; *āpaḥ* - water; *ca* - and; *sva-guṇe* - within its own quality; *rase* - taste; *līyate* - becomes merged; *jyotiṣi* - within fire; *rasaḥ* - taste; *jyotiḥ* - fire; *rūpe* - within form; *pralīyate* - becomes merged; *rūpaṁ* - form; *vāyau* - in air; *saḥ* - it; *ca* - and; *sparśe* - in touch; *līyate* - becomes merged; *saḥ* - it; *api* - also; *ca* - and; *ambare* - in ether; *ambaram* - ether; *śabda* - in sound; *tat-mātre* - its corresponding subtle sensation; *indriyāṇi* - the senses; *sva-yoniṣu* - in their sources, the demigods; *yonih* - the demigods; *vaikārike* - in false ego in the mode of goodness; *saumya* - My dear Uddhava; *līyate* - become merged; *manasi* - in the mind; *īśvare* - which is the controller; *śabdaḥ* - sound; *bhūta-ādim* - in the original false ego; *apyeti* - becomes merged; *bhūta-ādih* - false ego; *mahati* - in the total material nature; *prabhuḥ* - powerful; *saḥ* - that; *līyate* - becomes merged; *mahān* - the total material nature; *sveṣu* - in its

own; *guṇeṣu* - three modes; *guṇa-vat-tamaḥ* - being the ultimate abode of these modes; *te* - they; *avyakte* - in the unmanifest form of nature; *sampralīyante* - become completely merged; *tat* - that; *kāle* - in time; *līyate* - become merged; *avyaye* - in the infallible; *kālaḥ* - time; *māyā-maye* - who is full of transcendental knowledge; *jīve* - in the Supreme Lord, who activates all living beings; *jīvaḥ* - that Lord; *ātmani* - in the Supreme Self; *mayi* - in Me; *aje* - the unborn; *ātmā* - the original Self; *kevalaḥ* - alone; *ātma-sthaḥ* - self-situated; *vikalpa* - by creation; *apāya* - and annihilation; *lakṣaṇaḥ* - characterized.

TRANSLATION

At the time of annihilation, the mortal body of the living being becomes merged into food. Food merges into the grains, and the grains merge back into the earth. The earth merges into its subtle sensation, fragrance. Fragrance merges into water, and water further merges into its own quality, taste. That taste merges into fire, which merges into form. Form merges into touch, and touch merges into ether. Ether finally merges into the sensation of sound. The senses all merge into their own origins, the presiding demigods, and they, O gentle Uddhava, merge into the controlling mind, which itself merges into false ego in the mode of goodness. Sound becomes one with false ego in the mode of ignorance, and all-powerful false ego, the first of all the physical elements, merges into the total nature. The total material nature, the primary repository of the three basic modes, dissolves into the modes. These modes of nature then merge into the unmanifest form of nature, and that unmanifest form merges into time. Time merges into the Supreme Lord, present in the form of the omniscient Mahā-puruṣa, the original activator of all living beings. That origin of all life merges into Me, the unborn Supreme Soul, who remains alone, established within Himself. It is from Him that all creation and annihilation are manifested.

PURPORT

The annihilation of the material world is the reversal of the process of creation, and ultimately everything is merged to rest within the Supreme Lord, who remains full in His absolute position.

TEXT 24.28

*evam anvīkṣamāṇasya
katham vaikalpiko bhramaḥ
manaso hṛdi tiṣṭheta
vyomnīvārkodaye tamaḥ*

evam - in this way; *anvīkṣamāṇasya* - of one who is carefully examining; *katham* - how; *vaikalpikaḥ* - based on duality; *bhramaḥ* - illusion; *manasaḥ* - of his mind; *hṛdi* - in the heart; *tiṣṭheta* - can remain; *vyomni* - in the sky; *iva* - just as; *arka* - of the sun; *udaye* - upon the rising; *tamaḥ* - darkness.

TRANSLATION

Just as the rising sun removes the darkness of the sky, similarly, this scientific knowledge of cosmic annihilation removes all illusory duality from the mind of a serious student. Even if illusion somehow enters his heart, it cannot remain there.

PURPORT

Just as the brilliant sun removes all darkness from the sky, a clear understanding of the knowledge spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Uddhava removes all ignorance concocted by the material mind. One will then no longer accept the material body as the self. Even if such illusion temporarily manifests within one's consciousness, it will be driven away by the resurgence of one's spiritual knowledge.

TEXT 24.29

*eṣa sāṅkhya-vidhiḥ proktaḥ
saṁśaya-granthi-bhedanaḥ
pratilomānulomābhyām
parāvara-dṛśā mayā*

eṣaḥ – this; *sāṅkhya-vidhiḥ* – method of Sāṅkhya (analytic philosophy); *proktaḥ* – spoken; *saṁśaya* – of doubts; *granthi* – the bondage; *bhedanaḥ* – which breaks; *pratiloma-anulomābhyām* – in both direct and reverse order; *para* – the situation of the spiritual world; *avara* – and the inferior situation of the material world; *dṛśā* – by Him who sees perfectly; *mayā* – by Me.

TRANSLATION

Thus I, the perfect seer of everything material and spiritual, have spoken this knowledge of Sāṅkhya, which destroys the illusion of doubt by scientific analysis of creation and annihilation.

PURPORT

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has explained that the material mind accepts and rejects many different concepts of life, generating innumerable false arguments about the actual process of perfection. But a person who takes shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead can see everything with clear intelligence. One who understands how the Supreme Lord creates and annihilates can be liberated from material bondage and devote himself to the eternal service of the Supreme Lord.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-fourth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "The Philosophy of Sāṅkhya."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

The Three Modes of Nature and Beyond

To establish the transcendental nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this chapter describes the various functional manifestations of the three modes (goodness, passion and ignorance), which arise in the mind. Control of the mind, control of the senses, tolerance and so forth are manifestations of the unmixed mode of goodness. Desire, endeavor, false pride and so on are manifestations of the unmixed mode of passion. And anger, greed and bewilderment are among the functions of the unmixed mode of ignorance. In the admixture of the three modes we find the concept of "I" and "my," behavior in accordance with this mentality by body, mind and words, adherence to the principles of religiosity, economic development and sense gratification, and the fixed pursuit of one's occupational duty for material interest.

A person whose character is in the mode of goodness worships Lord Hari in a spirit of devotion, without regard to profit. On the other hand, one who hankers after the fruits of his worship of the Lord is passionate by nature. And one who desires violence is in the mode of ignorance. These modes of goodness, passion and ignorance are present in the infinitesimal living entity, whereas the Supreme Personality of Godhead is transcendental to the three modes of material nature.

The substance, place and result of activity, along with the time, the knowledge underlying action, the activity itself, the performer, his faith, his level of awareness, his spiritual progress and his destination after death, all partake of the three modes and manifest variously in terms of distinctions and hierarchies. But objects related to the Supreme Personality, places connected with Him, happiness based on Him, the time occupied in His worship, knowledge related to Him, work offered to Him, the performer of work who acts under His shelter, faith in His devotional service, progress toward the spiritual realm, and the destination of the Supreme Lord's personal abode all transcend the material modes.

There are many different destinations and conditions of life for the spirit soul within the cycle of material existence. These are all based on the modes of nature and on fruitive activities, which are governed by the modes. It is only by practicing the *yoga* of pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord that one can conquer the three modes, which arise originally from the mind. After obtaining a human body, which has the potential for developing knowledge and realization, a person who is intelligent should renounce association with the three modes of nature and then worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. First, by increasing the mode of goodness, one can defeat passion and ignorance. Then one can conquer material goodness by evolving his consciousness to the platform of transcendence. At that time he becomes entirely liberated from the material modes, gives up his subtle body (the material mind, intelligence and false ego) and attains the association of the Personality of Godhead. By the shattering of his subtle covering, the living entity is able to come face to face with the Supreme Lord and thus achieve absolute fulfillment by His grace.

TEXT 25.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
guṇānām asammiśrāṇām
pumān yena yathā bhavet
tan me puruṣa-varyedam
upadhāraya śamsataḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *guṇānām* – of the modes of nature; *asammiśrāṇām* – in their unmixed state; *pumān* – a person; *yena* – by which mode; *yathā* – how; *bhavet* – he becomes; *tat* – that; *me* – by Me; *puruṣa-varya* – O best among men; *idam* – this; *upadhāraya* – please try to understand; *śamsataḥ* – as I speak.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O best among men, please listen as I describe to you how the living entity attains a particular nature by association with individual material modes.

PURPORT

The word *asammiśra* indicates that which is not mixed with anything else. Lord Kṛṣṇa now explains how each of the three material modes (goodness, passion and ignorance), acting separately, causes a conditioned soul to manifest a particular type of existence. The living entity is ultimately transcendental to the modes of nature, being part and parcel of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but in conditioned life he manifests material qualities. This is described in the following verses.

TEXTS 25.2-5

*śamo damas titikṣekṣā
tapaḥ satyaṁ dayā smṛtiḥ
tuṣṭis tyāgo'spṛhā śraddhā
hrīr dayādiḥ sva-nirvṛtiḥ
kāma ihā madas tṛṣṇā
stambha āśīr bhidā sukham
madotsāho yaśaḥ-prītir
hāsyam vīryam balodyamaḥ
krodho lobho'nṛtam himsā
yācñā dambhaḥ klamaḥ kaliḥ
śoka-mohau viṣādārtī
nidrāsā bhīr anudyamaḥ
sattvasya rajasaś caitās
tamasaś cānupūrvaśaḥ
vṛttayo varṇita-prāyāḥ
sannipātam atho śṛṇu*

śamaḥ – mind control; *damaḥ* – sense control; *titikṣā* – tolerance; *īkṣā* – discrimination; *tapāḥ* – strictly following one’s prescribed duty; *satyam* – truthfulness; *dayā* – mercy; *smṛtiḥ* – observation of the past and future; *tuṣṭiḥ* – satisfaction; *tyāgaḥ* – generosity; *asprhā* – detachment from sense gratification; *śraddhā* – faith (in the *guru* and other bona fide authorities); *hrīḥ* – shame (due to improper activities); *dayā-ādiḥ* – charity, simplicity, humility and so on; *sva-nirvṛtiḥ* – taking one’s pleasure from within; *kāmaḥ* – material desire; *ihā* – endeavor; *madaḥ* – audacity; *tṛṣṇā* – dissatisfaction even in gain; *stambhaḥ* – false pride; *āśīḥ* – praying to the demigods and other deities with desire for material gain; *bhidā* – separatist mentality; *sukham* – sense gratification; *mada-utsāhaḥ* – courage based on intoxication; *yaśaḥ-prītiḥ* – being fond of praise; *hāsyam* – indulging in ridicule; *vīryam* – advertising one’s power; *bala-udyamaḥ* – acting on the sanction of one’s own strength; *krodhaḥ* – intolerant anger; *lobhaḥ* – stinginess; *anṛtam* – false speech (speaking what is not stated in scripture as if it were evidence); *himsā* – enmity; *yācñā* – begging; *dambaḥ* – hypocrisy; *klamaḥ* – fatigue; *kaliḥ* – quarrel; *śoka-mohau* – lamentation and delusion; *viṣāda-ārtī* – unhappiness and false humility; *nidrā* – sloth; *āśā* – false expectations; *bhīḥ* – fear; *anudyamaḥ* – lack of endeavor; *sattvasya* – of the mode of goodness; *rajasah* – of the mode of passion; *ca* – and; *etāḥ* – these; *tamasah* – of the mode of ignorance; *ca* – and; *ānupūrvaśah* – one after another; *vṛttayaḥ* – the functions; *varṇita* – have been described; *prāyāḥ* – for the most part; *sannipātam* – the combination of these; *atho* – now; *śṛṇu* – please hear.

TRANSLATION

Mind and sense control, tolerance, discrimination, sticking to one’s prescribed duty, truthfulness, mercy, careful study of the past and future, satisfaction in any condition, generosity, renunciation of sense gratification, faith in the spiritual master, being embarrassed at improper action, charity, simplicity, humbleness and satisfaction within oneself are qualities of the mode of goodness. Material desire, great endeavor, audacity, dissatisfaction even in gain, false pride, praying for material advancement, considering oneself different and better than others, sense gratification, rash eagerness to fight, a fondness for hearing oneself praised, the tendency to ridicule others, advertising one’s own prowess and justifying one’s actions by one’s strength are qualities of the mode of passion. Intolerant anger, stinginess, speaking without scriptural authority, violent hatred, living as a parasite, hypocrisy, chronic fatigue, quarrel, lamentation, delusion, unhappiness, depression, sleeping too much, false expectations, fear and laziness constitute the major qualities of the mode of ignorance. Now please hear about the combination of these three modes.

TEXT 25.6

*sannipātas tv aham iti
mamety uddhava yā matiḥ
vyavahāraḥ sannipāto
mano-mātrendriyāsubhiḥ*

sannipātaḥ – the combination of the modes; *tu* – and; *aham iti* – “I”; *mama iti* – “mine”; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *yā* – which; *matiḥ* – mentality; *vyavahāraḥ* – ordinary activities; *sannipātaḥ* – the combination; *manaḥ* – by the mind; *mātrā* – the objects of perception; *indriya* – the senses; *asubhiḥ* – and the vital airs.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, the combination of all three modes is present in the mentality of “I” and “mine.” The ordinary transactions of this world, which are carried out through the agency of the mind, the objects of perception, the senses and the vital airs of the physical body, are also based on the combination of the modes.

PURPORT

The illusory concept of “I” and “mine” occurs by the mixture of the three modes of nature. A person in goodness may feel, “I am peaceful.” One in passion may think, “I am lusty.” And one in ignorance may think, “I am angry.” Similarly, one may think “my peace,” “my lust” or “my anger.” One completely absorbed in the mentality of being peaceful could not work in the material world; he would lack any impulse to perform activity. Similarly, one absorbed in lust would be blinded without at least a tinge of peacefulness or restraint. One overwhelmed with anger could not function properly in the material world without the mixture of other qualities. Thus we find that a material mode does not occur in a pure, isolated form but rather is mixed with other modes, thereby making possible normal functioning within this world. Ultimately one should think, “I am an eternal servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa” and “My only possession is loving service to the Lord.” This is the pure state of consciousness, beyond the material modes of nature.

TEXT 25.7

*dharme cārthe ca kāme ca
yadāsau pariniṣṭhitaḥ
guṇānām sannikarṣo'yaṁ
śraddhā-rati-dhanāvahaḥ*

dharme – in religiosity; *ca* – and; *arthe* – in economic development; *ca* – and; *kāme* – in sense gratification; *ca* – and; *yadā* – when; *asau* – this living entity; *pariniṣṭhitaḥ* – is fixed; *guṇānām* – of the modes of nature; *sannikarṣaḥ* – the intermingling; *ayaṁ* – this; *śraddhā* – faith; *rati* – sensual enjoyment; *dhana* – and wealth; *āvahaḥ* – which each bring.

TRANSLATION

When a person devotes himself to religiosity, economic development and sense gratification, the faith, wealth and sensual

enjoyment obtained by his endeavors display the interaction of the three modes of nature.

PURPORT

Religiosity, economic development and sense gratification are situated within the modes of nature, and the faith, wealth and enjoyment obtained by them clearly reveal the particular situation of a person within the modes of nature.

TEXT 25.8

*pravṛtti-lakṣaṇe niṣṭhā
pumān yarhi gṛhāśrame
sva-dharme cānu tiṣṭheta
guṇānām samitir hi sā*

pravṛtti - of the path of material enjoyment; *lakṣaṇe* - in that which is the symptom; *niṣṭhā* - dedication; *pumān* - a person; *yarhi* - when; *gṛha-āśrame* - in family life; *sva-dharme* - in prescribed duties; *ca* - and; *anu* - later; *tiṣṭheta* - he stands; *guṇānām* - of the modes of nature; *samitiḥ* - the combination; *hi* - indeed; *sā* - this.

TRANSLATION

When a man desires sense gratification, being attached to family life, and when he consequently becomes established in religious and occupational duties, the combination of the modes of nature is manifest.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, religious duties performed for promotion to heaven are understood to be in the mode of passion, those performed to enjoy ordinary family life are in the mode of ignorance, and those performed selflessly to fulfill one's occupational duty in the *varṇāśrama* system are in the mode of goodness. The Lord has thus explained how mundane religiosity is manifest within the modes of nature.

TEXT 25.9

*puruṣam sattva-saṁyuktam
anumīyāc chamādibhiḥ
kāmadibhī rajo-yuktam
krodhādyais tamasā yutam*

puruṣam - a person; *sattva-saṁyuktam* - endowed with the mode of goodness; *anumīyāt* - can be deduced; *śama-ādibhiḥ* - by his qualities of sense control and so on; *kāma-ādibhiḥ* - by lust and so on; *rajaḥ-yuktam* - one who is in the mode of passion; *krodha-ādyaiḥ* - by anger and so on; *tamasā* - with the mode of ignorance; *yutam* - one who is endowed.

TRANSLATION

A person exhibiting qualities such as self-control is understood to be predominantly in the mode of goodness. Similarly, a passionate

person is recognized by his lust, and one in ignorance is recognized by qualities such as anger.

TEXT 25.10

*yadā bhajati mām bhaktyā
nirapekṣaḥ sva-karmabhiḥ
tam sattva-prakṛtiṁ vidyāt
puruṣam striyam eva vā*

yadā – when; *bhajati* – a person worships; *mām* – Me; *bhaktyā* – with devotion; *nirapekṣaḥ* – indifferent to results; *sva-karmabhiḥ* – by his own prescribed duties; *tam* – him; *sattva-prakṛtim* – a person whose nature is in the mode of goodness; *vidyāt* – one should understand; *puruṣam* – a man; *striyam* – a woman; *eva* – even; *vā* – or.

TRANSLATION

Any person, whether man or woman, who worships Me with loving devotion, offering his or her prescribed duties unto Me without material attachment, is understood to be situated in goodness.

TEXT 25.11

*yadā āśiṣa āśāsya
mām bhajeta sva-karmabhiḥ
tam rajaḥ-prakṛtiṁ vidyāt
himśam āśāsya tāmasam*

yadā – when; *āśiṣaḥ* – benedictions; *āśāsya* – hoping for; *mām* – Me; *bhajeta* – a person worships; *sva-karmabhiḥ* – by his duties; *tam* – that; *rajaḥ-prakṛtim* – a person situated in the mode of passion; *vidyāt* – one should understand; *himśam* – violence; *āśāsya* – hoping for; *tāmasam* – a person in the mode of ignorance.

TRANSLATION

When a person worships Me by his prescribed duties with the hope of gaining material benefit, his nature should be understood to be in passion, and one who worships Me with the desire to commit violence against others is in ignorance.

TEXT 25.12

*sattvaṁ rajas tama iti
guṇā jīvasya naiva me
citta-jā yaiḥ tu bhūtānām
sajjamāno nibadhyate*

sattvam – the mode of goodness; *rajaḥ* – the mode of passion; *tamaḥ* – the mode of ignorance; *iti* – thus; *guṇāḥ* – the modes; *jīvasya* – pertaining to the spirit soul; *na* – not; *eva* – indeed; *me* – to Me; *citta-jāḥ* – manifest within the mind; *yaiḥ* – by which modes; *tu* – and; *bhūtānām* – to material creations; *sajjamānaḥ* – becoming attached; *nibadhyate* – one is bound up.

TRANSLATION

The three modes of material nature - goodness, passion and ignorance - influence the living entity but not Me. Manifesting within his mind, they induce the living entity to become attached to material bodies and other created objects. In this way the living entity is bound up.

PURPORT

The living entity is the marginal potency of the Supreme Lord, having the tendency to be overwhelmed by the Lord's illusory material energy. The Personality of Godhead, however, is the absolute controller of illusion. Illusion can never control the Lord. Thus the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the eternal object of service for all living beings, who are eternally servants of the Lord. The three modes of nature manifest within the material energy. When a conditioned soul adopts a material mentality, the modes exert their influence within the jurisdiction of that mentality. But if one purifies one's mind in the devotional service of the Lord, the modes of nature can no longer act upon him, since they have no influence on the spiritual platform.

TEXT 25.13

*yadetarau jayet sattvaṁ
bhāsvaram viśadam śivam
tadā sukkena yujyeta
dharma-jñānādibhiḥ pumān*

yadā - when; *itarau* - the other two; *jayet* - overcomes; *sattvam* - the mode of goodness; *bhāsvaram* - luminous; *viśadam* - pure; *śivam* - auspicious; *tadā* - then; *sukkena* - with happiness; *yujyeta* - he becomes endowed; *dharma* - with religiousness; *jñāna* - knowledge; *ādibhiḥ* - and other good qualities; *pumān* - a man.

TRANSLATION

When the mode of goodness, which is luminous, pure and auspicious, predominates over passion and ignorance, a man becomes endowed with happiness, virtue, knowledge and other good qualities.

PURPORT

One can control one's mind and senses in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 25.14

*yadā jayet tamaḥ sattvaṁ
rajaḥ saṅgam bhidā calam
tadā duḥkhena yujyeta
karmaṇā yaśasā śriyā*

yadā - when; *jayet* - conquers; *tamaḥ sattvam* - both ignorance and goodness; *rajaḥ* - passion; *saṅgam* - (the cause of) attachment; *bhidā* - separatism; *calam* - and change; *tadā* - then; *duḥkhena* - with misery;

yujyeta – one becomes endowed; *karmaṇā* – with material work; *yaśasā* – with (the desire for) fame; *śriyā* – and with opulence.

TRANSLATION

When the mode of passion, which causes attachment, separatism and activity, conquers ignorance and goodness, a man begins to work hard to acquire prestige and fortune. Thus in the mode of passion he experiences anxiety and struggle.

TEXT 25.15

*yadā jayed rajaḥ sattvaṁ
tamo mūḍhaṁ layaṁ jaḍam
yujyeta śoka-mohābhyāṁ
nidrayā hiṁsayāśayā*

yadā – when; *jayet* – conquers; *rajaḥ sattvaṁ* – the modes of passion and goodness; *tamaḥ* – the mode of darkness; *mūḍham* – defeating one’s discrimination; *layam* – covering over consciousness; *jaḍam* – devoid of endeavor; *yujyeta* – one becomes endowed; *śoka* – with lamentation; *mohābhyām* – and bewilderment; *nidrayā* – with oversleeping; *hiṁsayā* – with violent qualities; *āśayā* – and false hopes.

TRANSLATION

When the mode of ignorance conquers passion and goodness, it covers one’s consciousness and makes one foolish and dull. Falling into lamentation and illusion, a person in the mode of ignorance sleeps excessively, indulges in false hopes, and displays violence toward others.

TEXT 25.16

*yadā cittam prasīdeta
indriyāṇām ca nirvṛtiḥ
dehe’bhayaṁ mano-’saṅgaṁ
tat sattvaṁ viddhi mat-padam*

yadā – when; *cittam* – the consciousness; *prasīdeta* – becomes clear; *indriyāṇām* – of the senses; *ca* – and; *nirvṛtiḥ* – cessation of their mundane activities; *dehe* – in the body; *abhayaṁ* – fearlessness; *manaḥ* – of the mind; *asaṅgam* – detachment; *tat* – that; *sattvaṁ* – the mode of goodness; *viddhi* – know it; *mat* – realization of Me; *padam* – the situation in which such can be achieved.

TRANSLATION

When consciousness becomes clear and the senses are detached from matter, one experiences fearlessness within the material body and detachment from the material mind. You should understand this situation to be the predominance of the mode of goodness, in which one has the opportunity to realize Me.

TEXT 25.17

*vikurvan kriyayā cā-dhīr
anivṛttiś ca cetasām
gātrāsvāsthyam mano bhrāntam
raja etair niśāmaya*

vikurvan - becoming distorted; *kriyayā* - by activity; *ca* - and; *ā* - even up to; *dhīh* - the intelligence; *anivṛttiḥ* - failure to stop; *ca* - and; *cetasām* - on the part of the conscious faculties of intelligence and the senses; *gātra* - of the working senses; *asvāsthyam* - unhealthy condition; *manaḥ* - the mind; *bhrāntam* - unsteady; *rajaḥ* - passion; *etair* - by these symptoms; *niśāmaya* - you should understand.

TRANSLATION

You should discern the mode of passion by its symptoms - the distortion of the intelligence because of too much activity, the inability of the perceiving senses to disentangle themselves from mundane objects, an unhealthy condition of the working physical organs, and the unsteady perplexity of the mind.

TEXT 25.18

*sīdat cittam vilīyeta
cetaso grahaṇe'kṣamam
mano naṣtam tamo glāniḥ
tamas tad upadhāraya*

sīdat - failing; *cittam* - the higher faculties of consciousness; *vilīyeta* - become dissolved; *cetasaḥ* - awareness; *grahaṇe* - in controlling; *akṣamam* - incapable; *manaḥ* - the mind; *naṣtam* - ruined; *tamaḥ* - ignorance; *glāniḥ* - depression; *tamaḥ* - the mode of ignorance; *tat* - that; *upadhāraya* - you should understand.

TRANSLATION

When one's higher awareness fails and finally disappears and one is thus unable to concentrate his attention, his mind is ruined and manifests ignorance and depression. You should understand this situation to be the predominance of the mode of ignorance.

TEXT 25.19

*edhamāne guṇe sattve
devānām balam edhate
asurāṇām ca rajasi
tamasy uddhava rakṣasām*

edhamāne - when it is increasing; *guṇe* - the mode; *sattve* - of goodness; *devānām* - of the demigods; *balam* - the strength; *edhate* - increases; *asurāṇām* - of the enemies of the demigods; *ca* - and; *rajasi* - when the mode of passion increases; *tamasi* - when the mode of ignorance increases; *uddhava* - O Uddhava; *rakṣasām* - of the man-eating monsters.

TRANSLATION

With the increase of the mode of goodness, the strength of the demigods similarly increases. When passion increases, the demoniac become strong. And with the rise of ignorance, O Uddhava, the strength of the most wicked increases.

TEXT 25.20

*sattvāj jāgaraṇaṁ vidyād
rajasā svapnam ādiśet
prasvāpaṁ tamasā jantoḥ
turīyaṁ triṣu santatam*

sattvāt – by the mode of goodness; *jāgaraṇam* – waking consciousness; *vidyāt* – one should understand; *rajasā* – by passion; *svapnam* – sleep; *ādiśet* – is indicated; *prasvāpam* – deep sleep; *tamasā* – by the mode of ignorance; *jantoḥ* – of the living entity; *turīyam* – the fourth, transcendental state; *triṣu* – throughout the three; *santatam* – pervading.

TRANSLATION

It should be understood that alert wakefulness comes from the mode of goodness, sleep with dreaming from the mode of passion, and deep, dreamless sleep from the mode of ignorance. The fourth state of consciousness pervades these three and is transcendental.

PURPORT

Our original Kṛṣṇa consciousness exists eternally within the soul, and it is also present in all the three phases of awareness, namely normal wakefulness, dreaming and dreamless sleep. Being covered by the modes of nature, this spiritual consciousness may not be manifest, but it continues to exist eternally as the real nature of the living entity.

TEXT 25.21

*upary upari gacchanti
sattvena brāhmaṇā janāḥ
tamasādho'dha ā-mukhyād
rajasāntara-cāriṇaḥ*

upari upari – higher and higher; *gacchanti* – they go; *sattvena* – by the mode of goodness; *brāhmaṇāḥ* – persons dedicated to Vedic principles; *janāḥ* – such men; *tamasā* – by the mode of ignorance; *adhaḥ adhaḥ* – lower and lower; *ā-mukhyāt* – headfirst; *rajasā* – by the mode of passion; *antara-cāriṇaḥ* – remaining in intermediate situations.

TRANSLATION

Learned persons dedicated to Vedic culture are elevated by the mode of goodness to higher and higher positions. The mode of ignorance, on the other hand, forces one to fall headfirst into lower and lower births. And by the mode of passion one continues transmigrating through human bodies.

PURPORT

Śūdras, persons in the mode of ignorance, are generally in deep illusion about the purpose of life, accepting the gross material body as the self. Those in passion and ignorance are called *vaiśyas* and hanker intensely for wealth, whereas *kṣatriyas*, who are in the mode of passion, are eager for prestige and power. Those in the mode of goodness, however, hanker after perfect knowledge; they are therefore called *brāhmaṇas*. Such a person is promoted up to the supreme material position of Brahmaloḥka, the planet of Lord Brahmā. One who is in the mode of ignorance gradually falls to the level of unmoving species, such as trees and stones, while one in the mode of passion, filled with material desire but satisfying it within Vedic culture, is allowed to remain in human society.

TEXT 25.22

*sattve pralīnāḥ svar yānti
nara-lokaṁ rajo-layāḥ
tamo-layās tu nirayaṁ
yānti mām eva nirguṇāḥ*

sattve – in the mode of goodness; *pralīnāḥ* – those who die; *svaḥ* – to heaven; *yānti* – they go; *nara-lokaṁ* – to the world of human beings; *rajaḥ-layāḥ* – those who die in the mode of passion; *tamaḥ-layāḥ* – those who die in the mode of ignorance; *tu* – and; *nirayaṁ* – to hell; *yānti* – they go; *mām* – to Me; *eva* – however; *nirguṇāḥ* – those who are free from all the modes.

TRANSLATION

Those who leave this world in the mode of goodness go to the heavenly planets, those who pass away in the mode of passion remain in the world of human beings, and those dying in the mode of ignorance must go to hell. But those who are free from the influence of all modes of nature come to Me.

TEXT 25.23

*mat-arpaṇaṁ niṣphalaṁ vā
sāttvikaṁ nija-karma tat
rājasam phala-saṅkalpaṁ
himsā-prāyādi tāmasam*

mat-arpaṇam – offered unto Me; *niṣphalam* – done without expectation of result; *vā* – and; *sāttvikam* – in the mode of goodness; *nija* – accepted as one's prescribed duty; *karma* – work; *tat* – that; *rājasam* – in the mode of passion; *phala-saṅkalpam* – done in expectation of some result; *himsā-prāya-ādi* – done with violence, envy and so on; *tāmasam* – in the mode of ignorance.

TRANSLATION

Work performed as an offering to Me, without consideration of the fruit, is considered to be in the mode of goodness. Work performed

with a desire to enjoy the results is in the mode of passion. And work impelled by violence and envy is in the mode of ignorance.

PURPORT

Ordinary work performed as an offering to God, without desire for the result, is understood to be in the mode of goodness, whereas activities of devotion – such as chanting and hearing the glories of the Lord – are transcendental forms of work beyond the modes of nature.

TEXT 25.24

*kaivalyaṁ sāttvikam̐ jñānam̐
rajo vaikalpikam̐ ca yat
prākṛtam̐ tāmasam̐ jñānam̐
man-niṣṭham̐ nirguṇam̐ smṛtam̐*

kaivalyam – absolute; *sāttvikam* – in the mode of goodness; *jñānam* – knowledge; *rajaḥ* – in the mode of passion; *vaikalpikam* – manifold; *ca* – and; *yat* – which; *prākṛtam* – materialistic; *tāmasam* – in the mode of ignorance; *jñānam* – knowledge; *mat-niṣṭham* – concentrated upon Me; *nirguṇam* – transcendental; *smṛtam* – is considered.

TRANSLATION

Absolute knowledge is in the mode of goodness, knowledge based on duality is in the mode of passion, and foolish, materialistic knowledge is in the mode of ignorance. Knowledge based upon Me, however, is understood to be transcendental.

PURPORT

The Lord clearly explains here that spiritual knowledge of His supreme personality is transcendental to ordinary religious knowledge in the mode of goodness. In the mode of goodness one understands the existence of a higher spiritual nature within all things. In the mode of passion one acquires scientific knowledge of the material body. And in the mode of ignorance one fixes one’s mind on the sense objects without higher awareness, perceiving things as a small child or a retarded person does.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī elaborately explains in his commentary on this verse that the material mode of goodness does not award perfect knowledge of the Absolute Truth. He quotes from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.14.2), proving that many great demigods in the mode of goodness could not understand the transcendental personality of Lord Kṛṣṇa. In the material mode of goodness, one becomes pious or religious, aware of a higher, spiritual nature. On the spiritual platform of purified goodness, however, one establishes a direct, loving relationship with the Absolute Truth, rendering service to the Lord rather than merely maintaining a connection to mundane piety. In the mode of passion the conditioned soul speculates about the reality of his own existence and of the world around him, and considers speculatively the existence of a kingdom of God. In the mode of ignorance one acquires knowledge for sense gratification, absorbing the mind in varieties of eating, sleeping, defending and sex, without any higher purpose. Thus, within the

modes of nature the conditioned souls are trying to gratify their senses, or else they are trying to free themselves from sense gratification. But they cannot directly engage themselves in their constitutional, liberated activities until they come to the transcendental position of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, beyond the modes of nature.

TEXT 25.25

*vanam tu sāttviko vāso
grāmo rājasa ucyate
tāmasam dyūta-sadanam
man-niketam tu nirguṇam*

vanam - the forest; *tu* - whereas; *sāttvikaḥ* - in the mode of goodness; *vāsaḥ* - residence; *grāmaḥ* - the village neighborhood; *rājasaḥ* - in the mode of passion; *ucyate* - is said; *tāmasam* - in the mode of ignorance; *dyūta-sadanam* - the gambling house; *man-niketam* - My residence; *tu* - but; *nirguṇam* - transcendental.

TRANSLATION

Residence in the forest is in the mode of goodness, residence in a town is in the mode of passion, residence in a gambling house displays the quality of ignorance, and residence in a place where I reside is transcendental.

PURPORT

Many creatures in the forest, such as the trees, wild boars and insects, are actually in the modes of passion and ignorance. But residence in the forest is designated as being in the mode of goodness because there one may live a solitary life free from sinful activities, material opulence and passionate ambition. Throughout the history of India, many millions of persons from all walks of life have adopted the orders of *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa* and have gone to sacred forests to practice austerity and perfect their self-realization. Even in America and other Western countries, persons such as Thoreau achieved fame by retiring to the forest to reduce the scope and opulence of material involvement.

The word *grāma* here indicates residence in the village of one's family. Family life is certainly full of false pride, false hopes, false affection, lamentation and illusion, since the family connection is squarely resting on the bodily concept of life, the very opposite of self-realization. The word *dyūta-sadanam*, "gambling house," refers to pool halls, racetracks, poker clubs, bars and other sinful places that maintain an abysmal level of consciousness in the mode of ignorance. *Man-niketam* refers to the Lord's own abode in the spiritual world as well as the Lord's temples within this world, wherein the Deity form of the Lord is appropriately worshiped. One who lives in the temple of Lord Kṛṣṇa, following the rules and regulations of temple life, is understood to be residing on the transcendental platform. In these verses the Lord clearly explains that all material phenomena may be divided into three divisions according to the modes of nature, and that

ultimately there is the fourth, or transcendental, division – Kṛṣṇa consciousness – which elevates all aspects of human culture to the liberated platform.

TEXT 25.26

*sāttvikaḥ kārako'saṅgī
rāgāndho rājasaḥ smṛtaḥ
tāmasaḥ smṛti-vibhraṣṭo
nirguṇo mad-apāśrayaḥ*

sāttvikaḥ – in the mode of goodness; *kārakaḥ* – the performer of activities; *asaṅgī* – free from attachment; *rāga-andhaḥ* – blinded by personal desire; *rājasaḥ* – the performer in the mode of passion; *smṛtaḥ* – is considered; *tāmasaḥ* – the performer in the mode of ignorance; *smṛti* – from remembrance of what is what; *vibhraṣṭaḥ* – fallen; *nirguṇaḥ* – transcendental; *mat-apāśrayaḥ* – he who has taken shelter of Me.

TRANSLATION

A worker free of attachment is in the mode of goodness, a worker blinded by personal desire is in the mode of passion, and a worker who has completely forgotten how to tell right from wrong is in the mode of ignorance. But a worker who has taken shelter of Me is understood to be transcendental to the modes of nature.

PURPORT

A transcendental worker performs his activities in strict accordance with the directions of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Lord's bona fide representatives. Taking shelter of the Lord's guidance, such a worker remains transcendental to the material modes of nature.

TEXT 25.27

*sāttvikī ādhyātmikī śraddhā
karma-śraddhā tu rājasī
tāmasy adharme yā śraddhā
mat-sevāyām tu nirguṇā*

sāttvikī – in the mode of goodness; *ādhyātmikī* – spiritual; *śraddhā* – faith; *karma* – in work; *śraddhā* – faith; *tu* – but; *rājasī* – in the mode of passion; *tāmāsī* – in the mode of ignorance; *adharme* – in irreligion; *yā* – which; *śraddhā* – faith; *mat-sevāyām* – in My devotional service; *tu* – but; *nirguṇā* – transcendental.

TRANSLATION

Faith directed toward spiritual life is in the mode of goodness, faith rooted in fruitive work is in the mode of passion, faith residing in irreligious activities is in the mode of ignorance, but faith in My devotional service is purely transcendental.

TEXT 25.28

*pathyaṁ pūtam anāyastam
āhāryaṁ sāttvikaṁ smṛtam
rājasam cendriya-preṣṭham
tāmasam cārti-dāśuci*

pathyam – beneficial; *pūtam* – pure; *anāyastam* – attained without difficulty; *āhāryam* – food; *sāttvikam* – in the mode of goodness; *smṛtam* – is considered; *rājasam* – in the mode of passion; *ca* – and; *indriya-preṣṭham* – very dear to the senses; *tāmasam* – in the mode of ignorance; *ca* – and; *ārti-da* – which creates suffering; *aśuci* – is impure.

TRANSLATION

Food that is wholesome, pure and obtained without difficulty is in the mode of goodness, food that gives immediate pleasure to the senses is in the mode of passion, and food that is unclean and causes distress is in the mode of ignorance.

PURPORT

Food in the mode of ignorance causes painful disease and ultimately premature death.

TEXT 25.29

*sāttvikaṁ sukham ātmottham
viṣayottham tu rājasam
tāmasam moha-dainyottham
nirguṇam mad-apāśrayam*

sāttvikam – in the mode of goodness; *sukham* – happiness; *ātma-uttham* – generated from the self; *viṣaya-uttham* – generated from sense objects; *tu* – but; *rājasam* – in the mode of passion; *tāmasam* – in the mode of ignorance; *moha* – from delusion; *dainya* – and degradation; *uttham* – derived; *nirguṇam* – transcendental; *mat-apāśrayam* – within Me.

TRANSLATION

Happiness derived from the self is in the mode of goodness, happiness based on sense gratification is in the mode of passion, and happiness based on delusion and degradation is in the mode of ignorance. But that happiness found within Me is transcendental.

TEXT 25.30

*dravyaṁ deśaḥ phalaṁ kālo
jñānam karma ca kārakaḥ
śraddhāvasthākṛtir niṣṭhā
trai-guṇyaḥ sarva eva hi*

dravyam – object; *deśaḥ* – place; *phalam* – result; *kālaḥ* – time; *jñānam* – knowledge; *karma* – activity; *ca* – and; *kārakaḥ* – performer; *śraddhā* – faith; *avasthā* – state of consciousness; *ākṛtiḥ* – species; *niṣṭhā* – destination; *trai-guṇyaḥ* – partaking of the three modes; *sarvaḥ* – all these; *eva hi* – certainly.

TRANSLATION

Therefore material substance, place, result of activity, time, knowledge, work, the performer of work, faith, state of consciousness, species of life and destination after death are all based on the three modes of material nature.

TEXT 25.31

*sarve guṇa-mayā bhāvāḥ
puruṣāvyakta-dhiṣṭhitāḥ
dṛṣṭam śrutam anudhyātam
buddhyā vā puruṣarṣabha*

sarve - all; *guṇa-mayāḥ* - composed of the modes of nature; *bhāvāḥ* - states of existence; *puruṣa* - by the enjoying soul; *avyakta* - and subtle nature; *dhiṣṭhitāḥ* - established and maintained; *dṛṣṭam* - seen; *śrutam* - heard; *anudhyātam* - conceived; *buddhyā* - by the intelligence; *vā* - or; *puruṣarṣabha* - O best among men.

TRANSLATION

O best of human beings, all states of material being are related to the interaction of the enjoying soul and material nature. Whether seen, heard of or only conceived within the mind, they are without exception constituted of the modes of nature.

TEXT 25.32

*etāḥ saṁsṛtayaḥ puṁso
guṇa-karma-nibandhanāḥ
yeneme nirjitāḥ saumya
guṇā jīvena citta-jāḥ
bhakti-yogena man-niṣṭho
mad-bhāvāya prapadyate*

etāḥ - these; *saṁsṛtayaḥ* - created aspects of existence; *puṁsaḥ* - of a living being; *guṇa* - with the material qualities; *karma* - and work; *nibandhanāḥ* - connected; *yena* - by whom; *ime* - these; *nirjitāḥ* - are conquered; *saumya* - O gentle Uddhava; *guṇāḥ* - the modes of nature; *jīvena* - by a living entity; *citta-jāḥ* - which are manifested from the mind; *bhakti-yogena* - through the process of devotional service; *mat-niṣṭhaḥ* - dedicated to Me; *mat-bhāvāya* - of love for Me; *prapadyate* - receives the qualification.

TRANSLATION

O gentle Uddhava, all these different phases of conditioned life arise from work born of the modes of material nature. The living entity who conquers these modes, manifested from the mind, can dedicate himself to Me by the process of devotional service and thus attain pure love for Me.

PURPORT

The words *mad-bhāvāya prapadyate* indicate the attainment of love for God or of the same state of existence as that of the Supreme Lord. Actual

liberation is residence within the eternal kingdom of God, where life is full of bliss and knowledge. The conditioned soul falsely imagines himself to be the enjoyer of the modes of nature, and thus a particular type of material work is generated, the reaction of which binds the conditioned soul to repeated birth and death. This fruitless process can be counteracted by loving service to the Lord, as described here.

TEXT 25.33

*tasmād deham imam labdhvā
jñāna-vijñāna-sambhavam
guṇa-saṅgam vinirdhūya
mām bhajantu vicakṣaṇāḥ*

tasmāt – therefore; *deham* – body; *imam* – this; *labdhvā* – having obtained; *jñāna* – of theoretical knowledge; *vijñāna* – and realized knowledge; *sambhavam* – the place of generation; *guṇa-saṅgam* – association with the modes of nature; *vinirdhūya* – washing out completely; *mām* – Me; *bhajantu* – they should worship; *vicakṣaṇāḥ* – persons who are very intelligent.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, having achieved this human form of life, which allows one to develop full knowledge, those who are intelligent should free themselves from all contamination of the modes of nature and engage exclusively in loving service to Me.

TEXT 25.34

*niḥsaṅgo mām bhajet vidvān
apramatto jitendriyaḥ
rajas tamaś cābhijayet
sattva-saṁsevayā muniḥ*

niḥsaṅgaḥ – free from material association; *mām* – Me; *bhajet* – should worship; *vidvān* – a wise person; *apramattaḥ* – not bewildered; *jita-indriyaḥ* – having subdued his senses; *rajaḥ* – the mode of passion; *tamaḥ* – the mode of ignorance; *ca* – and; *abhijayet* – he should conquer; *sattva-saṁsevayā* – by taking to the mode of goodness; *muniḥ* – the sage.

TRANSLATION

A wise sage, free from all material association and unbewildered, should subdue his senses and worship Me. He should conquer the modes of passion and ignorance by engaging himself only with things in the mode of goodness.

TEXT 25.35

*sattvaṁ cābhijayed yukto
nairapekṣyeṇa śānta-dhīḥ
sampadyate guṇair mukto
jīvo jīvaṁ vihāya mām*

sattvam – the mode of goodness; *ca* – also; *abhijayet* – he should conquer; *yuktaḥ* – engaged in devotional service; *nairapekṣyeṇa* – by being indifferent to the modes; *śānta* – pacified; *dhīḥ* – whose intelligence; *sampadyate* – he achieves; *guṇaiḥ* – from the modes of nature; *muktaḥ* – liberated; *jīvaḥ* – the living entity; *jīvam* – the cause of his being conditioned; *vihāya* – giving up; *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

Then, being fixed in devotional service, the sage should also conquer the material mode of goodness by indifference toward the modes. Thus pacified within his mind, the spirit soul, freed from the modes of nature, gives up the very cause of his conditioned life and attains Me.

PURPORT

The word *nairapekṣyeṇa* refers to complete detachment from the modes of material nature. By attachment to the loving service of the Lord, which is completely transcendental, one gives up one's interest in the modes of nature.

TEXT 25.36

*jīvo jīva-vinirmukto
guṇaiś cāśaya-sambhavaḥ
mayaiva brahmaṇā pūrṇo
na bahir nāntaraś caret*

jīvaḥ – the living entity; *jīva-vinirmuktaḥ* – freed from the subtle conditioning of material consciousness; *guṇaiḥ* – from the modes of nature; *ca* – and; *āśaya-sambhavaḥ* – which have manifested in his own mind; *mayā* – by Me; *eva* – indeed; *brahmaṇā* – by the Supreme Absolute Truth; *pūrṇaḥ* – made full in satisfaction; *na* – not; *bahiḥ* – in the external (sense gratification); *na* – nor; *antaraḥ* – in the internal (remembrance of sense gratification); *caret* – he should wander.

TRANSLATION

Freed from the subtle conditioning of the mind and from the modes of nature born of material consciousness, the living entity becomes completely satisfied by experiencing My transcendental form. He no longer searches for enjoyment in the external energy, nor does he contemplate or remember such enjoyment within himself.

PURPORT

The human form of life is a rare opportunity for achieving spiritual liberation in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Lord Kṛṣṇa has elaborately described in this chapter the characteristics of the three modes of nature and the transcendental situation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has ordered us to take shelter of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, by which process we can easily transcend the modes of nature and begin our real life of loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-fifth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Three Modes of Nature and Beyond.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

The Aila-gītā

This chapter explains how unfavorable association is a threat to one's position in devotional service and how by associating with saintly persons one can attain the highest platform of devotion.

The *jīva* who has received a human body, which is in itself most conducive toward achieving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and who has situated himself in the duties of devotional service to the Lord becomes capable of realizing Him, the very identity of spiritual bliss. Such a person, fully dedicated to the Supreme Personality, is liberated from the influence of *Māyā*; even while continuing to reside in this world created by illusion he is totally untouched by it. Those souls, on the other hand, who are bound up by *Māyā* are devoted only to their bellies and genitals. They are impure, and by associating with them one will fall down into the dark pit of ignorance.

The emperor *Purūravā*, who was bewildered by the association of the heavenly lady *Urvaśī*, later became renounced after being separated from her. He thus sang a song expressing his contempt for womanly connection. He described that persons who are attached to the body of a woman (or a man) – which is simply a mass of skin, meat, blood, sinew, brain tissue, marrow and bones – are not much different from worms. What is the worth of the education, austerity, renunciation, reception of the *Vedas*, solitary living and silence of one whose mind becomes stolen away by the body of a woman? Learned men should distrust their six mental enemies, headed by lust, and thus avoid associating with women or with men who are controlled by women. After declaring these facts, King *Purūravā*, now freed from the illusion of material existence, attained realization of the Supreme Lord in His form as the indwelling Supersoul.

In conclusion, one who is intelligent should give up bad association and let himself become attracted to the company of saintly persons. By their transcendental instructions, the saintly devotees of the Lord can break the false attachments of one's mind. Real saints are always liberated and devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In their association there are constant discussions about the Supreme Lord, by serving whom the spirit soul completely eradicates his material sins and obtains pure devotional service. And when one gains the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the original ocean of unlimited perfect qualities, what else remains to be gained?

TEXT 26.1

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
mat-lakṣaṇam imam kāyam
labdhvā mad-dharma āsthitaḥ
ānandaṁ paramātmānam
ātma-sthaṁ samupaiti mām

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *mat-lakṣaṇam* – in which I can be realized; *imam* – this; *kāyam* – human body; *labdhvā* – having achieved; *mat-dharme* – in devotional service to Me;

āsthitaḥ – situated; *ānandam* – who is pure ecstasy; *parama-ātmānam* – the Supreme Soul; *ātma-stham* – situated within the heart; *samapaiti* – he achieves; *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Having achieved this human form of life, which affords one the opportunity to realize Me, and being situated in My devotional service, one can achieve Me, the reservoir of all pleasure and the Supreme Soul of all existence, residing within the heart of every living being.

PURPORT

Because of bad association, even those who are spiritually liberated may fall down from self-realization. Within the material world the association of women is especially dangerous, and therefore in this chapter the *Aila-gītā* is spoken to prevent such a falldown. One can be saved from sex attraction by association with saintly persons, who awaken one's real spiritual intelligence. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa will speak to Uddhava the amazing song of Purūravā, also known as the *Aila-gītā*.

TEXT 26.2

guṇa-mayyā jīva-yonyā
vimukto jñāna-niṣṭhayā
guṇeṣu māyā-mātreṣu
dṛśyamāneṣv avastutaḥ
vartamāno'pi na pumān
yujyate'vastubhir guṇaiḥ

guṇa-mayyā – based on the modes of nature; *jīva-yonyā* – from the cause of material life, false identification; *vimuktaḥ* – one who has become completely free; *jñāna* – in transcendental knowledge; *niṣṭhayā* – by being properly fixed; *guṇeṣu* – among the products of the modes of nature; *māyā-mātreṣu* – which are simply illusion; *dṛśyamāneṣu* – appearing before the eyes; *avastutaḥ* – although not real; *vartamānaḥ* – living; *api* – although; *na* – does not; *pumān* – that person; *yujyate* – become entangled; *avastubhiḥ* – unreal; *guṇaiḥ* – with the manifestations of the modes of nature.

TRANSLATION

A person fixed in transcendental knowledge is freed from conditioned life by giving up his false identification with the products of the material modes of nature. Seeing these products as simply illusion, he avoids entanglement with the modes of nature, although constantly among them. Because the modes of nature and their products are simply not real, he does not accept them.

PURPORT

The three modes of nature become manifest as varieties of material bodies, places, families, countries, foods, sports, war, peace and so forth. In other words, everything we see within the material world is constituted of the modes of nature. A liberated soul, although existing within the ocean of

material energy, sees everything as the property of the Lord and is thus not entangled. Although Māyā tempts such a liberated soul to become a thief – to steal the property of the Lord for sense gratification – a Kṛṣṇa conscious person does not bite the bait of Māyā; he remains honest and pure in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In other words, he does not believe that anything within the universe can become his personal property for sense gratification, especially the illusory form of a woman.

TEXT 26.3

*saṅgam na kuryād asatām
śīśnodara-tṛpām kvacit
tasyānugas tamasy andhe
pataty andhānugāndha-vat*

saṅgam – association; *na kuryāt* – one should never make; *asatām* – of those who are materialistic; *śīśna* – the genitals; *udara* – and the belly; *tṛpām* – who are devoted to gratifying; *kvacit* – at any time; *tasya* – of any such person; *anugaḥ* – the follower; *tamasi andhe* – into the darkest pit; *patati* – he falls; *andha-anuga* – following a blind man; *andha-vat* – just like another blind man.

TRANSLATION

One should never associate with materialists, those dedicated to gratifying their genitals and bellies. By following them one falls into the deepest pit of darkness, just like a blind man who follows another blind man.

TEXT 26.4

*ailaḥ samrāḍ imām gāthām
agāyata bṛhac-chravāḥ
urvaśī-virahān muhyan
nirviṇṇaḥ śoka-saṁyame*

ailaḥ – King Purūravā; *samrāḍ* – the great emperor; *imām* – this; *gāthām* – song; *agāyata* – sang; *bṛhat* – mighty; *śravāḥ* – whose fame; *urvaśī-virahāt* – because of experiencing separation from Urvaśī; *muhyan* – becoming bewildered; *nirviṇṇaḥ* – feeling detached; *śoka* – his lamentation; *saṁyame* – when he was finally able to bring under control.

TRANSLATION

The following song was sung by the famous emperor Purūravā. When deprived of his wife, Urvaśī, he was at first bewildered, but by controlling his lamentation he began to feel detachment.

PURPORT

This story is also narrated in the Ninth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Aila, or Purūravā, was a great king whose glories were vast. On being separated from Urvaśī, he felt great bewilderment at first. But after meeting her briefly at Kurukṣetra, he worshiped the demigods with the sacrificial fire given him

by the Gandharvas and received the privilege of entering the planet where she resided.

TEXT 26.5

*tyaktvātmānam vrayantīm tām
nagna unmatta-van nṛpaḥ
vilapann anvagāj jāye
ghore tiṣṭheti viklavaḥ*

tyaktvā – abandoning; *ātmānam* – him; *vrayantīm* – going away; *tām* – unto her; *nagnaḥ* – being naked; *unmatta-vat* – like a madman; *nṛpaḥ* – the king; *vilapan* – crying out; *anvagāt* – followed; *jāye* – O my wife; *ghore* – O terrible woman; *tiṣṭha* – please stop; *iti* – thus speaking; *viklavaḥ* – overwhelmed with distress.

TRANSLATION

When she was leaving him, even though he was naked he ran after her just like a madman and called out in great distress, “O my wife, O terrible lady! Please stop!”

PURPORT

As his beloved wife was leaving him, the shocked king was crying out, “My dear wife, please think for a moment. Just stop! You terrible lady, can’t you stop? Why don’t we speak together for a while? Why are you killing me?” Thus lamenting, he followed her.

TEXT 26.6

*kāmān atṛpto’nujuṣan
kṣullakān varṣa-yāminīḥ
na veda yāntīr nāyāntīr
urvaśy-ākṛṣṭa-cetanaḥ*

kāmān – lusty desires; *atṛptaḥ* – unsatiated; *anujuṣan* – gratifying; *kṣullakān* – insignificant; *varṣa* – of many years; *yāminīḥ* – the nights; *na veda* – he did not know; *yāntīḥ* – going; *na* – nor; *āyāntīḥ* – approaching; *urvaśī* – by Urvaśī; *ākṛṣṭa* – attracted; *cetanaḥ* – his mind.

TRANSLATION

Although for many years Purūravā had enjoyed sex pleasure in the evening hours, still he was not satisfied by such insignificant enjoyment. His mind was so attracted to Urvaśī that he did not notice how the nights were coming and going.

PURPORT

This verse refers to Purūravā’s materialistic experience with Urvaśī.

TEXT 26.7

*aila uvāca
aho me moha-vistāraḥ
kāma-kaśmala-cetasaḥ*

*devyā grhīta-kaṅṭhasya
nāyuh-khaṇḍā ime smṛtāḥ*

ailaḥ uvāca – King Purūravā said; *aho* – alas; *me* – my; *moha* – of the delusion; *vistāraḥ* – the extent; *kāma* – by lust; *kaśmala* – contaminated; *cetasaḥ* – my consciousness; *devyā* – by this goddess; *grhīta* – is seized; *kaṅṭhasya* – whose neck; *na* – have not; *āyuh* – of my life span; *khaṇḍāḥ* – the divisions; *ime* – these; *smṛtāḥ* – been taken notice of.

TRANSLATION

King Aila said: Alas, just see the extent of my delusion! This goddess was embracing me and held my neck in her grip. My heart was so polluted by lust that I had no idea how my life was passing.

TEXT 26.8

*nāhaṁ vedābhinirmuktaḥ
sūryo vābhyudito'muyā
mūṣito varṣa-pūgānām
batāhāni gatāny uta*

na – did not; *aham* – I; *veda* – know; *abhinirmuktaḥ* – having set; *sūryaḥ* – the sun; *vā* – or; *abhyuditaḥ* – risen; *amuyā* – by her; *mūṣitaḥ* – deceived; *varṣa* – years; *pūgānām* – comprising many; *bata* – alas; *ahāni* – days; *gatāni* – have gone; *uta* – certainly.

TRANSLATION

That lady cheated me so much that I did not even see the rising or setting of the sun. Alas, for so many years I passed my days in vain!

PURPORT

Due to attachment to the goddess, King Purūravā forgot his devotional service to the Supreme Lord and became more concerned with pleasing this beautiful young lady. Thus he later lamented, having wasted his valuable time. Those who are Kṛṣṇa conscious utilize every moment in the Lord's loving service.

TEXT 26.9

*aho me ātma-sammoho
yena tmā yoṣitām kṛtaḥ
krīḍā-mṛgaś cakravartī
naradeva-śikhāmaṇiḥ*

aho – alas; *me* – my; *ātma* – of myself; *sammohaḥ* – total bewilderment; *yena* – by which; *tmā* – my body; *yoṣitām* – of women; *kṛtaḥ* – became; *krīḍā-mṛgaḥ* – a toy animal; *cakravartī* – mighty emperor; *naradeva* – of kings; *śikhā-maṇiḥ* – the crown jewel.

TRANSLATION

Alas, although I am supposed to be a mighty emperor, the crown jewel of all kings on this earth, just see how my bewilderment has rendered me a toy animal in the hands of women!

PURPORT

Since the king's body had become fully engaged in satisfying the superficial desires of women, his body was now like a toy animal in their hands.

TEXT 26.10

*sa-paricchadam ātmānam
hitvā tṛṇam iveśvaram
yāntīm striyaṁ cānvagamam
nagna unmatta-vad rudan*

sa-paricchadam – along with my kingdom and all paraphernalia; *ātmānam* – myself; *hitvā* – abandoning; *tṛṇam* – a blade of grass; *iva* – as if; *īśvaram* – the powerful lord; *yāntīm* – going away; *striyam* – the woman; *ca* – and; *anvagamam* – I followed; *nagnaḥ* – naked; *unmatta-vat* – like a madman; *rudan* – crying out.

TRANSLATION

Although I was a powerful lord with great opulence, that woman gave me up as if I were no more than an insignificant blade of grass. And still, naked and without shame, I followed her, crying out to her like a madman.

TEXT 26.11

*kutas tasyānubhāvaḥ syāt
teja īśatvam eva vā
yo'nvagaccham striyaṁ yāntīm
khara-vat pāda-tāḍitaḥ*

kutaḥ – where; *tasya* – of that person (myself); *anubhāvaḥ* – the influence; *syāt* – is; *tejaḥ* – strength; *īśatvam* – sovereignty; *eva* – indeed; *vā* – or; *yaḥ* – who; *anvagaccham* – ran after; *striyam* – this woman; *yāntīm* – while going away; *khara-vat* – just like an ass; *pāda* – by the foot; *tāḍitaḥ* – punished.

TRANSLATION

Where are my so-called great influence, power and sovereignty? Just like an ass being kicked in the face by his she-ass, I ran after that woman, who had already given me up.

TEXT 26.12

*kim vidyayā kim tapasā
kim tyāgena śrutena vā
kim viviktena maunena
strībhir yasya mano hṛtam*

kim – what is the use; *vidyayā* – of knowledge; *kim* – what; *tapasā* – of austerities; *kim* – what; *tyāgena* – of renunciation; *śrutena* – of having studied the scriptures; *vā* – or; *kim* – what; *viviktena* – of solitude; *maunena* – of silence; *strībhiḥ* – by women; *yasya* – whose; *manaḥ* – the mind; *hṛtam* – taken away.

TRANSLATION

What is the use of a big education or the practice of austerities and renunciation, and what is the use of studying religious scriptures, of living in solitude and silence, if, after all that, one's mind is stolen by a woman?

PURPORT

All of the above-mentioned processes are useless if one's heart and mind are stolen by an insignificant woman. One who hankers after a woman's association certainly spoils his spiritual progress. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura states that if one worships the example of the liberated *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana, who accepted Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their paramour, one can free one's mental activities from the contamination of lust.

TEXT 26.13

*svārthasyākovidam̐ dhiṁ mām̐
mūrkham̐ paṇḍita-māninam
yo'ham īśvaratām̐ prāpya
strībhir go-khara-vaj jitaḥ*

sva-arthasya – his own best interest; *akovidam* – who does not know; *dhiḥ* – to hell; *mām* – with me; *mūrkham* – a fool; *paṇḍita-māninam* – imagining himself to be a great scholar; *yaḥ* – who; *aham* – I; *īśvaratām* – the position of lordship; *prāpya* – achieving; *strībhiḥ* – by women; *go-khara-vat* – like a bullock or an ass; *jitaḥ* – conquered.

TRANSLATION

To hell with me! I am such a fool that I didn't even know what was good for me, although I arrogantly thought I was highly intelligent. Although I achieved the exalted position of a lord, I allowed myself to be conquered by women as if I were a bullock or a jackass.

PURPORT

All the fools of this world consider themselves very wise scholars even though, intoxicated by sense gratification and maddened by their lust for women's association, they become just like bullocks and jackasses. By the mercy of a saintly spiritual master, this lusty propensity can gradually be removed and one can understand the terrible, contemptible nature of material sense gratification. In this verse King Purūravā is coming to his senses in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 26.14

*sevato varṣa-pūgān me
urvaśyā adharāsavam
na tṛpyaty ātma-bhūḥ kāmō
vahnir āhutibhir yathā*

sevataḥ – who was serving; *varṣa-pūgān* – for many years; *me* – my; *urvaśyāḥ* – of Urvaśī; *adhara* – of the lips; *āsavam* – the nectar; *na tṛpyati* –

never became satisfied; *ātma-bhūḥ* – born from the mind; *kāmaḥ* – the lust; *vahniḥ* – fire; *āhutibhiḥ* – by oblations; *yathā* – just as.

TRANSLATION

Even after I had served the so-called nectar of the lips of Urvaśī for many years, my lusty desires kept rising again and again within my heart and were never satisfied, just like a fire that can never be extinguished by the oblations of ghee poured into its flames.

TEXT 26.15

*puṁścalyāpahṛtam cittaṁ
ko nv anyo mocitum prabhuḥ
ātmārāmeśvaram ṛte
bhagavantam adhokṣajam*

puṁścalyā – by a prostitute; *apahṛtam* – stolen; *cittaṁ* – the intelligence; *kaḥ* – who; *nu* – indeed; *anyaḥ* – other person; *mocitum* – to free; *prabhuḥ* – is capable; *ātmā-ārāma* – of the self-satisfied sages; *īśvaram* – the Lord; *ṛte* – except for; *bhagavantam* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *adhokṣajam* – who lies beyond the purview of material senses.

TRANSLATION

Who but the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who lies beyond material perception and is the Lord of self-satisfied sages, can possibly save my consciousness, which has been stolen by a prostitute?

TEXT 26.16

*bodhitasyāpi devyā me
sūkta-vākyena durmateḥ
mano-gato mahā-moho
nāpayāty ajitātmanaḥ*

bodhitasya – who had been informed; *api* – even; *devyā* – by the goddess Urvaśī; *me* – of me; *su-ukta* – well-spoken; *vākyena* – by words; *durmateḥ* – whose intelligence was dull; *manaḥ-gataḥ* – within the mind; *mahā-mohaḥ* – the great confusion; *na apayāti* – did not cease; *ajita-ātmanaḥ* – who had failed to control his senses.

TRANSLATION

Because I allowed my intelligence to become dull and because I failed to control my senses, the great confusion in my mind did not go away, even though Urvaśī herself gave me wise counsel with well-spoken words.

PURPORT

As described in the Ninth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the goddess Urvaśī plainly told Purūravā that he should never trust women or believe their promises. Despite this frank advice, he became fully attached and thus suffered great mental anguish.

TEXT 26.17

*kim etayā no'pakṛtam
rajivā vā sarpa-cetaṣaḥ
draṣṭuḥ svarūpāviduṣo
yo'ham yad ajitendriyaḥ*

kim – what; *etayā* – by her; *naḥ* – to us; *apakṛtam* – offense has been done; *rajivā* – by a rope; *vā* – or; *sarpa-cetaṣaḥ* – who is thinking it to be a snake; *draṣṭuḥ* – of such a seer; *svarūpa* – the real identity; *aviduṣaḥ* – who does not understand; *yaḥ* – who; *aham* – I; *yad* – because of; *ajita-indriyaḥ* – having not controlled the senses.

TRANSLATION

How can I blame her for my trouble when I myself am ignorant of my real, spiritual nature? I did not control my senses, and so I am like a person who mistakenly sees a harmless rope as a snake.

PURPORT

When a person mistakes a rope for a snake, he becomes fearful and anxious. Such fear and anxiety are, of course, illusion, since the rope can never bite. Similarly, one who mistakenly thinks that the material, illusory energy of the Lord exists for his personal sense gratification will certainly bring down on his head an avalanche of material, illusory fear and anxiety. King Purūravā frankly admits here that the young lady Urvaśī is not to blame. After all, it was Purūravā who mistakenly considered her to be an object of his personal enjoyment, and therefore he suffered the reaction by the laws of nature. Purūravā himself was the offender for trying to exploit the external form of Urvaśī.

TEXT 26.18

*kvāyam malīmasaḥ kāyo
daurgandhyādy-ātmako'suciḥ
kva guṇāḥ saumanasyādyā
hy adhyāso'vidyayā kṛtaḥ*

kva – where; *ayam* – this; *malīmasaḥ* – very filthy; *kāyaḥ* – material body; *daurgandhya* – bad odor; *ādi* – and so on; *ātmakaḥ* – consisting of; *aśuciḥ* – unclean; *kva* – where; *guṇāḥ* – the so-called good qualities; *saumanasya* – the fragrance and tenderness of flowers; *ādyāḥ* – and so on; *hi* – certainly; *adhyāsaḥ* – the superficial imposition; *avidyayā* – by ignorance; *kṛtaḥ* – created.

TRANSLATION

What is this polluted body anyway – so filthy and full of bad odors? I was attracted by the fragrance and beauty of a woman's body, but what are those so-called attractive features? They are simply a false covering created by illusion.

PURPORT

Purūravā now understands that although he was madly attracted to the fragrant, shapely body of Urvaśī, in fact that body was a sack of stool, gas, bile, mucus, hairs and other repugnant elements. In other words, Purūravā is now becoming sane.

TEXTS 26.19-20

*pitroḥ kiṁ svam̐ nu bhāryāyāḥ
svāmino'gneḥ śva-gr̥dhrayoḥ
kim ātmanaḥ kiṁ suḥṛdām
iti yo nāvasīyate
tasmin kalevare'medhye
tuccha-niṣṭhe viṣajjate
aho su-bhadram̐ su-nasam̐
su-smitam̐ ca mukham̐ striyaḥ*

pitroḥ – of the parents; *kim* – whether; *svam* – the property; *nu* – or; *bhāryāyāḥ* – of the wife; *svāminaḥ* – of the employer; *agneḥ* – of the fire; *śva-gr̥dhrayoḥ* – of the dogs and vultures; *kim* – whether; *ātmanaḥ* – of the soul; *kim* – whether; *suḥṛdām* – of friends; *iti* – thus; *yaḥ* – who; *na avasīyate* – can never decide; *tasmin* – to that; *kalevare* – material body; *amedhye* – abominable; *tuccha-niṣṭhe* – heading toward the lowest destination; *viṣajjate* – becomes attached; *aho* – ah; *su-bhadram* – very attractive; *su-nasam* – having a beautiful nose; *su-smitam* – beautiful smile; *ca* – and; *mukham* – the face; *striyaḥ* – of a woman.

TRANSLATION

One can never decide whose property the body actually is. Does it belong to one's parents, who have given birth to it, to one's wife, who gives it pleasure, or to one's employer, who orders the body around? Is it the property of the funeral fire or of the dogs and jackals who may ultimately devour it? Is it the property of the indwelling soul, who partakes in its happiness and distress, or does the body belong to intimate friends who encourage and help it? Although a man never definitely ascertains the proprietor of the body, he becomes most attached to it. The material body is a polluted material form heading toward a lowly destination, yet when a man stares at the face of a woman he thinks, "What a good-looking lady! What a charming nose she's got, and see her beautiful smile!"

PURPORT

The phrase *tuccha-niṣṭhe*, or "headed toward a lowly destination," indicates that if buried, the body will be consumed by worms; if burned, it will turn to ashes; and if dying in a lonely place, it will be consumed by dogs and vultures. The illusory potency of Māyā enters within the female form and bewilders a man's mind. The man is attracted to Māyā appearing within the female form, but when he embraces the woman's body he ends up with two

handfuls of stool, blood, mucus, pus, skin, bone, hairs and flesh. People should not be like cats and dogs, in the ignorance of bodily consciousness. A human being should be enlightened in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and learn to serve the Supreme Lord without falsely trying to exploit His potencies.

TEXT 26.21

*tvaṅ-māṁsa-rudhira-snāyu-
medo-majjāsthi-saṁhatau
viṅ-mūtra-pūye ramatām
kṛmīṅām kiyad antaram*

tvak - out of skin; *māṁsa* - flesh; *rudhira* - blood; *snāyu* - muscle; *medaḥ* - fat; *majjā* - marrow; *asthi* - and bone; *saṁhatau* - composed; *viṅ* - of stool; *mūtra* - urine; *pūye* - and pus; *ramatām* - enjoying; *kṛmīṅām* - compared to the worms; *kiyat* - how much; *antaram* - difference.

TRANSLATION

What difference is there between ordinary worms and persons who try to enjoy this material body composed of skin, flesh, blood, muscle, fat, marrow, bone, stool, urine and pus?

TEXT 26.22

*athāpi nopasajjeta
strīṣu straiṇeṣu cārtha-vit
viṣayendriya-saṁyogān
manaḥ kṣubhyati nānyathā*

atha api - yet therefore; *na upasajjeta* - he should never make contact; *strīṣu* - with women; *straiṇeṣu* - with men who are attached to women; *ca* - or; *artha-vit* - one who knows what is best for him; *viṣaya* - of the objects of enjoyment; *indriya* - with the senses; *saṁyogāt* - because of the connection; *manaḥ* - the mind; *kṣubhyati* - becomes agitated; *na* - not; *anyathā* - otherwise.

TRANSLATION

Yet even one who theoretically understands the actual nature of the body should never associate with women or with men attached to women. After all, the contact of the senses with their objects inevitably agitates the mind.

TEXT 26.23

*adṛṣṭād aśrutād bhāvān
na bhāva upajāyate
asamprayuñjataḥ prāṇān
śāmyati stimitam manaḥ*

adṛṣṭāt - which is not seen; *aśrutāt* - which is not heard; *bhāvāt* - from a thing; *na* - does not; *bhāvaḥ* - mental agitation; *upajāyate* - arise; *asamprayuñjataḥ* - for one who is not using; *prāṇān* - the senses; *śāmyati* - becomes pacified; *stimitam* - checked; *manaḥ* - the mind.

TRANSLATION

Because the mind is not disturbed by that which is neither seen nor heard, the mind of a person who restricts the material senses will automatically be checked in its material activities and become pacified.

PURPORT

It may be argued that even while closing one's eyes, while dreaming or while living in a solitary place, one may remember or contemplate sense gratification. Such an experience, however, is due to previous sense gratification that one repeatedly saw and heard about. When one restricts the senses from their objects, especially from intimate contact with women, the mind's material propensity will slacken and, like a fire without fuel, eventually die.

TEXT 26.24

*tasmāt saṅgo na kartavyaḥ
strīṣu straiṇeṣu cendriyaiḥ
viduṣāṁ cāpy avisrabdhaḥ
ṣaḍ-vargaḥ kim u mādrśām*

tasmāt – therefore; *saṅgaḥ* – association; *na kartavyaḥ* – should never be made; *strīṣu* – with women; *straiṇeṣu* – with men attached to women; *ca* – and; *indriyaiḥ* – by one's senses; *viduṣāṁ* – of wise men; *ca api* – even; *avisrabdhaḥ* – untrustworthy; *ṣaḍ-vargaḥ* – the six enemies of the mind (lust, anger, greed, bewilderment, intoxication and envy); *kim u* – what to speak; *mādrśām* – of persons like me.

TRANSLATION

Therefore one should never let his senses associate freely with women or with men attached to women. Even those who are highly learned cannot trust the six enemies of the mind; what to speak, then, of foolish persons like me.

TEXT 26.25

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
evam pragāyan nṛpa-deva-devaḥ
sa urvaśī-lokam atho vihāya
ātmānam ātmany avagamyā mām vai
upāramaj jñāna-vidhūta-mohaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *evam* – in this way; *pragāyan* – singing; *nṛpa* – among men; *deva* – and among demigods; *devaḥ* – who was eminent; *saḥ* – he, King Purūravā; *urvaśī-lokam* – the planet of Urvaśī, Gandharvaloka; *atha u* – then; *vihāya* – giving up; *ātmānam* – the Supreme Soul; *ātmani* – within his own heart; *avagamyā* – realizing; *mām* – Me; *vai* – indeed; *upāramat* – he became peaceful; *jñāna* – by transcendental knowledge; *vidhūta* – removed; *mohaḥ* – his illusion.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Having thus chanted this song, Mahārāja Purūravā, eminent among the demigods and human beings, gave up the position he had achieved in the planet of Urvaśī. His illusion cleansed away by transcendental knowledge, he understood Me to be the Supreme Soul within his heart and so at last achieved peace.

TEXT 26.26

*tato duḥsaṅgam utsrjya
satsu sajjeta buddhimān
santa evāśya chindanti
mano-vyāsaṅgam uktibhiḥ*

tataḥ – therefore; *duḥsaṅgam* – bad association; *utsrjya* – throwing away; *satsu* – to saintly devotees; *sajjeta* – he should become attached; *buddhi-mān* – one who is intelligent; *santaḥ* – saintly persons; *eva* – only; *asya* – his; *chindanti* – cut off; *manaḥ* – of the mind; *vyāsaṅgam* – excessive attachment; *uktibhiḥ* – by their words.

TRANSLATION

An intelligent person should therefore reject all bad association and instead take up the association of saintly devotees, whose words cut off the excessive attachment of one's mind.

TEXT 26.27

*santo'napekṣā mac-cittāḥ
praśāntāḥ sama-darśinaḥ
nirmamā nirahaṅkāṛā
nirdvandvā niṣparigrahāḥ*

santaḥ – the saintly devotees; *anapekṣāḥ* – not dependent on anything material; *mat-cittāḥ* – who have fixed their minds on Me; *praśāntāḥ* – completely peaceful; *sama-darśinaḥ* – endowed with equal vision; *nirmamāḥ* – free from possessiveness; *nirahaṅkāṛāḥ* – free from false ego; *nirdvandvāḥ* – free from all dualities; *niṣparigrahāḥ* – free from greed.

TRANSLATION

My devotees fix their minds on Me and do not depend upon anything material. They are always peaceful, endowed with equal vision, and free from possessiveness, false ego, duality and greed.

TEXT 26.28

*teṣu nityam mahā-bhāga
mahā-bhāgeṣu mat-kathāḥ
sambhavanti hi tā nṛṇām
juṣatām prapunanty agham*

teṣu – among them; *nityam* – constantly; *mahā-bhāga* – O greatly fortunate Uddhava; *mahā-bhāgeṣu* – among these greatly fortunate devotees; *mat-*

kathāḥ – discussions about Me; *sambhavanti* – arise; *hi* – indeed; *tāḥ* – these topics; *nṛṇāṃ* – of persons; *juṣatām* – who are partaking in them; *prapunanti* – totally purify; *agham* – the sins.

TRANSLATION

O greatly fortunate Uddhava, in the association of such saintly devotees there is constant discussion of Me, and those partaking in this chanting and hearing of My glories are certainly purified of all sins.

PURPORT

Even if one does not receive direct instructions from a pure devotee, simply by hearing him glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead one can be purified of all sinful reactions caused by one's involvement in illusion.

TEXT 26.29

*tā ye śṛṅvanti gāyanti
hy anumodanti cāḍṛtāḥ
mat-parāḥ śraddadhānāś ca
bhaktim vindanti te mayi*

tāḥ – those topics; *ye* – persons who; *śṛṅvanti* – hear; *gāyanti* – chant; *hi* – indeed; *anumodanti* – take to heart; *ca* – and; *cāḍṛtāḥ* – with respect; *mat-parāḥ* – dedicated to Me; *śraddadhānāḥ* – faithful; *ca* – and; *bhaktim* – devotional service; *vindanti* – achieve; *te* – they; *mayi* – for Me.

TRANSLATION

Whoever hears, chants and respectfully takes to heart these topics about Me becomes faithfully dedicated to Me and thus achieves My devotional service.

PURPORT

One who hears from advanced devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa can be saved from the ocean of material existence. When one obeys the order of a bona fide spiritual master, the polluted workings of the mind are checked, one sees things in a new, spiritual light, and there blossoms the propensity for selfless loving service to the Lord, which gives the fruit of love of Godhead.

TEXT 26.30

*bhaktim labdhavataḥ sādhoḥ
kim anyad avaśiṣyate
mayi ananta-guṇe brahmaṇy
ānandānubhavātmani*

bhaktim – devotional service to the Supreme Lord; *labdhavataḥ* – who has achieved; *sādhoḥ* – for the devotee; *kim* – what; *anyat* – else; *avaśiṣyate* – remains; *mayi* – to Me; *ananta-guṇe* – whose qualities are countless; *brahmaṇi* – to the Absolute Truth; *ānanda* – of ecstasy; *anubhava* – the experience; *ātmani* – who comprises.

TRANSLATION

What more remains to be accomplished for the perfect devotee after achieving devotional service unto Me, the Supreme Absolute Truth, whose qualities are innumerable and who am the embodiment of all ecstatic experience?

PURPORT

Devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is so pleasing that a pure devotee cannot desire anything except service to the Lord. In the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Lord Kṛṣṇa told the *gopīs* that they would have to accept their own service as the ultimate reward of their devotion to Him, since nothing awards as much happiness and knowledge as devotional service itself. When one sincerely chants and hears the holy name and fame of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the heart is purified and gradually one can appreciate the actual, blissful nature of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, loving service to the Lord.

TEXT 26.31

*yathopāśrayamāṇasya
bhagavantam vibhāvasum
śītam bhayam tamo'pyeti
sādhūn samsevatas tathā*

yathā – just as; *upāśrayamāṇasya* – of one who is approaching;
bhagavantam – the powerful; *vibhāvasum* – fire; *śītam* – cold; *bhayam* – fear;
tamaḥ – darkness; *apyeti* – are removed; *sādhūn* – saintly devotees;
samsevataḥ – for one who is serving; *tathā* – similarly.

TRANSLATION

Just as cold, fear and darkness are eradicated for one who has approached the sacrificial fire, so dullness, fear and ignorance are destroyed for one engaged in serving the devotees of the Lord.

PURPORT

Those engaged in fruitive activities are certainly dull; they lack higher awareness of the Supreme Lord and the soul. Materialists are engaged more or less mechanically in gratifying their senses and ambitions, and thus they are considered dull or practically unconscious. All such dullness, fear and ignorance are removed when one serves the lotus feet of the Lord, just as cold, fear and darkness are removed when one approaches a fire.

TEXT 26.32

*nimajjyonmajjatām ghore
bhavābdhau paramāyaṇam
santo brahma-vidaḥ śāntā
nauḥ dr̥dhevāpsu majjatām*

nimajjya – of those who are submerging; *unmajjatām* – and rising again;
ghore – in the horrible; *bhava* – of material life; *abdhou* – ocean; *parama* – supreme; *ayanam* – shelter; *santaḥ* – saintly devotees; *brahma-vidaḥ* – who understand the Absolute Truth; *śāntāḥ* – peaceful; *nauḥ* – a boat; *dr̥dhā* –

strong; *iva* – just as; *apsu* – in the water; *majjatām* – for those who are drowning.

TRANSLATION

The devotees of the Lord, peacefully fixed in absolute knowledge, are the ultimate shelter for those who are repeatedly rising and falling within the fearful ocean of material life. Such devotees are just like a strong boat that comes to rescue persons who are at the point of drowning.

TEXT 26.33

*annaṁ hi prāṇināṁ prāṇa
ārtānāṁ śaraṇaṁ tv aham
dharmo vittaṁ nṛṇāṁ pretya
santo'rvāg bibhyato'raṇam*

annam – food; *hi* – indeed; *prāṇinām* – of living entities; *prāṇaḥ* – the very life; *ārtānām* – of those who are distressed; *śaraṇam* – the shelter; *tu* – and; *aham* – I; *dharmāḥ* – religion; *vittam* – the wealth; *nṛṇām* – of men; *pretya* – when they have passed away from this world; *santaḥ* – the devotees; *arvāk* – of going downward; *bibhyataḥ* – for those who are fearful; *araṇam* – the refuge.

TRANSLATION

Just as food is the life of all creatures, just as I am the ultimate shelter for the distressed, and just as religion is the wealth of those who are passing away from this world, so My devotees are the only refuge of persons fearful of falling into a miserable condition of life.

PURPORT

Those fearful of being dragged down by material lust and anger should take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord's devotees, who can engage one safely in the Lord's loving service.

TEXT 26.34

*santo diśanti cakṣūṁṣi
bahir arkaḥ samutthitaḥ
devatā bāndhavāḥ santaḥ
santa ātmāham eva ca*

santaḥ – the devotees; *diśanti* – bestow; *cakṣūṁṣi* – eyes; *bahih* – external; *arkaḥ* – the sun; *samutthitaḥ* – when it is fully risen; *devatāḥ* – worshipable deities; *bāndhavāḥ* – relatives; *santaḥ* – the devotees; *santaḥ* – the devotees; *ātmā* – one's very soul; *aham* – Myself; *eva ca* – as well.

TRANSLATION

My devotees bestow divine eyes, whereas the sun allows only external sight, and that only when it is risen in the sky. My devotees are one's real worshipable deities and real family; they are one's own self, and ultimately they are nondifferent from Me.

PURPORT

Foolishness is the wealth of the impious, who place great value on their treasure and firmly make up their minds to remain in the darkness of ignorance. Sainly devotees of the Lord are just like the sun. By the light of their words, the living entities' eyes of knowledge are opened and the darkness of ignorance is destroyed. Thus the saintly devotees are one's real friends and relatives. They are the proper recipients of service - not the gross material body, which merely clamors for sense gratification.

TEXT 26.35

*vaitasenas tato'py evam
urvaśyā loka-niṣṭraḥ
mukta-saṅgo mahīm etām
ātmārāmaś cacāra ha*

vaitasenaḥ - King Purūravā; *tataḥ api* - for that reason; *evam* - thus; *urvaśyāḥ* - of Urvaśī; *loka* - of being on the same planet; *niṣṭraḥ* - freed from the desire; *mukta* - liberated; *saṅgaḥ* - from all material association; *mahīm* - the earth; *etām* - this; *ātmā-ārāmaḥ* - self-satisfied; *cacāra* - he traveled; *ha* - indeed.

TRANSLATION

Thus losing his desire to be on the same planet as Urvaśī, Mahārāja Purūravā began to wander the earth free of all material association and completely satisfied within the self.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-sixth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "The Aila-gītā."

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Lord Kṛṣṇa's Instructions on the Process of Deity Worship

In this chapter the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains the process of *kriyā-yoga*, or Deity worship.

Worshiping the Deity form of the Supreme Lord automatically brings purity and satisfaction to the mind. Thus it is the source of all desirable gains. If a person has no engagement in Deity service he will simply remain attracted to material sense gratification, and he will have no hope of giving up bad association. The Personality of Godhead has given instruction, among the regulations of the *Sātvata* scriptures, on the process of worshiping Him as the bona fide Deity. Brahmā, Śiva, Nārada, Vyāsa and all other sages have recommended this process described by the Lord as most perfectly beneficial for all the occupational classes and spiritual orders of human society, including even the women and *śūdras*.

There are three varieties of *arcana*, Deity worship, based on either the original *Vedas*, the secondary *tantras*, or a combination of these. The Deity image, the ground, the fire, the sun, the water and the heart of the worshiper are all true locations of the Deity's presence. The Deity form to be worshiped may be constructed of any one of eight substances – stone, wood, metal, clay, paint, sand (drawn upon the ground), the mind or jewels. These categories are further subdivided into two: temporary and permanent.

The details of the worshiping process are as follows: The devotee should bathe both physically and by chanting *mantras*, and then he should perform the utterance of Gāyatrī at the prescribed juncture of the day. He should arrange a seat facing either east or north, or else directly facing the Deity, and should bathe and clean the Deity. Then he should present clothing and ornaments, sprinkle water on the vessels and other paraphernalia to be used in the worship, and offer water for bathing the Deity's feet, *arghya*, water for washing His mouth, fragrant oils, incense, lamps, flowers and food preparations. After this, one should worship the Lord's personal servants and bodyguards, His consort energies, and the spiritual masters by chanting their respective *mūla-mantras*. The worshiper should recite prayers from the *Purāṇas* and other sources, offer obeisances flat on the ground, beg for benediction, and place on himself the remnants of the Lord's garlands. Included in this method of Deity worship are the proper installation of the transcendental Deity by constructing a fine temple, and also the conducting of processions and other festivals. By worshiping Lord Śrī Hari with unconditional devotion in this manner, one gains access to pure loving service to His lotus feet. But if one steals property that has been given as charity to the Deity or the *brāhmaṇas*, whether given by himself or by others, he will have to take his next birth as a stool-eating worm.

TEXT 27.1

śrī-uddhava uvāca
kriyā-yogaṁ samācakṣva
bhavad-ārādhanaṁ prabho

*yasmāt tvām ye yathārcanti
sātvatāḥ sātvatarṣabha*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *kriyā-yogam* – the prescribed method of activity; *samācakṣva* – please explain; *bhavat* – of You; *ārāadhanam* – the Deity worship; *prabho* – O Lord; *yasmāt* – based on what kind of form; *tvām* – You; *ye* – who; *yathā* – in what manner; *arcanti* – they worship; *sātvatāḥ* – the devotees; *sātvata-ṛṣabha* – O master of the devotees.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, O master of the devotees, please explain to me the prescribed method of worshipping You in Your Deity form. What are the qualifications of those devotees who worship the Deity, on what basis is such worship established, and what is the specific method of worship?

PURPORT

In addition to performing their prescribed duties, devotees of the Lord engage in regulated worship of the Lord in His Deity form in the temple. Such worship acts powerfully to cleanse the heart of both the lust to enjoy one's material body and the material family attachment that results directly from this lust. To be effective, however, the process of Deity worship must be performed in the authorized way. Therefore Uddhava now inquires from the Lord about this subject.

TEXT 27.2

*etad vadanti munayo
muhur niḥśreyasaṁ nṛṇām
nārado bhagavān vyāsa
ācāryo'ṅgirasaḥ sutaḥ*

etad – this; *vadanti* – they say; *munayaḥ* – the great sages; *muhur* – repeatedly; *niḥśreyasaṁ* – the highest goal of life; *nṛṇām* – for men; *nāradaḥ* – Nārada Muni; *bhagavān vyāsaḥ* – Śrīla Vedavyāsa; *ācāryaḥ* – my spiritual master; *aṅgirasaḥ* – of Aṅgirā; *sutaḥ* – the son.

TRANSLATION

All the great sages repeatedly declare that such worship brings the greatest benefit possible in human life. This is the opinion of Nārada Muni, the great Vyāsadeva and my own spiritual master, Bṛhaspati.

TEXTS 27.3-4

*niḥśṛtaṁ te mukhāmbhojād
yad āha bhagavān ajaḥ
putrebhyo bhṛgu-mukhyebhyo
devyai ca bhagavān bhavaḥ
etad vai sarva-varṇānām
āśramāṇāṁ ca sammatam
śreyasām uttamaṁ manye
strī-śūdrāṇāṁ ca māna-da*

niḥsṛtam – emanated; *te* – Your; *mukha-ambhojāt* – from the lotus mouth; *yat* – which; *āha* – spoke; *bhagavān* – the great lord; *ajaḥ* – self-born Brahmā; *putrebhyaḥ* – to his sons; *bhṛgu-mukhyebhyaḥ* – headed by Bhṛgu; *devyai* – to the goddess Pārvatī; *ca* – and; *bhagavān bhavaḥ* – Lord Śiva; *etat* – this (process of Deity worship); *vai* – indeed; *sarva-varṇānām* – by all the occupational classes of society; *āśramāṇām* – and spiritual orders; *ca* – also; *sammataṁ* – approved; *śreyasām* – of different kinds of benefit in life; *uttamam* – the topmost; *manye* – I think; *strī* – for women; *sūdrāṇām* – and low-class workers; *ca* – also; *māna-da* – O magnanimous Lord.

TRANSLATION

O most magnanimous Lord, the instructions on this process of Deity worship first emanated from Your lotus mouth. Then they were spoken by the great Lord Brahmā to his sons, headed by Bhṛgu, and by Lord Śiva to his wife, Pārvatī. This process is accepted by and appropriate for all the occupational and spiritual orders of society. Therefore I consider worship of You in Your Deity form to be the most beneficial of all spiritual practices, even for women and sūdras.

TEXT 27.5

etat kamala-patrākṣa
karma-bandha-vimocanam
bhaktāya cānuraktāya
brūhi viśveśvareśvara

etat – this; *kamala-patra-akṣa* – O lotus-eyed Lord; *karma-bandha* – from the bondage of material work; *vimocanam* – the means of liberation; *bhaktāya* – to Your devotee; *anuraktāya* – who is very attached; *brūhi* – please speak; *viśva-īśvara* – of all the lords of the universe; *īśvara* – O Supreme Lord.

TRANSLATION

O lotus-eyed one, O Supreme Lord of all lords of the universe, please explain to Your devoted servant this means of liberation from the bondage of work.

TEXT 27.6

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
na hy anto'nanta-pārasya
karma-kāṇḍasya coddhava
saṅkṣiptaṁ varṇayiṣyāmi
yathāvad anupūrvaśaḥ

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *na* – there is not; *hi* – indeed; *antaḥ* – any end; *ananta-pārasya* – of the boundless; *karma-kāṇḍasya* – Vedic prescriptions for the execution of worship; *ca* – and; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *saṅkṣiptam* – in brief; *varṇayiṣyāmi* – I shall explain; *yathā-vat* – in a suitable manner; *anupūrvaśaḥ* – in the appropriate order.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, there is no end to the innumerable Vedic prescriptions for executing Deity worship; so I shall explain this topic to you briefly, one step at a time.

PURPORT

Here the word *karma-kāṇḍa* refers to the various Vedic methods of worship, culminating in Deity worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Just as the means of sense gratification and material renunciation are innumerable, the transcendental pastimes and qualities the Supreme Personality of Godhead enjoys in His own abode, called *Vaikuṅṭha*, are also innumerable. The various concepts of piety and methods of purification in the material world ultimately cannot be reconciled amongst themselves without accepting the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, since without appreciation of Him there is no definitive understanding of what is actually obligatory for a human being. Even though almost all human beings are engaged in various processes of worship, the Lord will now summarize this topic, describing how one should worship Him in His Deity form.

TEXT 27.7

*vaidikas tāntriko miśra
iti me tri-vidho makhaḥ
trayāṇām īpsitenaiva
vidhinā mām samarcaret*

vaidikaḥ – according to the four *Vedas*; *tāntrikaḥ* – according to practical, explanatory literatures; *miśraḥ* – mixed; *iti* – thus; *me* – of Me; *tri-vidhaḥ* – of three kinds; *makhaḥ* – sacrifice; *trayāṇām* – of the three; *īpsitena* – that which one feels to be most suitable; *eva* – certainly; *vidhinā* – by the process; *mām* – Me; *samarcaret* – one should properly worship.

TRANSLATION

One should carefully worship Me by selecting one of the three methods by which I receive sacrifice: Vedic, tantric or mixed.

PURPORT

Vaidika refers to sacrifice performed with *mantras* from the four *Vedas* and auxiliary Vedic literature. *Tāntrika* refers to such literatures as the *Pañcarātra* and the *Gautamīya-tantra*. And “mixed” indicates utilization of both literatures. It should be remembered that superficial imitation of elaborate Vedic sacrifices will not bring one the actual perfection of life. One must perform sacrifice according to the prescription of the Supreme Lord, who recommends for this age the chanting of His holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

TEXT 27.8

*yadā sva-nigamenoktaṁ
dvijatvaṁ prāpya pūruṣaḥ
yathā yajeta mām bhaktyā
śraddhayā tan nibodha me*

yadā – when; *sva* – specified according to one’s qualification; *nigamena* – by the Vedas; *uktam* – enjoined; *dvijatvam* – the status of becoming twice-born; *prāpya* – achieving; *pūruṣaḥ* – a person; *yathā* – in which way; *yajeta* – he should execute worship; *mām* – unto Me; *bhaktyā* – with devotion; *śraddhayā* – with faith; *tat* – that; *nibodha* – please hear; *me* – from Me.

TRANSLATION

Now please listen faithfully as I explain exactly how a person who has achieved twice-born status through the relevant Vedic prescriptions should worship Me with devotion.

PURPORT

The word *sva-nigamena* refers to the particular Vedic injunctions relevant to one’s social and occupational status. Members of the *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya* communities all achieve *dvijatvam*, twice-born status, by initiation into the *Gāyatrī mantra*. Traditionally, fully qualified *brāhmaṇa* boys may be initiated at age eight, *kṣatriyas* at eleven and *vaiśyas* at twelve, provided the proper conditions are met. Having achieved twice-born status, one should faithfully worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His form of the Deity, as the Lord Himself will describe.

TEXT 27.9

*arcāyām sthaṇḍile’gnau vā
sūrye vāpsu hṛdi dvijaḥ
dravyeṇa bhakti-yukto’rcet
sva-gurum mām amāyayā*

arcāyām – within the Deity form; *sthaṇḍile* – in the earth; *agnau* – in fire; *vā* – or; *sūrye* – in the sun; *vā* – or; *apsu* – in water; *hṛdi* – in the heart; *dvijaḥ* – the *brāhmaṇa*; *dravyeṇa* – by various paraphernalia; *bhakti-yuktaḥ* – endowed with devotion; *arcet* – he should worship; *sva-gurum* – his worshipable Lord; *mām* – Me; *amāyayā* – without any deception.

TRANSLATION

A twice-born person should worship Me, his worshipable Lord, without duplicity, offering appropriate paraphernalia in loving devotion to My Deity form or to a form of Me appearing upon the ground, in fire, in the sun, in water or within the worshiper’s own heart.

TEXT 27.10

*pūrvam snānam prakurvīta
dhauta-danto’ṅga-śuddhaye
ubhayair api ca snānam
mantrair mṛd-grahaṇādinā*

pūrvam – first; *snānam* – bath; *prakurvīta* – one should perform; *dhauta* – having cleaned; *dantaḥ* – his teeth; *aṅga* – of the body; *śuddhaye* – for purification; *ubhayaiḥ* – with both kinds; *api ca* – also; *snānam* – bathing; *mantraiḥ* – with *mantras*; *mṛt-grahaṇa-ādinā* – by smearing with earth and so on.

TRANSLATION

One should first purify his body by cleansing his teeth and bathing. Then one should perform a second cleansing by smearing the body with earth and chanting both Vedic and tantric mantras.

TEXT 27.11

sandhyopāstyādi-karmāṇi
vedenācoditāni me
pūjām taiḥ kalpayet samyak-
saṅkalpaḥ karma-pāvanīm

sandhyā – at the three junctures of the day (dawn, noon and sunset); *upāsti* – worship (by chanting the *Gāyatrī mantra*); *ādi* – and so on; *karmāṇi* – prescribed duties; *vedena* – by the *Vedas*; *ācoditāni* – recommended; *me* – My; *pūjām* – worship; *taiḥ* – by these activities; *kalpayet* – one should perform; *samyak-saṅkalpaḥ* – who has perfectly fixed his determination (that the object of his endeavor will be the Personality of Godhead); *karma* – the reaction of fruitive work; *pāvanīm* – which eradicates.

TRANSLATION

Fixing the mind on Me, one should worship Me by his various prescribed duties, such as chanting the Gāyatrī mantra at the three junctures of the day. Such performances are enjoined by the Vedas and purify the worshiper of reactions to fruitive activities.

TEXT 27.12

śailī dāru-mayī lauhī
lepyā lekhyā ca saikatī
mano-mayī maṇi-mayī
pratimāṣṭa-vidhā smṛtā

śailī – made of stone; *dāru-mayī* – made of wood; *lauhī* – made of metal; *lepyā* – made of clay, sandalwood and other substances laid down as a paste; *lekhyā* – painted; *ca* – and; *saikatī* – made of sand; *manaḥ-mayī* – conceived of in the mind; *maṇi-mayī* – made of jewels; *pratimā* – the Deity; *aṣṭa-vidhā* – in eight varieties; *smṛtā* – it is remembered.

TRANSLATION

The Deity form of the Lord is said to appear in eight varieties - stone, wood, metal, earth, paint, sand, the mind or jewels.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that certain Deity forms, such as those made of sand, are manifested for a brief time to fulfill a personal desire of the worshiper. Those, however, who desire to attain pure love of God should

worship the permanent form of the Deity (made, for instance, of marble, gold or brass), and they should maintain continual worship. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness there is no scope for neglecting the worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 27.13

*calācaleti dvi-vidhā
pratiṣṭhā jīva-mandiram
udvāsāvāhane na staḥ
sthirāyām uddhavārcane*

calā – movable; *acalā* – immovable; *iti* – thus; *dvi-vidhā* – of two varieties; *pratiṣṭhā* – the installation; *jīva-mandiram* – of the Deity, who is the shelter of all living entities; *udvāsa* – sending away; *āvāhane* – and calling forth; *na staḥ* – are not done; *sthirāyām* – for the permanently established Deity; *uddhava* – My dear Uddhava; *arcane* – in His worship.

TRANSLATION

The Deity form of the Lord, who is the shelter of all living entities, can be established in two ways: temporarily or permanently. But a permanent Deity, having been called, can never be sent away, My dear Uddhava.

PURPORT

The devotees of the Lord understand themselves to be the Lord's eternal servitors; recognizing the Deity to be the Lord Himself, they permanently install the Deity and engage in perpetual worship. The impersonalists, however, regard the eternal form of the Lord as a temporary manifestation of illusion. In fact, they regard the Deity form as a mere stepping-stone in their ambitious program to become God. Materialistic persons of whatever stripe consider the Lord to be their order supplier, and so they make temporary arrangements for religious ceremonies to achieve temporary material sense gratification. This temporary mode of worship is favored by those desiring to exploit the Personality of Godhead for their personal ends, whereas the loving devotees in Kṛṣṇa consciousness eternally engage in worship of the Personality of Godhead. They install permanent Deities meant to be worshiped perpetually.

TEXT 27.14

*asthirāyām vikalpaḥ syāt
sthaṇḍile tu bhaved dvayam
snapanam tv avilepyāyām
anyatra parimārjanam*

asthirāyām – in the case of the temporarily installed Deity; *vikalpaḥ* – an option (as to whether the Deity is to be called and sent away); *syāt* – there is; *sthaṇḍile* – in the case of the Deity traced upon the ground; *tu* – but; *bhaved* – do occur; *dvayam* – these two rituals; *snapanam* – the bathing; *tu* – but; *avilepyāyām* – in the case when the Deity is not made out of clay (or

paint or wood); *anyatra* – in the other cases; *parimārjanam* – thorough cleansing, but without water.

TRANSLATION

The Deity that is temporarily established can optionally be called forth and sent away, but these two rituals should always be performed when the Deity is traced upon the ground. Bathing should be done with water except if the Deity is made of clay, paint or wood, in which cases a thorough cleansing without water is enjoined.

PURPORT

Various classes of devotees worship the Deity of the Personality of Godhead according to their various stages of faith in the Lord. An advanced devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa understands his eternal loving relationship with the Lord and, seeing the Deity as the Lord Himself, establishes an eternal relationship with the Deity based on loving servitude to Him. Understanding Lord Kṛṣṇa to be the eternal form of bliss and knowledge, a faithful devotee makes a permanent arrangement for Deity worship, installing the Lord's form made of, for example, stone, wood or marble.

The *śālagrāma-śilā* is considered to be automatically installed even without the formal ceremony, and so it is forbidden to call the Deity with *mantras* or ask the Deity to leave. On the other hand, if one prepares a Deity form by drawing on sanctified ground or by constructing a sand image, one must call the Deity with *mantras* and then ask the Deity to leave the external form, which will soon be demolished by the natural elements.

The general principle is that a pure devotee of the Lord understands his relationship with the Deity to be eternal. The more one surrenders in loving devotion to the Deity, the more one can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Kṛṣṇa is a person, but He is the Supreme Person, possessing His own unique feelings. One can easily please the Lord by devotional service offered to His Deity form. By pleasing the Lord one can gradually progress in the mission of human life and eventually go back home, back to Godhead, where the Deity personally appears before the devotee and welcomes the devotee to His personal abode, known throughout the world as the kingdom of God.

TEXT 27.15

*dravyaiḥ prasiddhair mad-yāgaḥ
pratimādiṣv amāyinaḥ
bhaktasya ca yathā-labdhair
hṛdi bhāvena caiva hi*

dravyaiḥ – with items of paraphernalia; *prasiddhaiḥ* – excellent; *mat-yāgaḥ* – My worship; *pratimā-ādiṣu* – in the different Deity forms; *amāyinaḥ* – who has no material desire; *bhaktasya* – of a devotee; *ca* – and; *yathā-labdhaiḥ* – by whatever paraphernalia he can easily obtain; *hṛdi* – in the heart; *bhāvena* – by mental conception; *ca* – and; *eva hi* – certainly.

TRANSLATION

One should worship Me in My Deity forms by offering the most excellent paraphernalia. But a devotee completely freed from material desire may worship Me with whatever he is able to obtain, and may even worship Me within his heart with mental paraphernalia.

PURPORT

A devotee still troubled by material desire tends to see the world as an object of sense gratification. Such a neophyte devotee may misunderstand the Lord's supreme position and may even consider the Lord an object of his own enjoyment. Hence the neophyte must offer opulent paraphernalia to the Deity so that he may constantly remember that the Deity is the supreme enjoyer and that he, the neophyte, is simply the worshiper and is actually meant for the Deity's pleasure. In contrast, an advanced devotee, one fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, never forgets that the Supreme Lord is the actual enjoyer and controller of everything. The pure devotee offers his unalloyed love to the Personality of Godhead along with whatever paraphernalia is easily obtained. A Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee does not waver in his devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and even with the simplest offering he completely satisfies the Personality of Godhead.

TEXTS 27.16-17

*snānālaṅkāraṇaṁ preṣṭham
arcāyām eva tūddhava
sthaṅḍile tattva-vinyāso
vahnāv ājya-plutaṁ haviḥ
sūrye cābhyarhaṇaṁ preṣṭham
salile salilādibhiḥ
śraddhayopāhṛtaṁ preṣṭham
bhaktena mama vāry api*

snāna – bathing; *alaṅkāraṇam* – and decorating with clothing and ornaments; *preṣṭham* – is most appreciated; *arcāyām* – for the Deity form; *eva* – certainly; *tu* – and; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *sthaṅḍile* – for the Deity drawn upon the ground; *tattva-vinyāsaḥ* – establishing the expansions and potencies of the Lord within the various limbs of the Deity by chanting the respective *mantras*; *vahnau* – for the sacrificial fire; *ājya* – in ghee; *plutam* – drenched; *haviḥ* – the oblations of sesame, barley and so on; *sūrye* – for the sun; *ca* – and; *abhyarhaṇam* – the *yoga* meditation of twelve *āsanas* and offerings of *arghya*; *preṣṭham* – most dear; *salile* – for the water; *salilādibhiḥ* – by offerings of water and so on; *śraddhayā* – with faith; *upāhṛtam* – presented; *preṣṭham* – most dear; *bhaktena* – by the devotee; *mama* – My; *vāri* – water; *api* – even.

TRANSLATION

In worshiping the temple Deity, my dear Uddhava, bathing and decoration are the most pleasing offerings. For the Deity traced on

sacred ground, the process of tattva-vinyāsa is most dear. Oblations of sesame and barley soaked in ghee are the preferred offering to the sacrificial fire, whereas worship consisting of upasthāna and arghya is preferred for the sun. One should worship Me in the form of water by offering water itself. Actually, whatever is offered to Me with faith by My devotee - even if only a little water - is most dear to Me.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is present everywhere, and Vedic culture prescribes various ritualistic methods for worshiping the Lord in His various manifestations. The principal item is the faith and devotion of the worshiper, without which everything else is useless, as the Lord describes in the next verse.

TEXT 27.18

*bhūry apy abhaktopāhṛtam
na me toṣāya kalpate
gandho dhūpaḥ sumanaso
dīpo'nnādyam ca kim punaḥ*

bhūri - opulent; *api* - even; *abhakta* - by a nondevotee; *upāhṛtam* - offered; *na* - does not; *me* - My; *toṣāya* - satisfaction; *kalpate* - create; *gandhaḥ* - fragrance; *dhūpaḥ* - incense; *sumanaśaḥ* - flowers; *dīpaḥ* - lamps; *anna-ādyam* - foodstuffs; *ca* - and; *kim punaḥ* - what to speak of.

TRANSLATION

Even very opulent presentations do not satisfy Me if they are offered by nondevotees. But I am pleased by any insignificant offering made by My loving devotees, and I am certainly most pleased when nice presentations of fragrant oil, incense, flowers and palatable foods are offered with love.

PURPORT

The Lord has stated in the previous verse that even a little water offered with love and devotion gives Him great pleasure. Therefore the words *kim punaḥ* indicate the Lord's complete happiness when a suitably opulent offering is made with love and devotion. But an opulent offering made by a nondevotee cannot please the Lord. As Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains, the rules and regulations concerning Deity worship and the listing of offenses against the Deities are all meant for helping one avoid precisely this kind of disrespectful or neglectful attitude toward the Personality of Godhead in His Deity form. In fact, all offenses against the Deity are based upon irreverence and disregard for the Lord's position as master, and thus upon disobedience to His orders. Since one must worship the Deity with reverence, one should offer opulent presentations to the Deity with love, for such presentations both enhance the respectfulness of the worshiper and help him avoid offenses in his worship.

TEXT 27.19

*śuciḥ sambhṛta-sambhāraḥ
prāg-darbhaiḥ kalpitāśanaḥ
āsīnaḥ prāg udag vārceḍ
arcāyām tv atha sammukhaḥ*

śuciḥ – clean; *sambhṛta* – having collected; *sambhāraḥ* – the paraphernalia; *prāk* – their tips facing the east; *darbhaiḥ* – with blades of *kuśa* grass; *kalpita* – having arranged; *āsanaḥ* – his own seat; *āsīnaḥ* – sitting; *prāk* – facing the east; *udak* – facing the north; *vā* – or; *arcet* – he should perform the worship; *arcāyām* – of the Deity; *tu* – but; *atha* – or else; *sammukhaḥ* – directly facing.

TRANSLATION

After cleansing himself and collecting all the paraphernalia, the worshiper should arrange his own seat with blades of kuśa grass whose tips point eastward. He should then sit facing either east or north, or else, if the Deity is fixed in one place, he should sit directly facing the Deity.

PURPORT

The word *sambhṛta-sambhāra* means that before beginning the Deity worship one should place all necessary paraphernalia nearby. In this way one will not have to get up continually to search for different items. If the Deity has been permanently installed, then one should sit facing the Deity.

TEXT 27.20

*kṛta-nyāsaḥ kṛta-nyāsām
mad-arcām pāṇināmṛjet
kalaśam prokṣaṇīyam ca
yathāvad upasādhayet*

kṛta-nyāsaḥ – having sanctified his own body (by touching various parts and chanting appropriate *mantras* while meditating on the corresponding forms of the Supreme Lord); *kṛta-nyāsām* – (the Deity) upon which the same process has been applied; *mad-arcām* – My Deity manifestation; *pāṇinā* – with his hand; *āmrjet* – should clean (by removing remnants of old offerings); *kalaśam* – the ritual pot filled with auspicious substances; *prokṣaṇīyam* – the vessel containing water for sprinkling; *ca* – and; *yathā-vat* – appropriately; *upasādhayet* – he should prepare.

TRANSLATION

The devotee should sanctify the various parts of his body by touching them and chanting mantras. He should do the same for My Deity form, and then with his hands he should clean the Deity of old flowers and the remnants of previous offerings. He should properly prepare the sacred pot and the vessel containing water for sprinkling.

PURPORT

Before beginning the process of worship mentioned here, one should offer obeisances to one’s spiritual master, the Deity and other worshipable personalities.

TEXT 27.21

*tad-adbhir deva-yajanaṁ
dravyāṅy ātmānam eva ca
prokṣya pātrāṇi trīṅy adbhis
tais tair dravyaiś ca sādhayet*

tat – of the vessel for sprinkling; *adbhiḥ* – with the water; *deva-yajanam* – the place where the Deity is worshiped; *dravyāṅi* – the paraphernalia; *ātmānam* – one’s own body; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *prokṣya* – sprinkling; *pātrāṇi* – the vessels; *trīṅi* – three; *adbhiḥ* – with water; *taiḥ taiḥ* – with those available; *dravyaiḥ* – auspicious items; *ca* – and; *sādhayet* – he should arrange.

TRANSLATION

Then, with the water of that prokṣaṇiya vessel he should sprinkle the area where the Deity is being worshiped, the offerings that are going to be presented, and his own body. Next he should decorate with various auspicious substances three vessels filled with water.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī gives references from Vedic literature stating that the water meant for bathing the feet should be combined with millet seeds, *dūrvā* grass mixed in water, *viṣṇukrānta* flowers and other items. The water used for *arghya* should include the following eight items: fragrant oil, flowers, unbroken barleycorns, husked barleycorns, the tips of *kuśa* grass, sesame seeds, mustard seeds and *dūrvā* grass. The water for sipping should include jasmine flowers, ground cloves and *kakkola* berries.

TEXT 27.22

*pādyārghyācamaniyārthaṁ
trīṅi pātrāṇi deśikaḥ
hṛdā śirṣṇātha śikhayā
gāyatrī cābhimantrayet*

pādya – of the water offered to the Lord for bathing His feet; *arghya* – the water offered to the Lord as a token of respectful greeting; *ācamaniya* – and the water offered to the Lord for washing His mouth; *artham* – placed there for the purpose; *trīṅi* – three; *pātrāṇi* – the vessels; *deśikaḥ* – the worshiper; *hṛdā* – by the “heart” *mantra*; *śirṣṇā* – by the “head” *mantra*; *atha* – and; *śikhayā* – by the “crown” *mantra*; *gāyatrī* – and by the *Gāyatrī mantra*; *ca* – also; *abhimantrayet* – he should perform purification by chanting.

TRANSLATION

The worshiper should then purify those three vessels. He should sanctify the vessel holding water for washing the Lord’s feet by chanting hṛdayāya namaḥ, the vessel containing water for arghya by chanting śirase svāhā, and the vessel containing water for

washing the Lord's mouth by chanting śikhāyai vaṣaṭ. Also, the Gāyatrī mantra should be chanted for all three vessels.

TEXT 27.23

*piṅḍe vāyv-agni-saṁśuddhe
hṛt-padma-sthām parām mama
aṅvīm jīva-kalām dhyāyen
nādānte siddha-bhāvitām*

piṅḍe – within the body; *vāyu* – by air; *agni* – and by fire; *saṁśuddhe* – which has become completely purified; *hṛt* – of the heart; *padma* – upon the lotus; *sthām* – situated; *parām* – the transcendental form; *mama* – of Mine; *aṅvīm* – very subtle; *jīva-kalām* – the Personality of Godhead, from whom all living entities expand; *dhyāyet* – he should meditate upon; *nāda-ante* – at the end of the vibration of *om*; *siddha* – by perfected sages; *bhāvitām* – experienced.

TRANSLATION

The worshiper should meditate upon My subtle form - which is situated within the worshiper's own body, now purified by air and fire - as the source of all living entities. This form of the Lord is experienced by self-realized sages in the last part of the vibration of the sacred syllable om.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the *praṇava*, or *omkāra*, has five parts: A, U, M, the nasal *bindu* and the reverberation (*nāda*). Liberated souls meditate upon the Lord at the end of that reverberation.

TEXT 27.24

*tayātma-bhūtayā piṅḍe
vyāpte sampūjya tat-mayaḥ
āvāhyārcādiṣu sthāpya
nyastāṅgam mām prapūjayet*

tayā – by that form meditated upon; *ātma-bhūtayā* – conceived of according to one's own realization; *piṅḍe* – in the physical body; *vyāpte* – which has become pervaded; *sampūjya* – perfectly worshiping that form; *tat-mayaḥ* – surcharged by His presence; *āvāhya* – inviting; *arcā-ādiṣu* – within the various Deities being worshiped; *sthāpya* – establishing Him; *nyasta-aṅgam* – having touched the Deity's various limbs with the chanting of appropriate *mantras*; *mām* – to Me; *prapūjayet* – he should carry out all the details of worship.

TRANSLATION

The devotee conceives of the Supersoul, whose presence surcharges the devotee's body, in the form corresponding to his realization. Thus the devotee worships the Lord to his full capacity and becomes fully absorbed in Him. By touching the various limbs of the Deity and chanting appropriate mantras, the devotee should invite the

Supersoul to join the Deity's form, and then the devotee should worship Me.

PURPORT

The body of a devotee is pervaded by the Supreme Lord just as a house is pervaded by the glow of a lamp. Just as one gestures in a friendly way to indicate that a guest should enter one's house, one touches the body of the Deity, chants appropriate *mantras*, and enthusiastically invites the Supersoul to enter the form of the Deity. Since both the Deity and the Supersoul are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they are not different. One form of the Lord can immediately become manifest in another.

TEXTS 27.25-26

*pādyopasparśārhaṇādīn
upacārān prakalpayet
dharmādibhiś ca navabhiḥ
kalpayitvāsanam mama
padmam aṣṭa-dalam tatra
karṇikā-kesarojjvalam
ubhābhyām veda-tantrābhyām
mahyam tūbhaya-siddhaye*

pādyā – water for washing the Lord's feet; *opasparśā* – water for washing the Lord's mouth; *arhaṇa* – water presented as *arghya*; *ādīn* – and other paraphernalia; *upacārān* – the offerings; *prakalpayet* – one should make; *dharmā-ādibhiḥ* – with the personifications of religion, knowledge, renunciation and opulence; *ca* – and; *navabhiḥ* – with the nine (energies of the Lord); *kalpayitvā* – having imagined; *āsanam* – the seat; *mama* – My; *padmam* – a lotus; *aṣṭa-dalam* – having eight petals; *tatra* – therein; *karṇikā* – in the whorl; *kesara* – with saffron filaments; *ujjvalam* – effulgent; *ubhābhyām* – by both means; *veda-tantrābhyām* – of the *Vedas* and *tantras*; *mahyam* – to Me; *tu* – and; *ubhaya* – of both (enjoyment and liberation); *siddhaye* – for the achievement.

TRANSLATION

The worshiper should first imagine My seat as decorated with the personified deities of religion, knowledge, renunciation and opulence and with My nine spiritual energies. He should think of the Lord's sitting place as an eight-petaled lotus, effulgent on account of the saffron filaments within its whorl. Then, following the regulations of both the Vedas and the tantras, he should offer Me water for washing the feet, water for washing the mouth, arghya and other items of worship. By this process he achieves both material enjoyment and liberation.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, religion, knowledge, renunciation and opulence are the legs of the Lord's sitting platform and occupy the four corners, beginning with the southeast. Irreligion, ignorance, attachment and

wretchedness are the intermediate legs, standing in the four directions beginning with the east. The nine śaktis, or potencies, of the Lord are Vimalā, Utkarṣiṇī, Jñānā, Kriyā, Yogā, Prahvī, Satyā, Īśānā and Anugrahā.

TEXT 27.27

*sudarśanaṁ pāñcajanyaṁ
gadāsīṣu-dhanur-halān
muṣalaṁ kaustubhaṁ mālāṁ
śrīvatsaṁ cānupūjayet*

sudarśanam – the Lord’s disc; *pāñcajanyaṁ* – the Lord’s conchshell; *gadā* – His club; *asi* – sword; *iṣu* – arrows; *dhanuḥ* – bow; *halān* – and plow; *muṣalam* – His *muṣala* weapon; *kaustubham* – the Kaustubha gem; *mālām* – His garland; *śrīvatsam* – the decoration of Śrīvatsa on His chest; *ca* – and; *anupūjayet* – one should worship one after another.

TRANSLATION

One should worship, in order, the Lord’s Sudarśana disc, His Pāñcajanya conchshell, His club, sword, bow, arrows and plow, His muṣala weapon, His Kaustubha gem, His flower garland and the Śrīvatsa curl of hair on His chest.

TEXT 27.28

*nandaṁ sunandaṁ garuḍaṁ
pracaṇḍaṁ caṇḍaṁ eva ca
mahābalaṁ balaṁ caiva
kumudaṁ kumudekṣaṇam*

nandam sunandam garuḍam – named Nanda, Sunanda and Garuḍa; *pracaṇḍam caṇḍam* – Pracaṇḍa and Caṇḍa; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – also; *mahā-balam balam* – Mahābala and Bala; *ca* – and; *eva* – indeed; *kumudam kumuda-īkṣaṇam* – Kumuda and Kumudekṣaṇa.

TRANSLATION

One should worship the Lord’s associates Nanda and Sunanda, Garuḍa, Pracaṇḍa and Caṇḍa, Mahābala and Bala, and Kumuda and Kumudekṣaṇa.

TEXT 27.29

*durgāṁ vināyakaṁ vyāsaṁ
viṣvaksenaṁ gurūn surān
sve sve sthāne tv abhimukhān
pūjayet prokṣaṇādibhiḥ*

durgām – the Lord’s spiritual energy; *vināyakam* – the original Gaṇeśa; *vyāsam* – the compiler of the Vedas; *viṣvaksenam* – Viṣvaksena; *gurūn* – one’s spiritual masters; *surān* – the demigods; *sve sve* – each in his own; *sthāne* – place; *tu* – and; *abhimukhān* – all facing the Deity; *pūjayet* – one should worship; *prokṣaṇa-ādibhiḥ* – by the various prescriptions beginning with sprinkling of water for purification.

TRANSLATION

With offerings such as prokṣaṇa one should worship Durgā, Vināyaka, Vyāsa, Viṣvaksena, the spiritual masters and the various demigods. All these personalities should be in their proper places facing the Deity of the Lord.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the Gaṇeśa and Durgā mentioned in this verse are not the same personalities present within the material world; rather, they are eternal associates of the Lord in Vaikuṅṭha. In this world Gaṇeśa, the son of Lord Śiva, is famous for awarding financial success, and the goddess Durgā, the wife of Lord Śiva, is famous as the external, illusory potency of the Supreme Lord. The personalities mentioned here, however, are eternally liberated associates of the Lord who reside in the spiritual sky, beyond the material manifestation. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī quotes from various Vedic literatures to prove that the name Durgā may also indicate the *internal* potency of the Lord, who is nondifferent from Him. The external, or covering, potency of the Lord expands from this original Durgā. The Durgā of the material world, called Mahā-māyā, assumes the function of bewildering the living entities. Thus a devotee should not fear becoming polluted by worshiping the Durgā mentioned here, who has the same name as illusion, but rather the devotee must show respect to these eternal servitors of the Supreme Lord in Vaikuṅṭha.

TEXTS 27.30-31

*candanośīra-karpūra-
kuṅkumāguru-vāsitaiḥ
salilaiḥ snāpayen mantrair
nityadā vibhave sati
svarṇa-gharmānuvākena
mahāpuruṣa-vidyayā
pauruṣeṇāpi sūktena
sāmbhī rājanādibhiḥ*

candana - with sandalwood paste; *uśīra* - the fragrant *uśīra* root; *karpūra* - camphor; *kuṅkuma* - vermilion; *aguru* - aloes wood; *vāsitaiḥ* - which are perfumed; *salilaiḥ* - by different kinds of water; *snāpayet* - one should bathe the Deity; *mantrair* - with *mantras*; *nityadā* - every day; *vibhave* - assets; *sati* - to the extent that there are; *svaṛṇa-gharma-anuvākena* - by the chapter of the *Vedas* known as *Svarṇa-gharma*; *mahā-puruṣa-vidyayā* - by the incantation called *Mahāpuruṣa*; *pauruṣeṇa* - by the *Puruṣa-sūkta*; *api* - also; *sūktena* - the Vedic hymn; *sāmbhīḥ* - by songs from the *Sāma Veda*; *rājana-ādibhiḥ* - known as *Rājana* and so on.

TRANSLATION

The worshiper should bathe the Deity every day, as opulently as his assets permit, using waters scented with sandalwood, uśīra root, camphor, kuṅkuma and aguru. He should also chant various Vedic

hymns, such as the anuvāka known as Svarṇa-gharma, the Mahāpuruṣa-vidyā, the Puruṣa-sūkta and various songs of the Sāma Veda, such as the Rājana and the Rohiṇya.

PURPORT

The Puruṣa-sūkta prayer, beginning om sahasra-śīrṣā-puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ sahasra-pāt, is contained within the Ṛg Veda.

TEXT 27.32

*vastropavītābharaṇa-
patra-srag-gandha-lepanaiḥ
alaṅkurvīta sa-prema
mad-bhakto mām yathocitam*

vastra - with clothing; *upavīta* - a *brāhmaṇa* thread; *ābharaṇa* - ornaments; *patra* - decorations drawn on various parts of the body with *tilaka*; *srag* - garlands; *gandha-lepanaiḥ* - and smearing of fragrant oils; *alaṅkurvīta* - he should decorate; *sa-prema* - with love; *mat-bhaktaḥ* - My devotee; *mām* - Me; *yathā ucitam* - as is enjoined.

TRANSLATION

My devotee should then lovingly decorate Me with clothing, a brāhmaṇa thread, various ornaments, marks of tilaka and garlands, and he should anoint My body with fragrant oils, all in the prescribed manner.

PURPORT

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī quotes Lord Śrī Viṣṇu's instructions to Ambarīṣa Mahārāja in the *Viṣṇu-dharma Upapurāṇa* as follows: "Absorbing your mind completely in the Deity, you should give up all other shelter and consider the Deity your intimate well-wisher. You should mentally worship Him and meditate upon Him while you walk, while you stand, while you sleep and eat. You should see the Deity in front of you, behind, above, below and on both sides. In this way you should constantly remember My Deity form." In the *Gautamīya-tantra* one is enjoined to give the Deity of the Lord a *brāhmaṇa* thread, if possible one made of gold. In the *Nṛsimha Purāṇa* it is stated, "If one offers to Lord Govinda a yellow sacred thread containing three strands of silk, he will become an expert in *Vedānta*."

TEXT 27.33

*pādyam ācamanīyam ca
gandham sumanaso'kṣatān
dhūpa-dīpopahāryāṇi
dadyān me śraddhayārcakaḥ*

pādyam - water for washing the feet; *ācamanīyam* - water for washing the mouth; *ca* - and; *gandham* - fragrances; *sumanaśaḥ* - flowers; *akṣatān* - unbroken grains; *dhūpa* - incense; *dīpa* - lamps; *upahāryāṇi* - such items of paraphernalia; *dadyāt* - he should present; *me* - to Me; *śraddhayā* - with faith; *arcakaḥ* - the worshiper.

TRANSLATION

The worshiper should faithfully present Me with water for washing My feet and mouth, fragrant oils, flowers and unbroken grains, along with incense, lamps and other offerings.

TEXT 27.34

*guḍa-pāyasa-sarpīmṣi
śaṣkuly-āpūpa-modakān
saṁyāva-dadhi-sūpāṁś ca
naivedyaṁ sati kalpayet*

guḍa – sugar candy; *pāyasa* – sweet rice; *sarpīmṣi* – and ghee; *śaṣkulī* – a kind of large, ear-shaped cake made of rice flour, sugar and sesame and fried in ghee; *āpūpa* – various kinds of sweet cakes; *modakān* – small conical steamed dumplings made of rice flour and filled with sweet coconut and sugar; *saṁyāva* – an oblong cake made of wheat, ghee and milk and covered with sugar and spices; *dadhi* – yogurt; *sūpān* – vegetable soups; *ca* – and; *naivedyam* – offerings of food; *sati* – if he has sufficient means; *kalpayet* – the devotee should arrange.

TRANSLATION

Within his means, the devotee should arrange to offer Me sugar candy, sweet rice, ghee, śaṣkulī [rice-flour cakes], āpūpa [various sweet cakes], modaka [steamed rice-flour dumplings filled with sweet coconut and sugar], saṁyāva [wheat cakes made with ghee and milk and covered with sugar and spices], yogurt, vegetable soups and other palatable foods.

PURPORT

One can acquire detailed information of proper and improper foods to offer in Deity worship by consulting *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, eighth *vilāsa*, verses 152-164.

TEXT 27.35

*abhyaṅgonmardanādarśa-
danta-dhāvābhiṣecanam
annādya-gīta-nṛtyāni
parvaṇi syur utānv-aham*

abhyaṅga – with ointment; *unmardana* – massaging; *ādarśa* – offering a mirror; *danta-dhāva* – washing the teeth; *abhiṣecanam* – bathing; *anna* – offering food that can be eaten without chewing; *ādya* – offering food that is chewed; *gītā* – singing; *nṛtyāni* – and dancing; *parvaṇi* – on special holidays; *syuḥ* – these offerings should be made; *uta* – or else (if it is within one's means); *anu-aham* – every day.

TRANSLATION

On special occasions, and daily if possible, the Deity should be massaged with ointment, shown a mirror, offered a eucalyptus stick for brushing His teeth, bathed with the five kinds of nectar, offered

all kinds of opulent foods, and entertained with singing and dancing.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura describes the process of Deity worship as follows: “First the Deity’s teeth should be cleaned and His body massaged with fragrant oil and rubbed with vermilion, camphor powder and so forth. Then He should be bathed with fragrant water and the five kinds of nectar. Next one should offer valuable silk garments and jeweled ornaments to the Deity, smear His body with sandalwood paste, and offer Him garlands and other gifts. After this, one should hold a mirror in front of the Deity and then offer fragrant oil, flowers, incense, lamps and scented water for refreshing the mouth. One should offer all types of palatable foods, fragrant water, betel nuts, garlands, *ārati* lamps, a bed to rest on, and so on. One should also fan the Deity and perform instrumental music, singing and dancing. This Deity worship must be performed on special occasions like religious holidays or else, if one can afford it, daily.” According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, Ekādaśī is an appropriate day for performing special Deity worship.

TEXT 27.36

*vidhinā vihite kuṇḍe
mekhalā-garta-vedibhiḥ
agnim ādhāya paritaḥ
samūhet pāṇinoditam*

vidhinā – according to scriptural injunctions; *vihite* – constructed; *kuṇḍe* – in the sacrificial arena; *mekhalā* – with the paraphernalia of the sacred belt; *garta* – the sacrificial pit; *vedibhiḥ* – and the altar mound; *agnim* – the fire; *ādhāya* – establishing; *paritaḥ* – on all sides; *samūhet* – one should build up; *pāṇinā* – with his hands; *uditam* – blazing.

TRANSLATION

In an arena constructed according to scriptural injunctions, the devotee should perform a fire sacrifice, utilizing the sacred belt, the sacrificial pit and the altar mound. When igniting the sacrificial fire, the devotee should bring it to a blaze with wood piled up by his own hands.

TEXT 27.37

*paristīryātha paryukṣed
anvādhāya yathā-vidhi
prokṣaṇyāsādya dravyāṇi
prokṣyāgnau bhāvayeta mām*

paristīrya – scattering (*kuśa* grass); *atha* – then; *paryukṣet* – he should sprinkle with water; *anvādhāya* – performing the ritual of *anvādhāna* (placing wood into the fire with recitations of *om bhūr bhuvaḥ svaḥ*); *yathā-vidhi* – according to the standard prescription; *prokṣaṇyā* – by the water in the *ācamana* vessel; *āsādya* – having arranged; *dravyāṇi* – the items to be

offered as oblations; *prokṣya* – sprinkling them; *agnau* – within the fire; *bhāvayeta* – he should meditate; *mām* – on Me.

TRANSLATION

After spreading kuśa grass on the ground and sprinkling it with water, one should perform the anvādhāna ritual according to the prescribed rules. Then one should arrange the items to be offered as oblations and should sanctify them with water from the sprinkling vessel. The worshiper should next meditate upon Me within the fire.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mentions that one should meditate upon the Lord as the Supersoul within the sacrificial fire.

TEXTS 27.38-41

*tapta-jāmbūnada-prakhyam
śaṅkha-cakra-gadāmbujaiḥ
lasac-catur-bhujam śāntam
padma-kiñjalka-vāsasam
sphurat-kirīṭa-kaṭaka
kaṭi-sūtra-varāṅgadam
śrīvatsa-vakṣasam bhrājat-
kaustubham vana-mālinam
dhyāyann abhyarcya dārūṇi
haviṣābhighṛtāni ca
prāsyājya-bhāgāv āghārau
dattvā cājya-plutam haviḥ
juhuyān mūla-mantreṇa
ṣoḍaśarcāvadānataḥ
dharmādibhyo yathā-nyāyam
mantraiḥ sviṣṭi-kṛtam budhaḥ*

tapta – molten; *jāmbū-nada* – of gold; *prakhyam* – the color; *śaṅkha* – with His conchshell; *cakra* – disc; *gadā* – club; *ambujaiḥ* – and lotus flower; *lasat* – brilliant; *catuḥ-bhujam* – having four arms; *śāntam* – peaceful; *padma* – of a lotus; *kiñjalka* – colored like the filaments; *vāsasam* – His garment; *sphurat* – shining; *kirīṭa* – helmet; *kaṭaka* – bracelets; *kaṭi-sūtra* – belt; *vara-aṅgadam* – fine ornaments on the arms; *śrī-vatsa* – the emblem of the goddess of fortune; *vakṣasam* – upon His chest; *bhrājat* – effulgent; *kaustubham* – the Kaustubha gem; *vana-mālinam* – wearing a flower garland; *dhyāyan* – meditating upon Him; *abhyarcya* – performing worship of Him; *dārūṇi* – pieces of dry wood; *haviṣā* – with the purified butter; *abhighṛtāni* – soaked; *ca* – and; *prāsyā* – throwing into the fire; *ājya* – of the ghee; *bhāgau* – the two designated portions; *āghārau* – in the course of performing the *āghāra* ritual; *dattvā* – offering; *ca* – and; *ājya* – with ghee; *plutam* – drenched; *haviḥ* – various oblations; *juhuyāt* – one should offer into the fire; *mūla-mantreṇa* – with the primary *mantras* naming each deity; *ṣoḍaśa-rcā* – with the hymn

Puruṣa-sūkta, consisting of sixteen lines of verse; *avadānataḥ* – pouring an oblation after each line; *dharma-ādibhyaḥ* – to the demigods, beginning with Yamarāja; *yathā-nyāyam* – in the proper order; *mantraiḥ* – with the specific *mantras* naming each demigod; *sviṣṭi-kṛtam* – the ritual of this name; *budhaḥ* – the intelligent devotee.

TRANSLATION

The intelligent devotee should meditate upon that form of the Lord whose color is like molten gold, whose four arms are resplendent with the conchshell, disc, club and lotus flower, and who is always peaceful and dressed in a garment colored like the filaments within a lotus flower. His helmet, bracelets, belt and fine arm ornaments shine brilliantly. The symbol of Śrīvatsa is on His chest, along with the glowing Kaustubha gem and a garland of forest flowers. The devotee should then worship that Lord by taking pieces of firewood soaked in the sacrificial ghee and throwing them into the fire. He should perform the ritual of āghāra, presenting into the fire the various items of oblation drenched in ghee. He should then offer to sixteen demigods, beginning with Yamarāja, the oblation called sviṣṭi-kṛt, reciting the basic mantras of each deity and the sixteen-line Puruṣa-sūkta hymn. Pouring one oblation after each line of the Puruṣa-sūkta, he should utter the particular mantra naming each deity.

TEXT 27.42

*abhyarcyātha namaskṛtya
pārṣadebhyo balim haret
mūla-mantram japet brahma
smaran nārāyaṇātmakam*

abhyarcya – having thus worshiped; *atha* – then; *namaskṛtya* – offering his obeisances by bowing down; *pārṣadebhyaḥ* – unto the Lord’s personal associates; *balim* – offerings; *haret* – he should present; *mūla-mantram* – the basic *mantra* for the Deity; *japet* – he should chant quietly; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *smaran* – remembering; *nārāyaṇa-ātmakam* – as the Supreme Personality, Lord Nārāyaṇa.

TRANSLATION

Having thus worshiped the Lord in the sacrificial fire, the devotee should offer his obeisances to the Lord’s personal associates by bowing down and should then present offerings to them. He should then chant quietly the mūla-mantra of the Deity of the Lord, remembering the Absolute Truth as the Supreme Personality, Nārāyaṇa.

TEXT 27.43

*dattvācamanam uccheṣaṁ
viṣvaksenāya kalpayet*

*mukha-vāsaṁ surabhimat
tāmbūlādyam athārhayet*

dattvā – offering; *ācamanam* – water for washing the Lord’s mouth; *uccheṣam* – the remnants of His food; *viṣvaksenāya* – to the personal associate of Lord Viṣṇu, Viṣvaksena; *kalpayet* – one should give; *mukha-vāsam* – cologne for the mouth; *surabhi-mat* – fragrant; *tāmbūla-ādyam* – betel-nut preparation; *atha* – then; *arhayet* – one should present.

TRANSLATION

Once again he should offer the Deity water for washing His mouth, and he should give the remnants of the Lord’s food to Viṣvaksena. Then he should present the Deity with fragrant perfume for the mouth and prepared betel nut.

TEXT 27.44

*upagāyan gṛṇan nṛtyan
karmāṇy abhinayan mama
mat-kathāḥ śrāvayan śṛṇvan
muhūrtam kṣaṇiko bhavet*

upagāyan – singing along; *gṛṇan* – loudly vibrating; *nṛtyan* – dancing; *karmāṇi* – transcendental activities; *abhinayan* – imitating by acting out; *mama* – My; *mat-kathāḥ* – stories about Me; *śrāvayan* – causing others to hear; *śṛṇvan* – hearing himself; *muhūrtam* – for some time; *kṣaṇikaḥ* – absorbed in the celebration; *bhavet* – he should become.

TRANSLATION

Singing along with others, chanting loudly and dancing, acting out My transcendental pastimes, and hearing and telling stories about Me, the devotee should for some time absorb himself in such festivity.

PURPORT

A devotee engaged in regulative worship of the Supreme Lord should sometimes become ecstatically absorbed in chanting and hearing the pastimes of the Lord, dancing, and other festivities. The word *muhūrtam*, “for some time,” indicates that a devotee should be careful not to neglect his regulative principles and service to the Lord in the name of so-called ecstasy. Although one may be ecstatically engaged in chanting, hearing and dancing, he cannot give up the formality of regulated service to the Lord.

TEXT 27.45

*stavair uccāvagaiḥ stotraiḥ
paurāṇaiḥ prākṛtair api
stutvā prasīda bhagavann
iti vandeta daṇḍa-vat*

stavaiḥ – with prayers from the scriptures; *ucca-avagaiḥ* – of greater and lesser varieties; *stotraiḥ* – and with prayers written by human authors; *paurāṇaiḥ* – from the *Purāṇas*; *prākṛtaiḥ* – from ordinary sources; *api* – also;

stutvā – thus praying to the Lord; *prasīda* – please show Your mercy; *bhagavan* – O Lord; *iti* – thus saying; *vandeta* – one should pay homage; *daṇḍa-vat* – falling down on the ground like a rod.

TRANSLATION

The devotee should offer homage to the Lord with all kinds of hymns and prayers, both from the Purāṇas and from other ancient scriptures, and also from ordinary traditions. Praying, “O Lord, please be merciful to me!” he should fall down flat like a rod to offer his obeisances.

TEXT 27.46

*śiro mat-pādayoḥ kṛtvā
bāhubhyāṁ ca parasparam
prapannaṁ pāhi mām īśa
bhītaṁ mṛtyu-grahārṇavāt*

śiraḥ – his head; *mat-pādayoḥ* – at My two feet; *kṛtvā* – placing; *bāhubhyāṁ* – with the hands; *ca* – and; *parasparam* – together (grasping the feet of the Deity); *prapannaṁ* – who am surrendered; *pāhi* – please protect; *mām* – me; *īśa* – O Lord; *bhītaṁ* – afraid; *mṛtyu* – of death; *graha* – the mouth; *arṇavāt* – of this material ocean.

TRANSLATION

Placing his head at the feet of the Deity, he should then stand with folded hands before the Lord and pray, “O my Lord, please protect me, who am surrendered unto You. I am most fearful of this ocean of material existence, standing as I am in the mouth of death.”

TEXT 27.47

*iti śeṣāṁ mayā dattāṁ
śirasy ādhāya sādaram
udvāsayec cet udvāsyam
jyotir jyotiṣi tat punaḥ*

iti – thus praying; *śeṣāṁ* – the remnants; *mayā* – by Me; *dattāṁ* – given; *śirasi* – on one’s head; *ādhāya* – placing; *sa-ādaram* – respectfully; *udvāsayet* – should send the Deity away; *cet* – if; *udvāsyam* – if such is meant to be performed; *jyotiḥ* – the light; *jyotiṣi* – within the light; *tat* – that; *punaḥ* – once again.

TRANSLATION

Praying in this way, the devotee should respectfully place upon his head the remnants I offer to him. And if the particular Deity is meant to be sent away at the end of the worship, then this should be performed, the devotee once again placing the light of the Deity’s presence inside the light of the lotus within his own heart.

TEXT 27.48

*arcādiṣu yadā yatra
śraddhā mām tatra cārcayet
sarva-bhūteṣv ātmani ca
sarvātmāham avasthitaḥ*

arcā-ādiṣu - in the Deity form and other manifestations of the Supreme Lord; *yadā* - whenever; *yatra* - in whichever form; *śraddhā* - faith develops; *mām* - Me; *tatra* - there; *ca* - and; *arcayet* - he should worship; *sarva-bhūteṣu* - within all created beings; *ātmani* - separately, in My original form; *ca* - also; *sarva-ātmā* - the original soul of all; *aham* - I am; *avasthitaḥ* - so situated.

TRANSLATION

Whenever one develops faith in Me - in My form as the Deity or in other bona fide manifestations - one should worship Me in that form. I certainly exist both within all created beings and also separately in My original form, since I am the Supreme Soul of all.

PURPORT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshiped according to the faith of a particular worshiper. The Deity form, *arcā*, is specifically mentioned here because Deity worship is essential for spiritual progress. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura mentions that inexperienced persons may think that the Deity is meant for the sense gratification of the worshiper, since superficially the Deity is made of external substances such as marble or brass. But through the process of installing the Deity by chanting of authorized *mantras*, one invites the Supreme Personality of Godhead to enter the Deity form. By regulated, faithful worship one gradually understands that the Deity is completely nondifferent from the Supreme Lord Himself. At that stage, on the strength of Deity worship, one rises to the second-class platform of devotional service. At this more developed stage one desires to make friendship with other devotees of the Lord, and as one becomes solidly established in the community of Vaiṣṇavas, one completely gives up material life and gradually becomes perfect in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 27.49

*evam kriyā-yoga-pathaiḥ
pumān vaidika-tāntrikaiḥ
arcann ubhayataḥ siddhim
matto vindaty abhīpsitām*

evam - in this way; *kriyā-yoga* - of regulated Deity worship; *pathaiḥ* - by the processes; *pumān* - a person; *vaidika-tāntrikaiḥ* - presented in the Vedas and *tantras*; *arcann* - worshipping; *ubhayataḥ* - in both this life and the next; *siddhim* - perfection; *mattaḥ* - from Me; *vindati* - he achieves; *abhīpsitām* - desired.

TRANSLATION

By worshipping Me through the various methods prescribed in the Vedas and tantras, one will gain from Me his desired perfection in both this life and the next.

TEXT 27.50

*mad-arcām sampratiṣṭhāpya
mandiram kārayet dṛḍham
puṣpadyānāni ramyāṇi
pūjā-yātrotsavāśritān*

mat-arcām – My Deity form; *sampratiṣṭhāpya* – properly establishing; *mandiram* – a temple; *kārayet* – he should construct; *dṛḍham* – strong; *puṣpa-udyānāni* – flower gardens; *ramyāṇi* – beautiful; *pūjā* – for regular, daily worship; *yātrā* – special festivals; *utsava* – and yearly holidays; *āśritān* – set aside.

TRANSLATION

The devotee should more fully establish My Deity by solidly constructing a temple, along with beautiful gardens. These gardens should be set aside to provide flowers for the regular daily worship, special Deity processions and holiday observances.

PURPORT

Wealthy, pious persons should be engaged in constructing temples and gardens for the pleasure of the Deity. The word *dṛḍham* indicates that the most solid means of construction should be employed.

TEXT 27.51

*pūjādīnām pravāhārtham
mahā-parvasv athānv-aham
kṣetrāpaṇa-pura-grāmān
dattvā mat-sārṣṭitām iyāt*

pūjā-ādīnām – of the regular worship and special festivals; *pravāha-artham* – in order to assure the continuance; *mahā-parvasu* – on auspicious occasions; *atha* – and; *anu-aham* – daily; *kṣetra* – land; *āpaṇa* – shops; *pura* – cities; *grāmān* – and villages; *dattvā* – bestowing as a gift to the Deity; *mat-sārṣṭitām* – opulence equal to Mine; *iyāt* – he achieves.

TRANSLATION

One who offers the Deity gifts of land, markets, cities and villages so that the regular daily worship and special festivals of the Deity may go on continually will achieve opulence equal to My own.

PURPORT

By placing tracts of land in the Deity's name, there will be regular income for opulent Deity worship, both from rent and from agricultural production. A worshiper who makes the arrangements mentioned above will certainly achieve opulence like that of the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 27.52

*pratiṣṭhayā sārvabhaumam
sadmanā bhuvana-trayam
pūjādinā brahma-lokam
tribhir mat-sāmyatām iyāt*

pratiṣṭhayā – by having installed the Deity; *sārvabhaumam* – sovereignty over the entire earth; *sadmanā* – by building a temple for the Lord; *bhuvana-trayam* – rulership over the three worlds; *pūjādinā* – by worship and other service; *brahma-lokam* – the planet of Lord Brahmā; *tribhiḥ* – by all three; *mat-sāmyatām* – the status of equality with Me (by having a transcendental, spiritual body similar to Mine); *iyāt* – he attains.

TRANSLATION

By installing the Deity of the Lord one becomes king of the entire earth, by building a temple for the Lord one becomes ruler of the three worlds, by worshiping and serving the Deity one goes to the planet of Lord Brahmā, and by performing all three of these activities one achieves a transcendental form like My own.

TEXT 27.53

*mām eva nairapekṣyeṇa
bhakti-yogena vindati
bhakti-yogam sa labhata
evam yaḥ pūjayeta mām*

mām – Me; *eva* – indeed; *nairapekṣyeṇa* – by being free from motivation; *bhakti-yogena* – by the performance of devotional service; *vindati* – achieves; *bhakti-yogam* – devotional service; *saḥ* – he; *labhata* – receives; *evam* – thus; *yaḥ* – whom; *pūjayeta* – worships; *mām* – Me.

TRANSLATION

But one who simply engages in devotional service with no consideration of fruitive results attains Me. Thus whoever worships Me according to the process I have described will ultimately attain pure devotional service unto Me.

PURPORT

The previous two verses were spoken by the Lord to attract those interested in fruitive results, and now the ultimate purpose of worshiping the Lord is described. The ultimate goal in life is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. Love for the Lord is the highest bliss, although ordinary people cannot understand this.

TEXT 27.54

*yaḥ sva-dattām parair dattām
hareta sura-viprayoḥ
vṛttim sa jāyate viḍ-bhug
varṣāṇām ayutāyutam*

yaḥ – who; *sva-dattām* – given previously by himself; *paraiḥ* – by others; *dattām* – given; *hareta* – takes away; *sura-viprayoḥ* – belonging to the demigods or *brāhmaṇas*; *vṛttim* – property; *saḥ* – he; *jāyate* – takes birth; *viḍ-*

bhuk – as a stool-eating worm; *varṣāṇām* – for years; *ayuta* – ten thousand; *ayutam* – times ten thousand.

TRANSLATION

Anyone who steals the property of the demigods or the brāhmaṇas, whether originally given to them by himself or someone else, must live as a worm in stool for one hundred million years.

TEXT 27.55

*kartuś ca sārathet hetor
anumoditur eva ca
karmaṇām bhāginaḥ pretya
bhūyo bhūyasi tat-phalam*

kartuḥ – of the performer; *ca* – and; *sārathet* – of the assistant; *hetor* – of the instigator; *anumodituḥ* – of the person who approves; *eva ca* – also; *karmaṇām* – of the fruitive reactions; *bhāginaḥ* – of the shareholder; *pretya* – in the next life; *bhūyaḥ* – more grievously; *bhūyasi* – to the extent that the action is grievous; *tat* – (must suffer) of that; *phalam* – the result.

TRANSLATION

Not only the performer of the theft but also anyone who assists him, instigates the crime, or simply approves of it must also share the reaction in the next life. According to their degree of participation, they each must suffer a proportionate consequence.

PURPORT

Stealing paraphernalia meant for worshipping the Supreme Lord or His authorized representatives should be avoided at all costs.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-seventh Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Lord Kṛṣṇa’s Instructions on the Process of Deity Worship.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT
Jñāna-yoga

This chapter briefly summarizes the process of *jñāna-yoga*, which previous chapters described in detail.

Every created thing in this universe is a material product of the three modes of nature, is subject to sensory perception, and is essentially unreal. Actually, the designations of “good” and “bad” that we assign to the various objects and activities of this world are all superficial. It is better to avoid condemning or praising anything of this world, because doing so simply entangles one in matter and deprives one of the higher goals of spiritual life. Hidden within every object of the material universe is the spirit soul, who underlies both the causes and products of manifest existence. One should see things in this light and thus move about the material world in a mood of detachment.

As long as there is a relationship between the bodily senses, which are comprised of matter, and the soul, which is the reality, one will continue in false consciousness. Although material existence is unreal, those who lack discrimination remain entangled in the cycle of birth and death because of their absorption in sense gratification. All the phases of material life – such as birth, death, sorrow and happiness – belong not to the soul but to the materialistic false ego. By learning to distinguish between the soul and its opposite, matter, one can destroy this false identification.

There is a single Absolute Truth present at the beginning and at the end of this world. During its interim, or maintenance phase, the cosmic manifestation is also founded upon the same Absolute Truth. This Absolute, Brahman, exists everywhere, both positively by its manifestations and negatively by its aloofness. Brahman is unique in being self-sufficient, whereas this world is the expansion of Brahman produced through the material mode of passion.

By the mercy of a bona fide spiritual master, one can understand the Absolute Truth and come to appreciate the nonspiritual nature of the material body and its extensions. Desisting from engagement in material sense enjoyment, one then becomes satisfied in the ecstasy of the self. Just as the sun remains untouched by the coming and going of clouds, the discriminating, liberated person remains unaffected by the activities of his senses. Nevertheless, until one becomes perfectly fixed in *bhakti-yoga*, pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord, one should carefully avoid contacting material sense objects. An aspiring devotee may meet various obstacles and fall down, but in his next life he will continue his practice by dint of what he has already accomplished in devotional service. He will never again become bound up by the laws of *karma*. The man who is liberated and established in discrimination will under no circumstances seek false enjoyment by indulging in material sense gratification. He knows that the soul is changeless and that any contrary conception imposed on the pure self is sheer illusion.

If, during the immature stage of spiritual practice, one suffers physical disease or other disturbances, the *Vedas* enjoin that he should certainly take proper measures to eradicate the problem. The prescribed remedies for lust

and the other enemies of the mind are meditation on the Supreme Lord and *saṅkīrtana*, the loud chanting of His names. The remedy for the disease of false ego is rendering service to the Supreme Lord's saintly devotees. By practicing *yoga*, some nondevotees keep their bodies youthful and fit, and may even achieve mystic perfections or long life. But these attainments are actually worthless, because they are perfections only of the material body. An intelligent person is therefore uninterested in this kind of process. Rather, by taking shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, an aspiring devotee who is seriously dedicated to the Lord rids himself of all disturbances and becomes empowered to attain the highest perfection, the full bliss of spiritual life.

TEXT 28.1

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
para-svabhāva-karmāṇi
na praśaṁsen na garhayet
viśvam ekātmakaṁ paśyan
prakṛtyā puruṣeṇa ca*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *para* – anyone else's; *svabhāva* – nature; *karmāṇi* – and activities; *na praśaṁset* – one should not praise; *na garhayet* – one should not criticize; *viśvam* – the world; *eka-ātmakam* – based on one reality; *paśyan* – seeing; *prakṛtyā* – along with nature; *puruṣeṇa* – with the enjoying soul; *ca* – also.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: One should neither praise nor criticize the conditioned nature and activities of other persons. Rather, one should see this world as simply the combination of material nature and the enjoying souls, all based on the one Absolute Truth.

PURPORT

Material situations and activities appear to be good, passionate or ignorant according to the interaction of the modes of nature. These modes are produced by the illusory potency of the Lord, which is itself not different from its master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So a devotee of the Lord remains aloof from the illusory, temporary manifestations of material nature. At the same time, he accepts material nature as the potency of the Lord and thus essentially real. The example may be given that modeling clay is shaped by a child into various playful forms such as tigers, men or houses. The modeling clay is real, whereas the temporary shapes it assumes are illusory, not being actual tigers, men or houses. Similarly, the entire cosmic manifestation is modeling clay in the hands of the Supreme Lord, who acts through *māyā* to shape the glaring temporary forms of illusion, which absorb the minds of those who are not devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 28.2

*para-svabhāva-karmāṇi
yaḥ praśaṁsati nindati
sa āśu bhraśyate svārthād
asaty abhiniveśataḥ*

para – another’s; *svabhāva* – personality; *karmāṇi* – and work; *yaḥ* – who; *praśaṁsati* – praises; *nindati* – criticizes; *saḥ* – he; *āśu* – quickly; *bhraśyate* – falls down; *sva-arthāt* – from his own interest; *asati* – in unreality; *abhiniveśataḥ* – because of becoming entangled.

TRANSLATION

Whoever indulges in praising or criticizing the qualities and behavior of others will quickly become deviated from his own best interest by his entanglement in illusory dualities.

PURPORT

A conditioned soul desires to lord it over material nature and thus criticizes another conditioned soul whom he considers inferior. Similarly, one praises a superior materialist because one aspires to that superior position, in which one may dominate others. Praising and criticizing other materialistic people are thus directly or indirectly based on envy of other living entities and cause one to fall down from *sva-artha*, one’s real self-interest, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The words *asaty abhiniveśataḥ*, “by absorption in the temporary, or unreal,” indicate that one should not adopt a concept of material duality and praise or criticize other materialistic persons. Rather, one should praise the pure devotees of the Supreme Lord and criticize the mentality of rebellion against the Personality of Godhead, by which one becomes a nondevotee. One should not criticize a low-class materialist, thinking that a high-class materialist is nice. In other words, one should distinguish between the material and the spiritual and should not become absorbed in good and bad on the material platform. For example, an honest citizen distinguishes between the life of civil freedom and that of imprisonment, whereas a foolish prisoner distinguishes between comfortable and uncomfortable prison cells. Just as for a free citizen any situation in prison is unacceptable, for a liberated, Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee any material position is unappealing. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura indicates that rather than trying to separate conditioned souls by materialistic distinctions, one should bring them together to chant the holy names of the Lord and propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya. A nondevotee, or even an envious third-class devotee, is not interested in uniting people on the platform of love of Godhead. Instead he unnecessarily separates them by emphasizing material distinctions like “communist,” “capitalist,” “black,” “white,” “rich,” “poor,” “liberal,” “conservative” and so on. Material life is always imperfect, full of ignorance and disappointing in the end. Rather than praising and

criticizing the high and low features of ignorance, one should be absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, on the spiritual platform of eternity, bliss and knowledge.

TEXT 28.3

*taijase nidrayāpanne
piṅḍa-stho naṣṭa-cetanaḥ
māyām prāpnoti mṛtyum vā
tadvan nānārtha-dṛk pumān*

taijase - when the senses, which are the products of false ego in the mode of passion; *nidrayā* - by sleep; *āpanne* - are overcome; *piṅḍa* - in the shell of the material body; *sthaḥ* - (the soul) who is situated; *naṣṭa-cetanaḥ* - having lost his consciousness; *māyām* - the illusion of dreaming; *prāpnoti* - he experiences; *mṛtyum* - the deathlike condition of deep sleep; *vā* - or; *tadvat* - in the same way; *nānā-artha* - in terms of material varieties; *dṛk* - who sees; *pumān* - a person.

TRANSLATION

Just as the embodied spirit soul loses external consciousness when his senses are overcome by the illusion of dreaming or the deathlike state of deep sleep, so a person experiencing material duality must encounter illusion and death.

PURPORT

The material senses are described here as *taijasa* because they are born of false ego in the mode of passion. Impelled by false ego, one dreams of the material world without the Personality of Godhead and makes plans to lord it over nature, to exploit her resources. Modern atheistic scientists have developed this false ego to a fine art and imagine themselves great heroes conquering the obstacles of nature and moving forward toward inevitable omniscience. Such dreamy materialists are repeatedly stunned by the crushing reactions of the laws of nature, and their arrogant, agnostic civilizations are repeatedly annihilated by world wars, natural disasters and violent shifts of the cosmic situation.

On a simpler level, all conditioned souls are captivated by sex attraction and thus bound to the illusion of material society, friendship and love. They imagine themselves to be wonderful enjoyers of the material nature, which suddenly turns against them and kills them just like the “tamed” animal that suddenly turns on its master and kills him.

TEXT 28.4

*kim bhadram kim abhadram vā
dvaitasyāvastunaḥ kiyat
vācoditam tad anṛtam
manasā dhyātam eva ca*

kim - what; *bhadram* - good; *kim* - what; *abhadram* - bad; *vā* - or; *dvaitasya* - of this duality; *avastunaḥ* - insubstantial; *kiyat* - how much; *vācā* - by

words; *uditam* – generated; *tat* – that; *anṛtam* – false; *manasā* – by the mind; *dhyātam* – meditated upon; *eva* – indeed; *ca* – and.

TRANSLATION

That which is expressed by material words or meditated upon by the material mind is not ultimate truth. What, therefore, is actually good or bad within this insubstantial world of duality, and how can the extent of such good and bad be measured?

PURPORT

The actual truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, from whom everything emanates, by whom everything is maintained, and in whom everything merges to rest. Material nature is the reflection of the Absolute Truth, and by the interaction of the material modes of nature the innumerable varieties of matter appear to be separate, independent truths. *Māyā*, illusion, distracts the conditioned soul from the Absolute Truth and absorbs his mind in the glaring manifestation of matter, which ultimately is nondifferent from the Absolute Truth, being an emanation from Him. The sense of good and bad as separate from the Supreme Lord is like the good and bad dreams experienced by a sleeping person. Good and bad dreams are equally unreal. Similarly, material good and evil have no permanent existence separate from the Personality of Godhead.

The Supreme Lord is the well-wisher of every living entity, and therefore execution of His order is good, whereas disobeying His order is bad. Lord Kṛṣṇa has created a perfect social and occupational system called *varṇāśrama-dharma*, and the Lord has further given perfect spiritual knowledge in *Bhagavad-gītā* and other literatures. Execution of Lord Kṛṣṇa's order will bring complete social, psychological, political, economic and spiritual success to human society. We should not foolishly look for so-called good outside the orders of the Personality of Godhead. Such orders are called the laws of God and constitute the essence, or substance, of religion.

TEXT 28.5

*chāyā-pratyāhvayābhāsā
hy asanto'py artha-kāriṇaḥ
evam dehādayo bhāvā
yacchanty ā-mṛtyuto bhayam*

chāyā – shadows; *pratyāhvaya* – echoes; *ābhāsāḥ* – and false appearances; *hi* – indeed; *asantaḥ* – nonexistent; *api* – although; *artha* – ideas; *kāriṇaḥ* – creating; *evam* – in the same way; *deha-ādayaḥ* – the body and so on; *bhāvāḥ* – material conceptions; *yacchanti* – they give; *ā-mṛtyutaḥ* – up to the point of death; *bhayam* – fear.

TRANSLATION

Although shadows, echoes and mirages are only illusory reflections of real things, such reflections do cause a semblance of meaningful or comprehensible perception. In the same way, although the identification of the conditioned soul with the material body, mind

and ego is illusory, this identification generates fear within him even up to the moment of death.

PURPORT

Although shadows, echoes and mirages are mere reflections of real substances, they create strong emotions in persons falsely accepting them as real. In the same manner, a conditioned soul is seized by such emotions as fear, lust, anger and hope because of his illusory perception of himself as the material body, mind and false ego. By practical example it is thus shown that even illusory objects may cause highly emotional reactions. Ultimately our emotions should be absorbed in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is eternal truth. Fear is forever vanquished when one takes shelter of the Lord's lotus feet. One can then enjoy the pure emotions of liberated life.

TEXTS 28.6-7

*ātmaiva tad idaṁ viśvaṁ
sṛjate sṛjati prabhuḥ
trāyate trāti viśvātmā
hriyate haratīśvaraḥ
tasmān na hy ātmano'nyasmād
anyo bhāvo nirūpitaḥ
nirūpite'yaṁ tri-vidhā
nirmūlā bhātir ātmani
idaṁ guṇa-mayaṁ viddhi
tri-vidhaṁ māyayā kṛtam*

ātmā – the Supreme Soul; *eva* – alone; *tat idaṁ* – this; *viśvam* – universe; *sṛjate* – is created; *sṛjati* – and creates; *prabhuḥ* – the Supreme Lord; *trāyate* – is protected; *trāti* – protects; *viśva-ātmā* – the Soul of all that be; *hriyate* – is withdrawn; *harati* – withdraws; *īśvaraḥ* – the supreme controller; *tasmāt* – than Him; *na* – no; *hi* – indeed; *ātmanaḥ* – than the Soul; *anyasmāt* – who is distinct; *anyaḥ* – other; *bhāvaḥ* – entity; *nirūpitaḥ* – is ascertained; *nirūpite* – thus established; *ayaṁ* – this; *tri-vidhā* – threefold; *nirmūlā* – without basis; *bhātiḥ* – appearance; *ātmani* – within the Supersoul; *idaṁ* – this; *guṇa-mayaṁ* – consisting of the modes of nature; *viddhi* – you should know; *tri-vidham* – threefold; *māyayā* – by the illusory energy; *kṛtam* – created.

TRANSLATION

The Supersoul alone is the ultimate controller and creator of this world, and thus He alone is also the created. Similarly, the Soul of all existence Himself both maintains and is maintained, withdraws and is withdrawn. No other entity can be properly ascertained as separate from Him, the Supreme Soul, who nonetheless is distinct from everything and everyone else. The appearance of the threefold material nature, which is perceived within Him, has no actual basis. Rather, you should understand that this material nature, composed of the three modes, is simply the product of His illusory potency.

PURPORT

The Absolute Truth, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, expands His external potency and thus creates the material cosmos. As with the sun globe and its expanded rays, the Lord and His expanded potency are simultaneously one and different. Although to conditioned souls material duality seems to be based on the modes of nature, the entire material manifestation is actually nondifferent from the Lord and is of one ultimately spiritual nature. The modes of nature create sense objects, demigods, human beings, animals, friends, enemies and so forth. But in reality, everything is simply an expansion of the potency of the Supreme Lord.

Foolishly, the conditioned soul tries to lord it over material nature, but the Lord Himself, being nondifferent from that nature, is its only true proprietor. In several places the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has given the example of the spider spinning its web by expanding thread from its own mouth. Similarly, through His own potency the Lord manifests the material world, maintains it and eventually withdraws it within Himself. Although the Lord is the unique Supreme Personality of Godhead, above everyone and everything, He is simultaneously and inconceivably nondifferent from everything. Therefore it is the Lord Himself who is manifested when the Lord creates, it is the Lord Himself who is maintained when the Lord maintains, and it is the Lord Himself who is withdrawn at the time of annihilation.

Although the Lord is nondifferent from both His spiritual abode and His material creation, still the spiritual abode, Vaikuṅṭha, is always superior to the material manifestation. Both matter and spirit are energies of the Lord, yet the spiritual energy is molded into the eternal forms of bliss and knowledge, whereas the temporary forms of matter are symbols of ignorance and frustration for the conditioned souls who covet them. The Supreme Lord is Himself the reservoir of all pleasure and is thus dear to His devotees. The presumption that the Lord cannot give us complete pleasure is due to our misidentifying Him as a product of the material modes of nature. As a result, we pursue false happiness in the deadly embrace of *māyā* and thus deviate from our eternal loving relationship with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 28.8

*etat vidvān mad-uditam
jñāna-vijñāna-naipuṇam
na nindati na ca stauti
loke carati sūrya-vaṭ*

etat – this; *vidvān* – one who knows; *mat* – by Me; *uditam* – described; *jñāna* – in knowledge; *vijñāna* – and realization; *naipuṇam* – the status of being fixed; *na nindati* – does not criticize; *na ca* – nor; *stauti* – praise; *loke* – within the world; *carati* – he wanders; *sūrya-vaṭ* – just like the sun.

TRANSLATION

One who has properly understood the process of becoming firmly fixed in theoretical and realized knowledge, as described herein by

Me, does not indulge in material criticism or praise. Like the sun, he wanders freely throughout this world.

PURPORT

Every living entity emanates from the Supreme Lord and is thus naturally full of realized knowledge. But when one becomes attached to praising or criticizing material good and bad for one's personal sense gratification, one's expert knowledge of the Lord becomes covered. A pure devotee should neither love nor hate any aspect of material illusion; he should rather accept whatever is favorable for serving Kṛṣṇa and reject whatever is unfavorable, following the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master.

TEXT 28.9

*pratyakṣeṇānumānena
nigamenātma-saṁvidā
ādy-antavad asaj jñātvā
niḥsaṅgo vicaret iha*

pratyakṣeṇa – by direct perception; *anumānena* – by logical deduction; *nigamena* – by the statements of scripture; *ātma-saṁvidā* – and by one's own realization; *ādi-anta-vat* – having a beginning and an end; *asat* – unreal; *jñātvā* – knowing; *niḥsaṅgaḥ* – free from attachment; *vicaret* – one should move about; *iha* – in this world.

TRANSLATION

By direct perception, logical deduction, scriptural testimony and personal realization, one should know that this world has a beginning and an end and so is not the ultimate reality. Thus one should live in this world without attachment.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, there are two main material dualities. The first duality is that one sees material good and bad, beautiful and ugly, rich and poor, and so on. The second is that one sees the entire material world as separate from or independent of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The first duality, that of opposites, is subject to dissolution by the influence of time, and the second duality, that of separateness, is merely a hallucination. One who is firmly convinced of the temporary, illusory nature of this world moves about freely, without attachment. Although engaging in all types of devotional service for the Lord, such a person is never entangled and remains cheerful and satisfied in spiritual consciousness.

TEXT 28.10

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
naivātmano na dehasya
saṁsṛtir draṣṭṛ-dṛśyayoḥ
anātma-sva-dṛśor īśa
kasya syād upalabhyate*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *na* – there is not; *eva* – indeed; *ātmanaḥ* – of the self; *na* – nor; *dehasya* – of the body; *saṁsṛtiḥ* – material existence; *draṣṭṛ-drśyayoḥ* – of the seer or the seen; *anātma* – of that which is not spirit; *sva-dṛśoḥ* – or of him who has innate knowledge; *īśa* – O Lord; *kasya* – of whom; *syāt* – may be; *upalabhyate* – which is experienced.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord, it is not possible for this material existence to be the experience of either the soul, who is the seer, or of the body, which is the seen object. On the one hand, the spirit soul is innately endowed with perfect knowledge, and on the other hand, the material body is not a conscious, living entity. To whom, then, does this experience of material existence pertain?

PURPORT

Since the living entity is pure spirit soul, innately full of perfect knowledge and bliss, and since the material body is a biochemical machine without knowledge or personal consciousness, who or what is actually experiencing the ignorance and anxiety of this material existence? The conscious experience of material life cannot be denied, and thus Uddhava asks Lord Kṛṣṇa this question to elicit a more precise understanding of the process by which illusion occurs.

TEXT 28.11

*ātmāvyayo'guṇaḥ śuddhaḥ
svayaṁ-jyotir anāvṛtaḥ
agni-vat dāru-vat acit
dehaḥ kasyeḥa saṁsṛtiḥ*

ātmā – the spirit soul; *avyayaḥ* – inexhaustible; *aguṇaḥ* – transcendental to the material modes; *śuddhaḥ* – pure; *svayaṁ-jyotiḥ* – self-luminous; *anāvṛtaḥ* – uncovered; *agni-vat* – like fire; *dāru-vat* – like firewood; *acit* – nonliving; *dehaḥ* – the material body; *kasya* – of which; *iha* – in this world; *saṁsṛtiḥ* – the experience of material life.

TRANSLATION

The spirit soul is inexhaustible, transcendental, pure, self-luminous and never covered by anything material. It is like fire. But the nonliving material body, like firewood, is dull and unaware. So in this world, who is it that actually undergoes the experience of material life?

PURPORT

The words *anāvṛtaḥ* and *agni-vat* are significant here. Fire can never be covered with darkness because by nature fire is illuminating. Similarly, the spirit soul is *svayaṁ-jyotiḥ*, or self-luminous, and thus the soul is transcendental – he can never be covered by the darkness of material life. On the other hand, the material body, like firewood, is by nature dull and unilluminated. In itself it does not have any awareness of life. If the soul is transcendental to material life and the body is not even conscious of it, the

following question arises: How does our experience of material existence actually take place?

TEXT 28.12

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
yāvad dehendriya-prāṇair
ātmanaḥ sannikarṣaṇam
saṁsāraḥ phalavāṁs tāvad
apārtho'py avivekinaḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca - the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *yāvat* - as long as; *deha* - by the body; *indriya* - senses; *prāṇaiḥ* - and vital force; *ātmanaḥ* - of the soul; *sannikarṣaṇam* - attraction; *saṁsāraḥ* - material existence; *phala-vān* - fruitful; *tāvat* - for that duration; *apārthaḥ* - meaningless; *api* - although; *avivekinaḥ* - for the undiscriminating.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: As long as the foolish spirit soul remains attracted to the material body, senses and vital force, his material existence continues to flourish, although it is ultimately meaningless.

PURPORT

Here the word *sannikarṣaṇam* indicates that the pure spirit soul voluntarily connects himself with the material body, considering this a most fruitful arrangement. Actually, the situation is *apārtha*, useless, unless one uses one's embodied situation to engage in the loving service of the Lord. At that time one's connection is actually with Lord Kṛṣṇa, not with the body, which becomes a mere instrument for executing one's higher purpose.

TEXT 28.13

*arthe hy avidyamāne'pi
saṁsṛtiḥ na nivartate
dhyāyato viṣayān asya
svapne'narthāgamo yathā*

arthe - real cause; *hi* - certainly; *avidyamāne* - not existing; *api* - although; *saṁsṛtiḥ* - the material existential condition; *na* - not; *nivartate* - does cease; *dhyāyataḥ* - contemplating; *viṣayān* - objects of the senses; *asya* - of the living entity; *svapne* - in a dream; *anartha* - of disadvantages; *āgamaḥ* - arrival; *yathā* - like.

TRANSLATION

Actually, the living entity is transcendental to material existence. But because of his mentality of lording it over material nature, his material existential condition does not cease, and, just as in a dream, he is affected by all sorts of disadvantages.

PURPORT

This same verse and other very similar verses occur elsewhere in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: Third Canto, Chapter Twenty-seven, verse 4; Fourth

Canto, Chapter Twenty-nine, verses 35 and 73; and Eleventh Canto, Chapter Twenty-two, verse 56. In fact, this verse completely explains the essence of illusion.

TEXT 28.14

*yathā hy apratibuddhasya
prasvāpo bahv-anartha-bhṛt
sa eva pratibuddhasya
na vai mohāya kalpate*

yathā - as; *hi* - indeed; *apratibuddhasya* - for one who has not awakened; *prasvāpaḥ* - sleep; *bahu* - many; *anartha* - undesirable experiences; *bhṛt* - presenting; *saḥ* - that same dream; *eva* - indeed; *pratibuddhasya* - for one who has awakened; *na* - not; *vai* - certainly; *mohāya* - confusion; *kalpate* - generates.

TRANSLATION

Although while dreaming a person experiences many undesirable things, upon awakening he is no longer confused by the dream experiences.

PURPORT

Even a liberated soul must observe material objects while living in this world. But being awake to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he understands that sensory pains and pleasures, like dreams, are without substance. Thus the liberated soul is not bewildered by illusion.

TEXT 28.15

*śoka-harṣa-bhaya-krodha-
lobha-moha-sprhādayaḥ
ahaṅkārasya dṛśyante
janma-mṛtyuś ca nātmanaḥ*

śoka - lamentation; *harṣa* - elation; *bhaya* - fear; *krodha* - anger; *lobha* - greed; *moha* - confusion; *sprhā* - hankering; *ādayaḥ* - and so on; *ahaṅkārasya* - of false ego; *dṛśyante* - they appear; *janma* - birth; *mṛtyuḥ* - death; *ca* - and; *na* - not; *ātmanaḥ* - of the soul.

TRANSLATION

Lamentation, elation, fear, anger, greed, confusion and hankering, as well as birth and death, are experiences of the false ego and not of the pure soul.

PURPORT

False ego is the pure soul's illusory identification with the subtle material mind and the gross material body. As a result of this illusory identification, the conditioned soul feels lamentation for things lost, jubilation over things gained, fear of things inauspicious, anger at the frustration of his desires, and greed for sense gratification. And so, bewildered by such false attractions and aversions, the conditioned soul must accept further material bodies, which means he must undergo repeated births and deaths. One who

is self-realized knows that all such mundane emotions have nothing to do with the pure soul, whose natural propensity is to engage in the loving service of the Lord.

TEXT 28.16

*dehendriya-prāṇa-mano-'bhimāno
jīvo'ntar-ātmā guṇa-karma-mūrtiḥ
sūtram mahān ity urudheva gītaḥ
saṁsāra ādhāvati kāla-tantraḥ*

deha – with the material body; *indriya* – senses; *prāṇa* – life air; *manaḥ* – and mind; *abhimānaḥ* – who is falsely identifying; *jīvaḥ* – the living entity; *antaḥ* – situated within; *ātmā* – the soul; *guṇa* – according to his material qualities; *karma* – and work; *mūrtiḥ* – assuming his form; *sūtram* – the *sūtra-tattva*; *mahān* – the original form of material nature; *iti* – thus; *urudhā* – in many different ways; *iva* – indeed; *gītaḥ* – described; *saṁsāre* – in material life; *ādhāvati* – he runs about; *kāla* – of time; *tantraḥ* – under the strict control.

TRANSLATION

The living entity who falsely identifies with his body, senses, life air and mind, and who dwells within these coverings, assumes the form of his own materially conditioned qualities and work. He is designated variously in relation to the total material energy, and thus, under the strict control of supreme time, he is forced to run here and there within material existence.

PURPORT

False ego, which causes the living entity to suffer material existence, is here described in detail as the illusory identification with the material body, senses, life air and mind. The word *kāla* refers directly to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who imposes the limiting segments of time upon the conditioned souls, keeping them tightly bound under the laws of nature. Liberation is not an impersonal experience; liberation is attainment of one's eternal body, senses, mind and intelligence in the association of the Personality of Godhead. We can revive our eternal, liberated personality, free from the contamination of false ego, by dedicating ourselves to the loving service of the Lord in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When the pure spirit soul accepts the false ego, he must undergo material suffering. One automatically conquers the false ego by accepting oneself, in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to be the eternal servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 28.17

*amūlam etad bahu-rūpa-rūpitaṁ
mano-vacaḥ-prāṇa-śarīra-karma
jñānāsinopāsanayā śitena
cchittvā munir gāṁ vicaraty atṛṣṇaḥ*

amūlam – without foundation; *etat* – this (false ego); *bahu-rūpa* – in many forms; *rūpitaṁ* – ascertained; *manaḥ* – of the mind; *vacaḥ* – speech; *prāṇa* –

the life air; *śarīra* – and the gross body; *karma* – the functions; *jñāna* – of transcendental knowledge; *asinā* – by the sword; *upāsanayā* – through devotional worship (of the spiritual master); *śitena* – which has been sharpened; *chittvā* – cutting off; *muniḥ* – a sober sage; *gām* – this earth; *vicarati* – wanders; *atṛṣṇaḥ* – free from material desires.

TRANSLATION

Although the false ego has no factual basis, it is perceived in many forms - as the functions of the mind, speech, life air and bodily faculties. But with the sword of transcendental knowledge, sharpened by worship of a bona fide spiritual master, a sober sage will cut off this false identification and live in this world free from all material attachment.

PURPORT

The word *bahu-rūpa-rūpitam*, “perceived in many forms,” also indicates that the false ego is manifest in the belief that one is a demigod, a great man, a beautiful lady, an oppressed worker, a tiger, a bird, an insect and so on. By the influence of false ego, the pure soul accepts some material covering to be his ultimate self, but such ignorance can be removed by the process described in this verse.

TEXT 28.18

*jñānam viveko nigamas tapaś ca
pratyakṣam aitihiyam athānumānam
ādy-antayor asya yad eva kevalam
kālaś ca hetuś ca tad eva madhye*

jñānam – transcendental knowledge; *vivekaḥ* – discrimination; *nigamaḥ* – the scripture; *tapaḥ* – austerity; *ca* – and; *pratyakṣam* – direct perception; *aitihiyam* – the historical accounts of the *Purāṇas*; *atha* – and; *anumānam* – logic; *ādi* – in the beginning; *antayoḥ* – and the end; *asya* – of this creation; *yad* – which; *eva* – indeed; *kevalam* – alone; *kālaḥ* – the controlling factor of time; *ca* – and; *hetuḥ* – the ultimate cause; *ca* – and; *tad* – that; *eva* – alone; *madhye* – in the middle.

TRANSLATION

Real spiritual knowledge is based on the discrimination of spirit from matter, and it is cultivated by scriptural evidence, austerity, direct perception, reception of the Purāṇas’ historical narrations, and logical inference. The Absolute Truth, which alone was present before the creation of the universe and which alone will remain after its destruction, is also the time factor and the ultimate cause. Even in the middle stage of this creation’s existence, the Absolute Truth alone is the actual reality.

PURPORT

Material scientists and philosophers are desperately searching for the ultimate material cause or principle, which is described here as *kāla*, the time factor. The material process of cause and effect takes place entirely

within a sequence of time; in other words, the time factor is the motivating impetus for material cause and effect. This time factor is a manifestation of the Supersoul, the form of the Supreme Lord that pervades and supports the cosmic manifestation. The method for acquiring knowledge is scientifically described here, and those who are serious, reasonable scholars will take advantage of the transcendental epistemology revealed here by the Lord.

TEXT 28.19

*yathā hiraṇyam sv-akṛtaṁ purastāt
paścāc ca sarvasya hiraṇ-mayasya
tad eva madhye vyavahāryamāṇam
nānāpadeśair aham asya tadvat*

yathā – just as; *hiraṇyam* – gold; *sv-akṛtam* – unmanifest as manufactured products; *purastāt* – previously; *paścāt* – subsequently; *ca* – and; *sarvasya* – of everything; *hiraṇ-mayasya* – that is made of gold; *tad* – that gold; *eva* – alone; *madhye* – in the middle; *vyavahāryamāṇam* – being utilized; *nānā* – various; *apadeśaiḥ* – in terms of designations; *aham* – I; *asya* – of this created universe; *tadvat* – in the same way.

TRANSLATION

Gold alone is present before its manufacture into gold products, the gold alone remains after the products' destruction, and the gold alone is the essential reality while it is being utilized under various designations. Similarly, I alone exist before the creation of this universe, after its destruction and during its maintenance.

PURPORT

Gold is manufactured into many types of jewelry, as well as into coins and other luxurious products. But at each stage – before manufacture, during manufacture, during utilization and afterward – the essential reality is gold. In the same way, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the essential reality – both the dynamic and the ingredient cause of everything. All throughout the material creation, the Lord is simply setting into motion His own potency, which is not different from Him.

TEXT 28.20

*vijñānam etat triy-avastham aṅga
guṇa-trayam kāraṇa-kārya-kartṛ
samanvayena vyatirekataś ca
yenaiva turyeṇa tad eva satyam*

vijñānam – (the mind, whose symptom is) full knowledge; *etat* – this; *triy-avastham* – existing in three conditions (wakeful consciousness, sleep and deep sleep); *aṅga* – My dear Uddhava; *guṇa-trayam* – manifesting through the three modes of nature; *kāraṇa* – as the subtle cause (*adhyātma*); *kārya* – the gross product (*adhibhūta*); *kartṛ* – and the producer (*adhidaiva*); *samanvayena* – in each of them, one after another; *vyatirekataḥ* – as

separate; *ca* - and; *yena* - by which; *eva* - indeed; *turyeṇa* - fourth factor; *tat* - that; *eva* - alone; *satyam* - is the Absolute Truth.

TRANSLATION

The material mind manifests in three phases of consciousness - wakefulness, sleep and deep sleep - which are products of the three modes of nature. The mind further appears in three different roles - the perceiver, the perceived and the regulator of perception. Thus the mind is manifested variously throughout these threefold designations. But it is the fourth factor, existing separately from all this, that alone constitutes the Absolute Truth.

PURPORT

As stated in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (2.2.15), *tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvaṃ/ tasya bhāsā sarvaṃ idaṃ vibhāti*: "Everything radiates its illumination in pursuance of His original illumination; His light illuminates everything in this universe." As thus described, the entire range of perception, cognition and sensitivity is an insignificant expansion of the perception, cognition and sensitivity of the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 28.21

*na yat purastād uta yan na paścān
madhye ca tan na vyapadeśa-mātram
bhūtaṃ prasiddhaṃ ca pareṇa yad yat
tad eva tat syād iti me manīṣā*

na - does not exist; *yat* - that which; *purastāt* - previously; *uta* - nor; *yat* - which; *na* - not; *paścāt* - afterward; *madhye* - in between; *ca* - and; *tat* - that; *na* - does not exist; *vyapadeśa-mātram* - merely a designation; *bhūtaṃ* - created; *prasiddham* - made known; *ca* - and; *pareṇa* - by another; *yad yat* - whatever; *tat* - that; *eva* - only; *tat* - that other; *syāt* - actually is; *iti* - thus; *me* - My; *manīṣā* - idea.

TRANSLATION

That which did not exist in the past and will not exist in the future also has no existence of its own for the period of its duration, but is only a superficial designation. In My opinion, whatever is created and revealed by something else is ultimately only that other thing.

PURPORT

Although all material products, such as our own bodies, are temporary and thus ultimately false, the material world is a real manifestation of the Lord's potency. The basic substance, or reality, of this world is the Personality of Godhead Himself, whereas the temporary designations imposed by the conditioned souls are illusion. Thus we consider ourselves American, Russian, British, German, Indian, black, white, Hindu, Muslim, Christian and so forth. In fact, we are the marginal potency of the Supreme Lord, but by attempting to exploit the Lord's inferior material potency we have become entangled in illusion. Everything should be properly defined in terms of the Personality of Godhead, who is the essential reality of this and all other worlds.

TEXT 28.22

*avidyamāno'py avabhāsate yo
vaikāriko rājasa-sarga eṣaḥ
brahma svayaṁ jyotir ato vibhāti
brahmendriyārthātma-vikāra-citram*

avidyamānaḥ – actually not existing; *api* – although; *avabhāsate* – appears; *yaḥ* – which; *vaikārikaḥ* – manifestation of transformations; *rājasa* – of the mode of passion; *sargaḥ* – the creation; *eṣaḥ* – this; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth (on the other hand); *svayaṁ* – established in Himself; *jyotiḥ* – luminous; *ataḥ* – therefore; *vibhāti* – becomes manifest; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *indriya* – of the senses; *artha* – their objects; *ātma* – the mind; *vikāra* – and of the transformations of the five gross elements; *citram* – as the variety.

TRANSLATION

Although thus not existing in reality, this manifestation of transformations created from the mode of passion appears real because the self-manifested, self-luminous Absolute Truth exhibits Himself in the form of the material variety of the senses, the sense objects, the mind and the elements of physical nature.

PURPORT

The total material nature, *pradhāna*, is originally undifferentiated and inert, but later it undergoes transformation when the Supreme Lord, through His time agent, glances upon it and activates the mode of passion. Material transformation thus takes place and is exhibited as the Lord's inferior energy. In contrast, the Supreme Lord's personal abode possesses eternal variety, which is the self-luminous, internal opulence of the Absolute Truth and is not subject to material creation, transformation or annihilation. The material world is in this way simultaneously one with and different from the Absolute Truth.

TEXT 28.23

*evam sphuṭam brahma-viveka-hetubhiḥ
parāpavādena viśāradena
chittvātma-sandeham upārameta
svānanda-tuṣṭo'khila-kāmukebhyaḥ*

evam – in this way; *sphuṭam* – clearly; *brahma* – of the Absolute Truth; *viveka-hetubhiḥ* – by discriminating, logical arguments; *para* – of misidentification with other conceptions; *apavādena* – by refutation; *viśāradena* – expert; *chittvā* – cutting off; *ātma* – regarding the identity of the self; *sandeham* – doubt; *upārameta* – one should desist; *svānanda* – in his own transcendental ecstasy; *tuṣṭaḥ* – satisfied; *akhila* – from all; *kāmukebhyaḥ* – things of lust.

TRANSLATION

Thus clearly understanding by discriminating logic the unique position of the Absolute Truth, one should expertly refute one's misidentification with matter and cut to pieces all doubts about the identity of the self. Becoming satisfied in the soul's natural ecstasy, one should desist from all lusty engagements of the material senses.

TEXT 28.24

*nātmā vapuḥ pāṛthivam indriyāṇi
devā hy asur vāyur jalam hutāśaḥ
mano'nna-mātram dhiṣaṇā ca sattvam
ahaṅkṛtiḥ kham kṣitir artha-sāmyam*

na - is not; *ātmā* - the self; *vapuḥ* - the body; *pāṛthivam* - made of earth; *indriyāṇi* - the senses; *devāḥ* - the presiding demigods; *hi* - indeed; *asuḥ* - the living air; *vāyuh* - the external air; *jalam* - water; *huta-āśaḥ* - fire; *manaḥ* - the mind; *anna-mātram* - being only matter; *dhiṣaṇā* - intelligence; *ca* - and; *sattvam* - material consciousness; *ahaṅkṛtiḥ* - false ego; *kham* - the ether; *kṣitiḥ* - earth; *artha* - the objects of sense perception; *sāmyam* - and the original, undifferentiated state of nature.

TRANSLATION

The material body made of earth is not the true self; nor are the senses, their presiding demigods or the air of life; nor is the external air, water or fire or one's mind. All these are simply matter. Similarly, neither one's intelligence, material consciousness nor ego, nor the elements of ether or earth, nor the objects of sense perception, nor even the primeval state of material equilibrium can be considered the actual identity of the soul.

TEXT 28.25

*samāhitaiḥ kaḥ karaṇair guṇātmabhir
guṇo bhaven mat-suvivikta-dhāmnaḥ
vikṣipyamāṇair uta kim nu dūṣaṇam
ghanair upetair vigatai raveḥ kim*

samāhitaiḥ - which are perfectly concentrated in meditation; *kaḥ* - what; *karaṇaiḥ* - by senses; *guṇa-ātmabhiḥ* - which are basically manifestations of the modes of nature; *guṇaḥ* - virtue; *bhavaḥ* - will be; *mat* - My; *su-vivikta* - who has properly ascertained; *dhāmnaḥ* - the personal identity; *vikṣipyamāṇaiḥ* - which are being agitated; *uta* - on the other hand; *kim* - what; *nu* - indeed; *dūṣaṇam* - blame; *ghanaiḥ* - by clouds; *upetaiḥ* - which have come; *vigataiḥ* - or which have gone away; *raveḥ* - of the sun; *kim* - what.

TRANSLATION

For one who has properly realized My personal identity as the Supreme Godhead, what credit is there if his senses - mere products

of the material modes - are perfectly concentrated in meditation? And on the other hand, what blame is incurred if his senses happen to become agitated? Indeed, what does it mean to the sun if the clouds come and go?

PURPORT

A pure devotee of the Lord is considered eternally liberated, because he has perfectly understood the Lord's transcendental personality and abode and is always engaged in serving the Lord's mission within this world. Although superficially such a devotee may appear agitated by events in the material world while engaged in the Lord's mission, this does not change his exalted status as the Lord's eternal servitor, just as the exalted status of the sun is not changed even when the sun is apparently covered by clouds.

TEXT 28.26

*yathā nabho vāyv-analāmbu-bhū-guṇair
gatāgatair vartu-guṇair na sajjate
tathākṣaram śattva-rajas-tamo-malair
aḥam-mateḥ saṁsṛti-hetubhiḥ param*

yathā - just as; *nabhaḥ* - the sky; *vāyu* - of air; *anala* - fire; *ambu* - water; *bhū* - and earth; *guṇaiḥ* - by the qualities; *gata-āgataiḥ* - which come and go; *vā* - or; *ṛtu-guṇaiḥ* - by the qualities of the seasons (such as heat and cold); *na sajjate* - is not entangled; *tathā* - similarly; *akṣaram* - the Absolute Truth; *śattva-rajaḥ-tamaḥ* - of the modes of goodness, passion and ignorance; *malaiḥ* - by the contaminations; *aḥam-mateḥ* - of the conception of false ego; *saṁsṛti-hetubhiḥ* - by the causes of material existence; *param* - the Supreme.

TRANSLATION

The sky may display the various qualities of the air, fire, water and earth that pass through it, as well as such qualities as heat and cold, which continually come and go with the seasons. Yet the sky is never entangled with any of these qualities. Similarly, the Supreme Absolute Truth is never entangled with the contaminations of goodness, passion and ignorance, which cause the material transformations of the false ego.

PURPORT

The word *aḥam-mateḥ* here indicates the conditioned living entity, who becomes manifest with the false ego of a particular material body. By contrast, the Personality of Godhead is unaffected by the modes of nature, and thus He is never covered by a material body and never subject to false ego. As described here, the Lord is eternally infallible and pure.

TEXT 28.27

*tathāpi saṅgaḥ parivarjanīyo
guṇeṣu māyā-raciteṣu tāvat*

*mad-bhakti-yogena dṛḍhena yāvad
rajo nirasyeta manaḥ-kaṣāyaḥ*

tathā api – nevertheless; *saṅgaḥ* – association; *parivarjanīyaḥ* – must be rejected; *guṇeṣu* – with the modes; *māyā-raciteṣu* – produced by the illusory material energy; *tāvat* – for that long; *mat-bhakti-yogena* – by devotional service to Me; *dṛḍhena* – firm; *yāvad* – until; *rajaḥ* – passionate attraction; *nirasyeta* – is eliminated; *manaḥ* – of the mind; *kaṣāyaḥ* – the dirt.

TRANSLATION

Nevertheless, until by firmly practicing devotional service to Me one has completely eliminated from his mind all contamination of material passion, one must very carefully avoid associating with the material modes, which are produced by My illusory energy.

PURPORT

The word *tathāpi* in this verse indicates that even though the material nature is nondifferent from the Supreme Lord (as elaborately described in this chapter), one who has yet to conquer material desire should not artificially associate with material things, declaring them to be nondifferent from the Lord. Thus one aspiring to be Kṛṣṇa conscious should not loosely associate with women, claiming them to be nondifferent from the Personality of Godhead, for by such imitation of the most advanced devotees one will become a sense gratifier. A neophyte devotee who presumes himself liberated is impelled by the mode of passion to become falsely proud of his position, and thus he neglects the actual process of devotional service to the Lord. One must have firm and steady engagement in the loving service of the Lord, under the direction of higher authorities; then advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be easy and sublime.

TEXT 28.28

*yathāmayo'sādhu cikitsito nṛṇāṃ
punaḥ punaḥ santudati prarohan
evam mano'pakva-kaṣāya-karma
kuyoginam vidhyati sarva-saṅgam*

yathā – as; *āmayaḥ* – a disease; *asādhu* – imperfectly; *cikitsitaḥ* – treated; *nṛṇām* – of men; *punaḥ punaḥ* – again and again; *santudati* – gives distress; *prarohan* – rising up; *evam* – in the same way; *manaḥ* – the mind; *apakva* – unpurified; *kaṣāya* – of contamination; *karma* – from its activities; *kuyoginam* – the imperfect *yogī*; *vidhyati* – torments; *sarva-saṅgam* – who is full of all kinds of material attachment.

TRANSLATION

Just as an improperly treated disease recurs and gives repeated distress to the patient, the mind that is not completely purified of its perverted tendencies will remain attached to material things and repeatedly torment the imperfect yogī.

PURPORT

Sarva-saṅgam refers to one's stubborn attachment to material objects of so-called enjoyment, such as children, wife, money, nation and friends. One who increases his attachment to children, wife and so on, although supposedly performing devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, is understood to be either a *kuyogī*, as described in this verse, or a bewildered neophyte who has failed to properly treat the disease of the heart called material attachment. If one has repeated relapses into material attachment, he has failed to eradicate the darkness of ignorance from his heart.

TEXT 28.29

*kuyogino ye vihitāntarāyair
manuṣya-bhūtais tridaśopasṛṣṭaiḥ
te prāktanābhyāsa-balena bhūyo
yuñjanti yogam na tu karma-tantram*

ku-yoginaḥ – those practitioners of *yoga* whose knowledge is not complete; *ye* – who; *vihita* – imposed; *antarāyaiḥ* – by obstructions; *manuṣya-bhūtaiḥ* – in the form of human beings (their relatives, disciples and so on); *tridaśa* – by the demigods; *upasṛṣṭaiḥ* – sent; *te* – they; *prāktana* – of the previous life; *abhyāsa* – of the accumulated practice; *balena* – on the strength; *bhūyaḥ* – once again; *yuñjanti* – engage; *yogam* – in spiritual practice; *na* – never; *tu* – however; *karma-tantram* – the entanglement of fruitive work.

TRANSLATION

Sometimes the progress of imperfect transcendentalists is checked by attachment to family members, disciples or others, who are sent by envious demigods for that purpose. But on the strength of their accumulated advancement, such imperfect transcendentalists will resume their practice of yoga in the next life. They will never again be trapped in the network of fruitive work.

PURPORT

Sometimes *sannyāsīs* and other spiritual teachers are bewildered by flattering followers and disciples sent by the demigods to embarrass spiritual leaders who are lacking complete spiritual knowledge. Similarly, spiritual progress is sometimes checked by attachment to one's bodily relatives. Although an imperfect transcendentalist may fall down from *yoga* practice in this life, he will resume it in the next life on the strength of his accumulated merit, as described in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The words *na tu karma-tantram* indicate that a fallen transcendentalist does not have to pass through the lower stages of fruitive activity and gradually be promoted to the practice of *yoga*. Rather, he will immediately resume his *yoga* practice at that point at which he left it. Of course, one should not presume to fall back on the facility offered here but should try to become perfect in this lifetime. *Sannyāsīs*, especially, should remove the knot of lust from their hearts and should avoid falling into the clutches of flattering followers or female disciples sent by the

demigods to expose a so-called spiritual leader who is imperfect in Kṛṣṇa conscious knowledge.

TEXT 28.30

*karoti karma kriyate ca jantuḥ
kenāpy asau codita ā-nipātāt
na tatra vidvān prakṛtau sthito'pi
nivr̥tta-tr̥ṣṇaḥ sva-sukhānubhūtyā*

karoti – he performs; *karma* – material work; *kriyate* – is acted upon; *ca* – also; *jantuḥ* – the living entity; *kena api* – by some force or other; *asau* – he; *coditaḥ* – impelled; *ā-nipātāt* – up to the point of death; *na* – not; *tatra* – there; *vidvān* – a wise person; *prakṛtau* – in material nature; *sthitaḥ* – situated; *api* – even though; *nivr̥tta* – having given up; *tr̥ṣṇaḥ* – material desire; *sva* – by his own; *sukha* – of happiness; *anubhūtyā* – experience.

TRANSLATION

An ordinary living entity performs material work and is transformed by the reaction to such work. Thus he is driven by various desires to continue working fruitively up to the very moment of his death. A wise person, however, having experienced his own constitutional bliss, gives up all material desires and does not engage in fruitive work.

PURPORT

By sexual association with women, a man is driven to enjoy the female form again and again, and indeed he remains lusty up to the moment of death. Similarly, through association with family and friends the knot of material attachment becomes very tight. Thus the reactions of fruitive work bind one more and more in the cycle of material defeat. But a learned person, one who is in touch with the Supreme Lord within his heart, realizes the ultimate frustration of material work and the danger of entering the womb of a pig or dog in a future life as the result of sinful activities. One on the platform of self-realization does not regard himself as an enjoyer of the world. Rather, he regards the entire cosmos as simply an insignificant expansion of the Lord's potency – and himself as the Lord's humble servant.

TEXT 28.31

*tiṣṭhantam āsīnam uta vrajantam
śayānam ukṣantam adantam annam
svabhāvam anyat kim apīhamānam
ātmānam ātma-stha-matir na veda*

tiṣṭhantam – standing; *āsīnam* – sitting; *uta* – or; *vrajantam* – walking; *śayānam* – lying down; *ukṣantam* – urinating; *adantam* – eating; *annam* – food; *sva-bhāvam* – manifested from his conditioned nature; *anyat* – other; *kim api* – whatever; *īhamānam* – executing; *ātmānam* – his own bodily self; *ātma-stha* – fixed in the true self; *matih* – whose consciousness; *na veda* – he does not recognize.

TRANSLATION

The wise man, whose consciousness is fixed in the self, does not even notice his own bodily activities. While standing, sitting, walking, lying down, urinating, eating or performing other bodily functions, he understands that the body is acting according to its own nature.

TEXT 28.32

*yadi sma paśyaty asad-indriyārtham
nānānumānena viruddham anyat
na manyate vastutayā manīṣī
svāpnam yathothhāya tirodadhānam*

yadi - if; *sma* - ever; *paśyati* - he sees; *asad* - impure; *indriya-artham* - sense objects; *nānā* - of their being based on duality; *anumānena* - by the logical inference; *viruddham* - refuted; *anyat* - separate from true reality; *na manyate* - does not accept; *vastutayā* - as real; *manīṣī* - the intelligent man; *svāpnam* - of a dream; *yathā* - as if; *utthāya* - waking; *tirodadhānam* - which is in the process of disappearing.

TRANSLATION

Although a self-realized soul may sometimes see an impure object or activity, he does not accept it as real. By logically understanding impure sense objects to be based on illusory material duality, the intelligent person sees them to be contrary to and distinct from reality, in the same way that a man awakening from sleep views his fading dream.

PURPORT

A sane person can clearly distinguish between a dream experience and his real life. Similarly a *manīṣī*, or intelligent person, can clearly perceive polluted material sense objects to be creations of the Lord's illusory energy and not factual reality. This is the practical test of realized intelligence.

TEXT 28.33

*pūrvam grhītam guṇa-karma-citram
ajñānam ātmany aviviktam aṅga
nivartate tat punar īkṣayaiva
na grhyate nāpi viśrjya ātmā*

pūrvam - previously; *grhītam* - accepted; *guṇa* - of the modes of nature; *karma* - by the activities; *citram* - made varied; *ajñānam* - the ignorance; *ātmani* - upon the soul; *aviviktam* - imposed as identical; *aṅga* - My dear Uddhava; *nivartate* - ceases; *tat* - that; *punaḥ* - again; *īkṣayā* - by knowledge; *eva* - alone; *na grhyate* - is not accepted; *na* - nor; *api* - indeed; *viśrjya* - being rejected; *ātmā* - the soul.

TRANSLATION

Material nescience, which expands into many varieties by the activities of the modes of nature, is wrongly accepted by the

conditioned soul to be identical with the self. But through the cultivation of spiritual knowledge, My dear Uddhava, this same nescience fades away at the time of liberation. The eternal self, on the other hand, is never assumed and never abandoned.

PURPORT

It is emphasized here that the eternal self is never assumed or imposed as a material designation, nor is it ever abandoned. As explained in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the soul is eternally the same and does not undergo transformation. The modes of nature, however, create the gross material body and subtle mind as a result of one's previous fruitive activities, and these gross and subtle bodies are imposed upon the soul. Thus the living entity can neither assume nor reject the soul, which is an eternal fact. Rather, he should give up the gross ignorance of material consciousness by cultivating spiritual knowledge, as indicated here.

TEXT 28.34

*yathā hi bhānoḥ udayo nṛ-cakṣuṣām
tamo nihanyān na tu sad vidhatte
evam samīkṣā nipuṇā satī me
hanyāt tamisram puruṣasya buddheḥ*

yathā - as; *hi* - indeed; *bhānoḥ* - of the sun; *udayaḥ* - the rising; *nṛ* - human; *cakṣuṣām* - of eyes; *tamaḥ* - the darkness; *nihanyāt* - destroys; *na* - not; *tu* - but; *sat* - objects that exist; *vidhatte* - creates; *evam* - similarly; *samīkṣā* - full realization; *nipuṇā* - potent; *satī* - true; *me* - of Me; *hanyāt* - destroys; *tamisram* - the darkness; *puruṣasya* - of a person; *buddheḥ* - in the intelligence.

TRANSLATION

When the sun rises it destroys the darkness covering men's eyes, but it does not create the objects they then see before them, which in fact were existing all along. Similarly, potent and factual realization of Me will destroy the darkness covering a person's true consciousness.

TEXT 28.35

*eṣa svayam-jyotir ajo'prameyo
mahānubhūtiḥ sakalānubhūtiḥ
eko'dvitiyo vacasām virāme
yeneṣitā vāg-asavaś caranti*

eṣaḥ - this (Supersoul); *svayam-jyotiḥ* - self-luminous; *ajāḥ* - unborn; *aprameyaḥ* - impossible to measure; *mahā-anubhūtiḥ* - full of transcendental consciousness; *sakala-anubhūtiḥ* - aware of everything; *ekaḥ* - one; *advitiyaḥ* - without a second; *vacasām virāme* - (realized only) when material words cease; *yena* - by whom; *īṣitāḥ* - impelled; *vāk* - speech; *asavaḥ* - and the life airs; *caranti* - move.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Lord is self-luminous, unborn and immeasurable. He is pure transcendental consciousness and perceives everything. One without a second, He is realized only after ordinary words cease. By Him the power of speech and the life airs are set into motion.

PURPORT

The Supreme Lord is self-luminous, self-manifested, whereas the individual living entity is manifested by Him. The Lord is unborn, but the living entity, because of material, designative coverings, takes birth in conditioned life. The Lord is immeasurable, being all-pervasive, whereas the living entity is localized. The Supreme Lord is *mahānubhūti*, the totality of consciousness, whereas the living entity is a tiny spark of consciousness. The Lord is *sakalānubhūti*, omniscient, whereas the living entity is aware only of his own limited experience. The Supreme Lord is one, whereas the living entities are innumerable. Considering all these contrasts between the Lord and ourselves, we should not waste time like the foolish material scientists and philosophers, who struggle to find the origin of this world by their insignificant mental speculation and word jugglery. Although one may discover some of the gross laws of material nature through material research, there is no hope of achieving the Absolute Truth by such petty endeavors.

TEXT 28.36

*etāvān ātma-sammoho
yad vikalpas tu kevale
ātman ṛte svam ātmānam
avalambo na yasya hi*

etāvān – whatever; *ātma* – of the self; *sammohaḥ* – delusion; *yad* – which; *vikalpaḥ* – idea of duality; *tu* – but; *kevale* – in the unique; *ātman* – in the self; *ṛte* – without; *svam* – that very; *ātmānam* – self; *avalambaḥ* – basis; *na* – there is not; *yasya* – of which (duality); *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

Whatever apparent duality is perceived in the self is simply the confusion of the mind. Indeed, such supposed duality has no basis to rest upon apart from one’s own soul.

PURPORT

As explained in verse 33 of this chapter, the eternal self is neither assumed nor lost, since every living entity is an eternal reality. The word *vikalpa*, or “duality,” here refers to the mistaken idea that the spirit soul is partly composed of matter in the form of the gross body or subtle mind. It is thus that foolish persons consider the material body or mind to be an intrinsic or fundamental component of the self. In fact the living entity is pure spirit, without any tinge of matter. Consequently the false ego, which is generated by the false identification with matter, is a mistaken identity imposed upon the pure spirit soul. The sense of ego, or “I am” – in other words, the sense of

one's individual identity – comes from the spirit soul, because there is no other possible basis for such self-awareness. By studying one's false sense of ego, one can analytically understand that there is a pure ego, which is expressed by the words *aham brahmāsmi*, "I am pure spirit soul." One can easily understand in a similar way that there is a supreme spirit soul, the Personality of Godhead, who is the omniscient controller of everything. Such understanding in Kṛṣṇa consciousness constitutes perfect knowledge, as described here by the Lord.

TEXT 28.37

*yan nāmākṛtibhir grāhyam
pañca-varṇam abādhitam
vyarthenāpy artha-vādo'yaṁ
dvayaṁ paṇḍita-māninām*

yat – which; *nāma* – by names; *ākṛtibhiḥ* – and forms; *grāhyam* – perceivable; *pañca-varṇam* – consisting of the five material elements; *abādhitam* – undeniable; *vyarthena* – in vain; *api* – indeed; *artha-vādaḥ* – the imaginative interpretation; *ayaṁ* – this; *dvayam* – duality; *paṇḍita-māninām* – of so-called scholars.

TRANSLATION

The duality of the five material elements is perceived only in terms of names and forms. Those who say this duality is real are pseudoscholars vainly proposing fanciful theories without basis in fact.

PURPORT

Material names and forms, subject as they are to creation and annihilation, have no permanent existence and so do not constitute essential, fundamental principles of reality. The material world consists of variegated transformations of the potency of God. Although God is real and His potency is real, the particular forms and names that temporarily or circumstantially appear have no ultimate reality. Gross ignorance occurs when the conditioned soul imagines himself to be material or a mixture of matter and spirit. Some philosophers argue that the eternal soul in contact with matter is permanently transformed and that the false ego represents a new and permanent reality of the soul. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī replies that spirit is the living, superior energy of the Lord, whereas matter is the inferior, unconscious energy of the Lord, and that these two energies thus possess opposite qualities, as with light and darkness. The superior living entity and inferior matter therefore cannot possibly merge into a common existence, since they eternally possess opposite and incompatible characteristics. The hallucination of a mixture of matter and spirit is called illusion; it becomes specifically manifest as false ego, which identifies with a specific material body or mind created by illusion. Clearly those scientists or philosophers who are embedded in gross ignorance cannot be real scientists and philosophers. The simple criterion of spiritual self-awareness unfortunately eliminates a

huge percentage of modern so-called scientists and philosophers, who bury their foolish noses in the Lord's material energy, without any knowledge of or interest in the Lord Himself.

TEXT 28.38

*yogino'pakva-yogasya
yuñjataḥ kāya utthitaiḥ
upasargair vihanayeta
tatrāyaṁ vihito vidhiḥ*

yoginaḥ – of the *yogī*; *apakva-yogasya* – who is immature in the practice of *yoga*; *yuñjataḥ* – trying to engage; *kāyaḥ* – the body; *utthitaiḥ* – which have arisen; *upasargaiḥ* – by disturbances; *vihanayeta* – may be frustrated; *tatra* – in that connection; *ayaṁ* – this; *vihitaiḥ* – is prescribed; *vidhiḥ* – recommended process.

TRANSLATION

The physical body of the endeavoring yogī who is not yet mature in his practice may sometimes be overcome by various disturbances. Therefore the following process is recommended.

PURPORT

Having described the process of cultivating knowledge, the Lord now gives instructions to the *yogī* whose body may be disturbed by disease or other impediments. Those inferior *yogīs* who are attached to the body and bodily exercises are often incomplete in their realization, and thus the Lord here offers them some assistance.

TEXT 28.39

*yoga-dhāraṇayā kāmścid
āsanair dhāraṇānvitaiḥ
tapo-mantrauśadhaiḥ kāmścid
upasargān vinirdahet*

yoga-dhāraṇayā – by yogic meditation; *kāmścit* – some disturbances; *āsanaiḥ* – by prescribed postures; *dhāraṇā-anvitaiḥ* – together with meditation on controlled breathing; *tapaiḥ* – by special austerities; *mantra* – magical chants; *auśadhaiḥ* – and medicinal herbs; *kāmścit* – some; *upasargān* – obstructions; *vinirdahet* – can be eradicated.

TRANSLATION

Some of these obstructions may be counteracted by yogic meditation or by sitting postures, practiced together with concentration on controlled breathing, and others may be counteracted by special austerities, mantras or medicinal herbs.

TEXT 28.40

*kāmścin mamānudhyānena
nāma-saṅkīrtanādibhiḥ*

*yogeśvarānuvṛtṭyā vā
hanyād aśubha-dān śanaiḥ*

kāmścit - some; *mama* - of Me; *anudhyānena* - by constant thought; *nāma* - of the holy names; *saṅkīrtana* - by the loud chanting; *ādibhiḥ* - and so on; *yoga-īśvara* - of the great masters of *yoga*; *anuvṛtṭyā* - by following in the footsteps; *vā* - or; *hanyāt* - may be destroyed; *aśubha-dān* - (the obstructions) that create inauspicious situations; *śanaiḥ* - gradually.

TRANSLATION

These inauspicious disturbances can be gradually removed by constant remembrance of Me, by congregational hearing and chanting of My holy names, or by following in the footsteps of the great masters of yoga.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, by meditation on the Supreme Lord one can overcome lust and other mental disturbances, and by following in the footsteps of great transcendentalists one can overcome hypocrisy, false pride and other types of mental imbalance.

TEXT 28.41

*kecid deham imam dhīrāḥ
su-kalpam vayasi sthiram
vidhāya vividhopāyair
atha yuñjanti siddhaye*

kecit - some; *deham* - the material body; *imam* - this; *dhīrāḥ* - self-controlled; *su-kalpam* - fit; *vayasi* - in youth; *sthiram* - fixed; *vidhāya* - making; *vividha* - by various; *upāyair* - means; *atha* - thus; *yuñjanti* - they engage; *siddhaye* - for the achievement of material perfections.

TRANSLATION

By various methods, some yogīs free the body from disease and old age and keep it perpetually youthful. Thus they engage in yoga for the purpose of achieving material mystic perfections.

PURPORT

The process described here is meant to fulfill one's material desires, not to bring one transcendental knowledge. Therefore this process cannot be accepted as devotional service to the Lord, according to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Despite all such mystic perfections, the material body will ultimately die. Actual eternal youth and happiness are available only on the spiritual platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 28.42

*na hi tat kuśalādṛtyam
tad-āyāso hy apārthakaḥ
antavattvāc charīrasya
phalasyeva vanaspateḥ*

na - not; *hi* - indeed; *tat* - that; *kuśala* - by those expert in transcendental knowledge; *ādr̥tyam* - to be respected; *tat* - of that; *āyāsaḥ* - the endeavor; *hi* - certainly; *apārthakaḥ* - useless; *anta-vattvāt* - because of being subject to destruction; *śarīrasya* - on the part of the material body; *phalasya* - of the fruit; *iva* - just as; *vanaspateḥ* - of a tree.

TRANSLATION

This mystic bodily perfection is not valued very highly by those expert in transcendental knowledge. Indeed, they consider endeavor for such perfection useless, since the soul, like a tree, is permanent, but the body, like a tree's fruit, is subject to destruction.

PURPORT

The example given here is of a tree that seasonally bears fruit. The fruit exists for a very short time, whereas the tree may exist for thousands of years. Similarly, the spirit soul is eternal, whereas the material body, even when preserved as long as possible, is destroyed relatively quickly. The body should never be equated with the eternally existing spirit soul. Those who are actually intelligent, who actually have spiritual knowledge, are not interested in material mystic perfections.

TEXT 28.43

*yogam niṣevato nityam
kāyaś cet kalpatām iyāt
tac chraddadhyān na matimān
yogam utsrjya mat-paraḥ*

yogam - the practice of *yoga*; *niṣevataḥ* - of one executing; *nityam* - regularly; *kāyaḥ* - the material body; *cet* - even if; *kalpatām* - fitness; *iyāt* - attains; *tat* - in that; *śraddadhyāt* - take faith; *na* - does not; *mati-mān* - who is intelligent; *yogam* - the system of mystic *yoga*; *utsrjya* - giving up; *mat-paraḥ* - the devotee dedicated to Me.

TRANSLATION

Although the physical body may be improved by various processes of yoga, an intelligent person who has dedicated his life to Me does not place his faith in the prospect of perfecting his physical body through yoga, and in fact he gives up such procedures.

PURPORT

A devotee of the Lord keeps his body fit by eating nourishing Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*, by maintaining a clean and regulated life, free from unnecessary anxiety, and by chanting and dancing before the Deity of the Lord. When a devotee is sick, he accepts medical treatment by normal methods, but beyond this there is no need to absorb one's mind in the physical body in the name of so-called *yoga* practice. Ultimately one must accept the destiny that has been ordained by the Lord.

TEXT 28.44

*yoga-caryām imām yogī
vicaran mad-apāśrayaḥ
nāntarāyair vihaneta
niḥspṛhaḥ sva-sukhānubhūḥ*

yoga-caryām – the prescribed process of *yoga*; *imām* – this; *yogī* – the practitioner; *vicaran* – executing; *mad-apāśrayaḥ* – having taken shelter of Me; *na* – not; *antarāyaiḥ* – by obstacles; *vihaneta* – is checked; *niḥspṛhaḥ* – free from hankering; *sva* – of the soul; *sukha* – the happiness; *anubhūḥ* – experiencing within.

TRANSLATION

The yogī who has taken shelter of Me remains free from hankering because he experiences the happiness of the soul within. Thus while executing this process of yoga, he is never defeated by obstacles.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the Supreme Lord has briefly described to Uddhava the essential wisdom of all the *Upaniṣads*, with the conclusion that pure devotional service to the Lord is the real means of ultimate liberation. In this regard Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura emphasizes that although *haṭha-yogīs* and *rāja-yogīs* try to make progress along their prescribed paths, they confront obstacles and often fail to achieve their desired goals. However, one who surrenders to the Supreme Lord will certainly be victorious on his spiritual path back home, back to Godhead. *Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-eighth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “Jñāna-yoga.”*

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

Bhakti-yoga

Thinking that the previously described spiritual practice, based on detachment, is too difficult, Uddhava inquired about an easier method. In reply, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave brief instructions on devotional service. The fruitive workers and mystic *yogīs*, who are bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and puffed up by their false identifications, refuse to take shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord. But the swanlike men, those who know how to discriminate between the essential and nonessential, always take shelter at the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Lord Himself – within the living entity as the *caitya-guru* and without as the spiritual master who teaches by example – eradicates all the misfortune of the spirit soul and reveals His own personal form.

One should execute all duties for the sake of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, keeping one's mind absorbed in Him. One should take advantage of the sacred abodes of the Lord, where His devotees reside, and one should serve the Lord and celebrate the festivals and holidays in His honor. By understanding all living beings to be Lord Kṛṣṇa's place of residence, one can attain the ability to see equally everywhere, and thus all faulty qualities of envy, false ego and so on will be removed. Bearing this in mind, the devotee should give up his proud relatives, his separatist outlook and his mundane embarrassment and should offer obeisances flat on the ground to all, even the dogs and outcastes. As long as one has not learned to see the presence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in all creatures, he must continue to use his body, mind and speech to worship the Supreme Lord in that manner of offering full obeisances to all.

Because this eternal process of devotional service to the Supreme Lord is transcendental and has been established by the Lord Himself, it can never, to the slightest extent, be defeated or prove fruitless. When one offers himself completely to the Supreme Lord with exclusive devotion, the Lord becomes particularly pleased, and thus the devotee achieves immortality, becoming qualified to obtain opulence equal to that of the Lord.

After receiving these instructions, Śrī Uddhava went to Badarikāśrama in pursuance of Lord Kṛṣṇa's order, and by perfectly carrying out the instructions of the Supreme Lord, he attained the Lord's transcendental abode. By faithfully serving these instructions spoken by the Personality of Godhead to Uddhava, the greatest of devotees, the entire world can become liberated.

TEXT 29.1

śrī-uddhava uvāca
su-dustarām imām manye
yoga-caryām anātmanaḥ
yathāñjasā pumān siddhyet
tan me brūhy añjasācyuta

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *su-dustarām* – very difficult to execute; *imām* – this; *manye* – I think; *yoga-caryām* – process of yoga; *anātmanaḥ* – for one who has not controlled his mind; *yathā* – how; *añjasā* – easily; *pumān* – a person; *siddhyet* – may accomplish it; *tat* – that; *me* – to me; *brūhi* – please tell; *añjasā* – in a simple manner; *acyuta* – O infallible Lord.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: My dear Lord Acyuta, I fear that the method of yoga described by You is very difficult for one who cannot control his mind. Therefore please explain to me in simple terms how someone can more easily execute it.

TEXT 29.2

*prāyaśaḥ puṇḍarīkākṣa
yuñjanto yogino manaḥ
viśīdanty asamādhānān
mano-nigraha-karśitāḥ*

prāyaśaḥ – for the most part; *puṇḍarīka-akṣa* – O lotus-eyed Lord; *yuñjantaḥ* – who engage; *yoginaḥ* – yogīs; *manaḥ* – the mind; *viśīdanti* – become frustrated; *asamādhānāt* – because of inability to attain trance; *manaḥ-nigraha* – by the attempt to subdue the mind; *karśitāḥ* – weary.

TRANSLATION

O lotus-eyed Lord, generally those yogīs who try to steady the mind experience frustration because of their inability to perfect the state of trance. Thus they weary in their attempt to bring the mind under control.

PURPORT

Without the shelter of the Supreme Lord, a *yogī* easily becomes discouraged in the difficult task of fixing his mind on the Supreme.

TEXT 29.3

*athāta ānanda-dughaṁ padāmbujam
haṁsāḥ śrayeran aravinda-locana
sukhaṁ nu viśveśvara yoga-karmabhis
tvan-māyayāmī vihatā na māninaḥ*

atha – now; *ataḥ* – therefore; *ānanda-dugham* – the source of all ecstasy; *pada-ambujam* – Your lotus feet; *haṁsāḥ* – the swanlike men; *śrayeran* – take shelter of; *aravinda-locana* – O lotus-eyed; *sukham* – happily; *nu* – indeed; *viśva-īśvara* – Lord of the universe; *yoga-karmabhiḥ* – because of their practice of mysticism and fruitive work; *tvan-māyayā* – by Your material energy; *amī* – these; *vihatāḥ* – defeated; *na* – do not (take shelter); *māninaḥ* – those who are falsely proud.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O lotus-eyed Lord of the universe, swanlike men happily take shelter of Your lotus feet, the source of all transcendental

ecstasy. But those who take pride in their accomplishments in yoga and karma fail to take shelter of You and are defeated by Your illusory energy.

PURPORT

Śrī Uddhava emphasizes here that one can achieve spiritual perfection simply by taking shelter of the Personality of Godhead. Those who do so are called *hamsāḥ*, the most discriminating human beings, since they are able to locate the actual source of spiritual happiness, the Lord's lotus feet. The word *yoga-karmabhiḥ* indicates that those who are attracted to or proud of achievements in the field of mystic *yoga* or ordinary material endeavor cannot appreciate the great advantage of obediently surrendering to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Generally the *yogīs* and fruitive workers are proud of their so-called achievements and are more attracted to their own endeavor than to the Lord Himself. By humbly taking shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one can advance easily and quickly on the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and go back home, back to Godhead.

TEXT 29.4

*kiṁ citram acyuta tavaitad aśeṣa-bandho
dāseṣv ananya-śaraṇesu yad ātma-sāttvam
yo'rocayat saha mṛgaiḥ svayam īśvarāṇām
śrīmat-kirīṭa-taṭa-pīḍita-pāda-pīṭhaḥ*

kim - what; *citram* - wonder; *acyuta* - O infallible Lord; *tava* - Your; *etat* - this; *aśeṣa-bandho* - O friend of all; *dāseṣu* - for the servants; *ananya-śaraṇeṣu* - who have taken no other shelter; *yad* - which; *ātma-sāttvam* - intimacy with You; *yaḥ* - who; *arocayat* - acted affectionately; *saha* - with; *mṛgaiḥ* - the animals (monkeys); *svayam* - Yourself; *īśvarāṇām* - of the great demigods; *śrīmat* - effulgent; *kirīṭa* - of the helmets; *taṭa* - by the edges; *pīḍita* - shaken; *pāda-pīṭhaḥ* - whose footstool.

TRANSLATION

My dear infallible Lord, it is not very astonishing that You intimately approach Your servants who have taken exclusive shelter of You. After all, during Your appearance as Lord Rāmacandra, even while great demigods like Brahmā were vying to place the effulgent tips of their helmets upon the cushion where Your lotus feet rested, You displayed special affection for monkeys such as Hanumān because they had taken exclusive shelter of You.

PURPORT

The devotees of the Lord become completely successful by the Lord's causeless mercy. Sometimes Lord Kṛṣṇa accepts a position of subservience to His great devotees, as with Nanda Mahārāja, the *gopīs*, Bali Mahārāja and others. Although demigods like Lord Brahmā were standing in line to touch their helmets to the Lord's foot cushion, still Lord Rāmacandra awarded His most intimate friendship to subhumans, such as the monkeys headed by Hanumān. Similarly Lord Kṛṣṇa's affection for the deer and cows, and even

for the trees of Vṛndāvana, is well known. Further, the Lord gladly drove the chariot of Arjuna and acted as the messenger and faithful subordinate of King Yudhiṣṭhira. Such devotees have no need for the elaborate *jñāna-yoga* systems or the process for achieving mystic powers. All these devotees are represented here by Śrī Uddhava, who frankly informs the Lord that the sophisticated systems of philosophical speculation and mystic *yoga* are not appealing for one who has developed a taste for direct loving service to the Lord.

TEXT 29.5

*taṁ tvākhilātma-dayiteśvaram āśritānām
sarvārtha-dam̐ sva-kṛta-vid viśjeta ko nu
ko vā bhajet kim api viśmṛtaye'nu bhūtyai
kim vā bhaven na tava pāda-rajo-juṣām naḥ*

taṁ – that; *tvā* – You; *akhila* – of all; *ātma* – the Supreme Soul; *dayita* – the most dear; *īśvaram* – and the supreme controller; *āśritānām* – of those who take shelter of You; *sarva-artha* – of all perfections; *dam̐* – the bestower; *sva-kṛta* – the benefit you have given; *vit* – who knows; *viśjeta* – can reject; *kaḥ* – who; *nu* – indeed; *kaḥ* – who; *vā* – or; *bhajet* – can accept; *kim api* – anything; *viśmṛtaye* – for forgetfulness; *anu* – consequently; *bhūtyai* – for sense gratification; *kim* – what; *vā* – or; *bhavet* – is; *na* – not; *tava* – Your; *pāda* – of the lotus feet; *rajaḥ* – the dust; *juṣām* – for those who are serving; *naḥ* – ourselves.

TRANSLATION

Who, then, could dare reject You, the very Soul, the most dear object of worship, and the Supreme Lord of all - You who give all possible perfections to the devotees who take shelter of You? Who could be so ungrateful, knowing the benefits You bestow? Who would reject You and accept something for the sake of material enjoyment, which simply leads to forgetfulness of You? And what lack is there for us who are engaged in the service of the dust of Your lotus feet?

PURPORT

As stated in the Nārāyaṇīya of the Mokṣa-dharma, in Śrī Mahābhārata:

*yā vai sādhana-sampattiḥ
puruṣārtha-catuṣṭaye
tayā vinā tad āpnoti
naro nārāyaṇāśrayaḥ*

“Whatever among the four goals of human life can be achieved by various spiritual practices is automatically achieved without such endeavors by the person who has taken shelter of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the refuge of all persons.” Thus a Kṛṣṇa conscious person knows that he will obtain all perfection of life simply by surrendering to the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. This is the highest stage of *yoga*, as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

TEXT 29.6

*naivopayanty apacitiṁ kavayas taveśa
brahmāyusāpi kṛtam ṛddha-mudaḥ smarantaḥ
yo'ntar bahis tanu-bhṛtām aśubhaṁ vidhunvann
ācārya-caitya-vapuṣā sva-gatiṁ vyanakti*

na eva – not at all; *upayanti* – are able to express; *apacitim* – their gratitude; *kavayaḥ* – learned devotees; *tava* – Your; *īśa* – O Lord; *brahma-āyusā* – with a lifetime equal to Lord Brahmā's; *api* – in spite of; *kṛtam* – magnanimous work; *ṛddha* – increased; *mudaḥ* – joy; *smarantaḥ* – remembering; *yaḥ* – who; *antaḥ* – within; *bahiḥ* – outside; *tanu-bhṛtām* – of those who are embodied; *aśubham* – misfortune; *vidhunvan* – dissipating; *ācārya* – of the spiritual master; *caitya* – of the Supersoul; *vapuṣā* – by the forms; *sva* – own; *gatiṁ* – path; *vyanakti* – shows.

TRANSLATION

O my Lord! Transcendental poets and experts in spiritual science could not fully express their indebtedness to You, even if they were endowed with the prolonged lifetime of Brahmā, for You appear in two features - externally as the ācārya and internally as the Supersoul - to deliver the embodied living being by directing him how to come to You.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Lord Kṛṣṇa is ten million times more dear to a devotee than life itself. And according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, even by rendering devotional service for the total duration of one thousand universal creations, a devotee cannot repay the debt he feels to the Lord for having awarded him loving service to the Lord's lotus feet. The Lord appears within the heart as the Supersoul and externally both as the spiritual master and as His literary incarnation – the supreme Vedic knowledge of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 29.7

*śrī-śuka uvāca
ity uddhavenāty-anurakta-cetasā
pṛṣṭo jagat-kṛḍanakaḥ sva-śaktibhiḥ
grhīta-mūrti-traya īśvareśvaro
jagāda sa-prema-manohara-smitaḥ*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *iti* – thus; *uddhavana* – by Uddhava; *ati-anurakta* – extremely attached; *cetasā* – whose heart; *pṛṣṭaḥ* – asked; *jagat* – the universe; *kṛḍanakaḥ* – whose plaything; *sva-śaktibhiḥ* – by His own energies; *grhīta* – who has assumed; *mūrti* – personal forms; *trayaḥ* – three; *īśvara* – of all controllers; *īśvaraḥ* – the supreme controller; *jagāda* – He spoke; *sa-prema* – loving; *manaḥ-hara* – attractive; *smitaḥ* – whose smile.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus questioned by the most affectionate Uddhava, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme controller of all controllers, who takes the entire universe as His plaything and assumes the three forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, began to reply, lovingly displaying His all-attractive smile.

TEXT 29.8

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
hanta te kathayisyāmi
mama dharmān su-maṅgalān
yān śraddhayācaran martyo
mṛtyum jayati durjayam*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *hanta* – yes; *te* – to you; *kathayisyāmi* – I shall speak; *mama* – relating to Me; *dharmān* – religious principles; *su-maṅgalān* – most auspicious; *yān* – which; *śraddhayā* – with faith; *ācaran* – executing; *martyaḥ* – a mortal human being; *mṛtyum* – death; *jayati* – conquers; *durjayam* – unconquerable.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Yes, I shall describe to you the principles of devotion to Me, by executing which a mortal human being will conquer unconquerable death.

TEXT 29.9

*kuryāt sarvāṇi karmāṇi
mad-arthaṁ śanakaiḥ smaran
mayy arpita-manaś-citto
mad-dharmātma-mano-ratiḥ*

kuryāt – one should perform; *sarvāṇi* – all; *karmāṇi* – prescribed activities; *mat-artham* – for Me; *śanakaiḥ* – without becoming impetuous; *smaran* – remembering; *mayi* – unto Me; *arpita* – who has offered; *manaḥ-cittaḥ* – his mind and his intelligence; *mat-dharma* – My devotional service; *ātma-manaḥ* – of his own mind; *ratiḥ* – the attraction.

TRANSLATION

Always remembering Me, one should perform all his duties for Me without becoming impetuous. With mind and intelligence offered to Me, one should fix his mind in attraction to My devotional service.

PURPORT

The words *mad-dharmātma-mano-ratiḥ* mean that all of one's love and affection should be devoted to pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is not indicated here that one should try to relish selfish satisfaction in devotional service, but rather that one should be attracted to the Lord's own satisfaction, which one achieves by faithfully executing the order of a bona fide spiritual master coming in disciplic succession from Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. Attachment to one's own satisfaction, even within devotional service, is

materialistic, whereas attachment to the satisfaction of the Lord is pure spiritual emotion.

TEXT 29.10

*deśān puṇyān āśrayeta
mad-bhaktaiḥ sādhubhiḥ śritān
devāsura-manuṣyeṣu
mad-bhaktācaritāni ca*

deśān – places; *puṇyān* – sacred; *āśrayeta* – he should take shelter of; *mat-bhaktaiḥ* – by My devotees; *sādhubhiḥ* – saintly; *śritān* – resorted to; *deva* – among the demigods; *asura* – demons; *manuṣyeṣu* – and human beings; *mat-bhakta* – of My devotees; *ācaritāni* – the activities; *ca* – and.

TRANSLATION

One should take shelter of holy places where My saintly devotees reside, and one should be guided by the exemplary activities of My devotees, who appear among the demigods, demons and human beings.

PURPORT

Nārada Muni is one of the great devotees of the Lord who appeared among the demigods. Prahlāda Mahārāja appeared among the demons, and many other great devotees, such as Ambarīṣa Mahārāja and the Pāṇḍavas, appeared among human beings. One should take shelter of the devotees' exemplary activities and also the holy places where devotees reside. Thus one will remain safe on the path of devotional service.

TEXT 29.11

*ṛthak satreṇa vā mahyam
parva-yātrā-mahotsavān
kārayed gīta-nṛtyādyair
mahārāja-vibhūtibhiḥ*

ṛthak – alone; *satreṇa* – in assembly; *vā* – or; *mahyam* – for Me; *parva* – monthly observances, such as Ekādaśī; *yātrā* – special gatherings; *mahā-utsavān* – and festivals; *kārayet* – one should arrange to perform; *gīta* – with singing; *nṛtya-ādyaiḥ* – dancing and so on; *mahā-rāja* – royal; *vibhūtibhiḥ* – with signs of opulence.

TRANSLATION

Either alone or in public gatherings, with singing, dancing and other exhibitions of royal opulence, one should arrange to celebrate those holy days, ceremonies and festivals set aside specially for My worship.

TEXT 29.12

*mām eva sarva-bhūteṣu
bahir antar apāvṛtam*

*īkṣetātmani cātmānaṁ
yathā kham amalāśayaḥ*

mām – Me; *eva* – indeed; *sarva-bhūteṣu* – within all living beings; *bahiḥ* – externally; *antaḥ* – internally; *apāvṛtam* – uncovered; *īkṣeta* – one should see; *ātmani* – within himself; *ca* – also; *ātmānam* – the Supreme Soul; *yathā* – as; *kham* – the sky; *amala-āśayaḥ* – having a pure heart.

TRANSLATION

With a pure heart one should see Me, the Supreme Soul within all beings and also within oneself, to be both unblemished by anything material and also present everywhere, both externally and internally, just like the omnipresent sky.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the Lord has spoken the present verse to attract those who are inclined toward philosophical speculation about the Absolute Truth. Such transcendental scholars searching for the ultimate unity will be attracted by the Lord’s manifestation described here.

TEXTS 29.13-14

*iti sarvāṇi bhūtāni
mad-bhāvena mahā-dyute
sabhājayan manyamāno
jñānaṁ kevalam āśritaḥ
brāhmaṇe pukṣase stene
brahmaṇye'rke sphuliṅgake
akrūre krūrake caiva
sama-dṛk paṇḍito mataḥ*

iti – in this way; *sarvāṇi* – to all; *bhūtāni* – living beings; *mat-bhāvena* – with the sense of My presence; *mahā-dyute* – O greatly effulgent Uddhava; *sabhājayan* – giving respect; *manyamānaḥ* – so considering; *jñānam* – knowledge; *kevalam* – transcendental; *āśritaḥ* – taking shelter of; *brāhmaṇe* – in the *brāhmaṇa*; *pukṣase* – in the outcaste of the Pukṣasa tribe; *stene* – in the thief; *brahmaṇye* – in the man who respects brahminical culture; *arke* – in the sun; *sphuliṅgake* – in the spark of the fire; *akrūre* – in the gentle; *krūrake* – in the cruel; *ca* – also; *eva* – indeed; *sama-dṛk* – having equal vision; *paṇḍitaḥ* – a learned scholar; *mataḥ* – is considered.

TRANSLATION

O brilliant Uddhava, one who thus views all living entities with the idea that I am present within each of them, and who by taking shelter of this divine knowledge offers due respect to everyone, is considered actually wise. Such a man sees equally the brāhmaṇa and the outcaste, the thief and the charitable promoter of brahminical culture, the sun and the tiny sparks of fire, the gentle and the cruel.

PURPORT

A series of opposites is set forth here – namely the high-class *brāhmaṇa* and the low-class aborigine, the thief who steals from respectable persons and the respecter of brahminical culture who gives charity to *brāhmaṇas*, the all-powerful sun and the insignificant spark, and finally the kind and the cruel. Ordinarily, the ability to distinguish between such opposites qualifies one as intelligent. How, then, can the Lord state that ignoring such obvious differences establishes one as a wise man? The answer is given by the words *mad-bhāvena*: a wise person sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead within everything. Therefore, although externally perceiving and dealing with the varieties of material situations, a wise man is more impressed by and concerned with the overwhelming unity of all existence, which is based on the presence of the Supreme Lord within everything. As explained here, a truly wise person is not limited to superficial material discrimination.

TEXT 29.15

*nareṣv abhīkṣṇam mad-bhāvam
puṁso bhāvayato'cirāt
spardhāsūyā-tiraskārāḥ
sāhaṅkāra viyanti hi*

nareṣu – in all persons; *abhīkṣṇam* – constantly; *mat-bhāvam* – the personal presence of Me; *puṁsaḥ* – of the person; *bhāvayataḥ* – who is meditating upon; *acirāt* – quickly; *spardhā* – the tendency to feel rivalry (against equals); *asūyā* – envy (of superiors); *tiraskārāḥ* – and abuse (of inferiors); *sa* – along with; *ahaṅkāraḥ* – false ego; *viyanti* – they disappear; *hi* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

For him who constantly meditates upon My presence within all persons, the bad tendencies of rivalry, envy and abusiveness, along with false ego, are very quickly destroyed.

PURPORT

We conditioned souls tend to feel rivalry toward our equals, envy toward our superior, and the desire to belittle our subordinates. These contaminated propensities, along with their very basis, false ego, can be quickly vanquished by meditating upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead within every living being.

TEXT 29.16

*visṛjya smayamānān svān
dṛśam vṛḍḍāṁ ca daihikīm
praṇamed daṇḍa-vad bhūmāv
ā-śva-cāṇḍāla-go-kharam*

visṛjya – giving up; *smayamānān* – who are laughing; *svān* – one's own friends; *dṛśam* – the outlook; *vṛḍḍāṁ* – the embarrassment; *ca* – and; *daihikīm* – of the bodily conception; *praṇamet* – one should offer obeisances;

daṇḍa-vat – falling down like a rod; *bhūmau* – upon the ground; *ā* – even; *śva* – to the dogs; *cāṇḍāla* – outcastes; *go* – cows; *kharam* – and asses.

TRANSLATION

Disregarding the ridicule of one’s companions, one should give up the bodily conception and its accompanying embarrassment. One should offer obeisances before all – even the dogs, outcastes, cows and asses – falling flat upon the ground like a rod.

PURPORT

One should practice seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead within all creatures. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu advised all devotees to consider themselves lower than a blade of grass and to be more tolerant than a tree. In such a humble position, one will not be disturbed in the prosecution of pure devotional service to the Lord. A devotee does not foolishly think that a cow or an ass is God, but rather the devotee sees the Supreme Lord within all creatures, and on this higher, spiritual plane he does not discriminate.

TEXT 29.17

*yāvat sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhāvo nopajāyate
tāvad evam upāsīta
vāñ-maṇaḥ-kāya-vṛttibhiḥ*

yāvat – as long as; *sarveṣu* – in all; *bhūteṣu* – living entities; *mat-bhāvaḥ* – the vision of My presence; *na upajāyate* – does not fully develop; *tāvat* – for that long; *evam* – in this way; *upāsīta* – one must worship; *vāñ* – of his speech; *maṇaḥ* – mind; *kāya* – and body; *vṛttibhiḥ* – by the functions.

TRANSLATION

Until one has fully developed the ability to see Me within all living beings, one must continue to worship Me by this process with the activities of his speech, mind and body.

PURPORT

Until one fully realizes the Supreme Lord within all beings, he should continue the process of offering obeisances to all creatures. Although one may not be able to actually fall on the ground before all creatures, at least within his mind or by his words one should offer respect to all living beings. This will accelerate the devotee’s self-realization.

TEXT 29.18

*sarvaṁ brahmātmakaṁ tasya
vidyayātma-manīṣayā
paripaśyann upamet
sarvato mukta-saṁśayaḥ*

sarvaṁ – everything; *brahma-ātmakam* – based on the Absolute Truth; *tasya* – for him; *vidyayā* – by transcendental knowledge; *ātma-manīṣayā* – by realization of the Supreme Soul; *paripaśyan* – seeing everywhere; *upamet*

- he should desist from material activities; *sarvataḥ* - in all cases; *mukta-samśayaḥ* - freed from doubts.

TRANSLATION

By such transcendental knowledge of the all-pervading Personality of Godhead, one is able to see the Absolute Truth everywhere. Freed thus from all doubts, one gives up fruitive activities.

TEXT 29.19

*ayam hi sarva-kalpānām
sadr̥cīno mato mama
mad-bhāvaḥ sarva-bhūteṣu
mano-vāk-kāya-vṛttibhiḥ*

ayam - this; *hi* - indeed; *sarva* - of all; *kalpānām* - processes; *sadr̥cīnaḥ* - the most appropriate; *mataḥ* - is considered; *mama* - by Me; *mat-bhāvaḥ* - seeing Me; *sarva-bhūteṣu* - within all living entities; *manaḥ-vāk-kāya-vṛttibhiḥ* - by the functions of one's mind, words and body.

TRANSLATION

Indeed, I consider this process - using one's mind, words and bodily functions for realizing Me within all living beings - to be the best possible method of spiritual enlightenment.

TEXT 29.20

*na hy aṅgopakrame dhvaṁso
mad-dharmasyoddhavāṇv api
mayā vyavasitaḥ samyaṅ
nirguṇatvād anāśiṣaḥ*

na - there is not; *hi* - indeed; *aṅga* - My dear Uddhava; *upakrame* - in the attempt; *dhvaṁsaḥ* - destruction; *mat-dharmasya* - of My devotional service; *uddhava* - My dear Uddhava; *aṅu* - the slightest; *api* - even; *mayā* - by Me; *vyavasitaḥ* - established; *samyak* - perfectly; *nirguṇa-tvāt* - because of its being transcendental; *anāśiṣaḥ* - having no ulterior motive.

TRANSLATION

My dear Uddhava, because I have personally established it, this process of devotional service unto Me is transcendental and free from any material motivation. Certainly a devotee never suffers even the slightest loss by adopting this process.

PURPORT

Although great sages and authorities have established various methods of human progress, the Supreme Lord Himself has introduced the system of *bhakti-yoga*, wherein one directly takes shelter of the Lord in loving service. One who serves the Lord without personal motivation can never be defeated in his progress and will certainly go back home, back to Godhead, in the near future.

TEXT 29.21

*yo yo mayi pare dharmah
kalpyate niṣphalāya cet
tad-āyāso nirarthaḥ syād
bhayāder iva sattama*

yaḥ yaḥ – whatever; *mayi* – unto Me; *pare* – the Supreme; *dharmah* – is religion; *kalpyate* – tends; *niṣphalāya* – toward becoming free from the result of material work; *cet* – if; *tad* – of that; *āyāsaḥ* – the endeavor; *nirarthaḥ* – futile; *syāt* – may be; *bhaya-ādeḥ* – of fear and so on; *iva* – as; *sat-tama* – O best of saintly persons.

TRANSLATION

O Uddhava, greatest of saints, in a dangerous situation an ordinary person cries, becomes fearful and laments, although such useless emotions do not change the situation. But activities offered to Me without personal motivation, even if they are externally useless, amount to the actual process of religion.

PURPORT

Even the most insignificant activity, when offered to the Supreme Lord without personal desire, can elevate one to the perfection of spiritual life. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa always protects and maintains His devotee. But if a devotee cries to the Lord for protection or maintenance, desiring to continue his devotional service unimpeded, Lord Kṛṣṇa accepts such apparently unnecessary appeals to be the highest religious process.

TEXT 29.22

*eṣā buddhimatām buddhir
manīṣā ca manīṣiṇām
yat satyam anṛteneha
martyenāpnoti māmṛtam*

eṣā – this; *buddhi-matām* – of the intelligent; *buddhiḥ* – the intelligence; *manīṣā* – the cleverness; *ca* – and; *manīṣiṇām* – of the clever; *yat* – which; *satyam* – the real; *anṛtena* – by the false; *iha* – in this life; *martyena* – by the mortal; *āpnoti* – obtains; *mā* – Me; *mṛtam* – the immortal.

TRANSLATION

This process is the supreme intelligence of the intelligent and the cleverness of the most clever, for by following it one can in this very life make use of the temporary and unreal to achieve Me, the eternal reality.

PURPORT

As described in this chapter, one who desires personal prestige in the Lord's service cannot be considered intelligent and clever. Similarly, one who is anxious to become a sophisticated transcendental philosopher is not the most intelligent. Nor is one who is expert in accumulating money. The Lord here states that the most intelligent and clever person is the devotee who offers his temporary, illusory material body and possessions to Him with love and without personal motivation. The devotee thus obtains the eternal

Absolute Truth. In other words, real intelligence is to actually surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa, without personal desire or duplicity. That is the Lord's opinion.

TEXT 29.23

*eṣa te'bhīhitaḥ kṛtsno
brahma-vādasya saṅgrahaḥ
samāsa-vyāsa-vidhinā
devānām api durgamaḥ*

eṣaḥ – this; *te* – unto you; *abhīhitaḥ* – has been described; *kṛtsnaḥ* – completely; *brahma-vādasya* – of the science of the Absolute Truth; *saṅgrahaḥ* – the survey; *samāsa* – in brief; *vyāsa* – in detail; *vidhinā* – by both means; *devānām* – for the demigods; *api* – even; *durgamaḥ* – inaccessible.

TRANSLATION

Thus have I related to you - both in brief and in detail - a complete survey of the science of the Absolute Truth. Even for the demigods, this science is very difficult to comprehend.

PURPORT

The word *devānām* indicates those living beings in the mode of goodness (such as demigods, saints and pious philosophers) who nevertheless cannot understand the Absolute Truth because they lack full surrender to the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 29.24

*abhīkṣṇāśas te gaditaṁ
jñānaṁ vispaṣṭa-yuktimat
etat vijñāya mucyeta
puruṣo naṣṭa-saṁśayaḥ*

abhīkṣṇāśaḥ – repeatedly; *te* – to you; *gaditam* – spoken; *jñānam* – knowledge; *vispaṣṭa* – clear; *yukti* – logical arguments; *mat* – having; *etat* – this; *vijñāya* – properly understanding; *mucyeta* – will become liberated; *puruṣaḥ* – a person; *naṣṭa* – destroyed; *saṁśayaḥ* – his doubts.

TRANSLATION

I have repeatedly spoken this knowledge to you with clear reasoning. Anyone who properly understands it will become free from all doubts and attain liberation.

TEXT 29.25

*su-viviktaṁ tava praśnaṁ
mayaitad api dhārayet
sanātanaṁ brahma-guhyam
param brahmādhigacchati*

sa-viviktam – clearly elucidated; *tava* – your; *praśnam* – question; *mayā* – by Me; *etat* – this; *api* – even; *dhārayet* – fixes his attention upon; *sanātanam* – eternal; *brahma-guhyam* – secret of the Vedas; *param* – supreme; *brahma* – the Absolute Truth; *adhigacchati* – he attains.

TRANSLATION

Anyone who fixes his attention on these clear answers to your questions will attain to the eternal, confidential goal of the Vedas - the Supreme Absolute Truth.

TEXT 29.26

*ya etan mama bhakteṣu
sampradadyāt su-puṣkalam
tasyāhaṁ brahma-dāyasya
dadāmy ātmānam ātmanā*

yaḥ - who; *etat* - this; *mama* - My; *bhakteṣu* - among the devotees; *sampradadyāt* - instructs; *su-puṣkalam* - liberally; *tasya* - to him; *aham* - I; *brahma-dāyasya* - to the person who is the bestower of knowledge of the Absolute; *dadāmi* - I give; *ātmānam* - Myself; *ātmanā* - by Myself.

TRANSLATION

One who liberally disseminates this knowledge among My devotees is the bestower of the Absolute Truth, and to him I give My very own self.

TEXT 29.27

*ya etat samadhīyīta
pavitram paramam śuci
sa pūyetāhar ahar mām
jñāna-dīpena darśayan*

yaḥ - who; *etat* - this; *samadhīyīta* - recites loudly; *pavitram* - the purifying agent; *paramam* - supreme; *śuci* - clear and transparent; *saḥ* - he; *pūyeta* - becomes purified; *ahaḥ ahaḥ* - day after day; *mām* - Me; *jñāna-dīpena* - with the lamp of knowledge; *darśayan* - exhibiting.

TRANSLATION

He who loudly recites this supreme knowledge, which is the most lucid and purifying, becomes purified day by day, for he reveals Me to others with the lamp of transcendental knowledge.

TEXT 29.28

*ya etac chraddhayā nityam
avyagraḥ śṛṇuyān naraḥ
mayi bhaktim parām kurvan
karmabhir na sa badhyate*

yaḥ - who; *etat* - this; *śraddhayā* - with faith; *nityam* - regularly; *avyagraḥ* - free from distraction; *śṛṇuyāt* - listens; *naraḥ* - a person; *mayi* - to Me; *bhaktim* - devotional service; *parām* - transcendental; *kurvan* - performing; *karmabhiḥ* - by fruitive actions; *na* - not; *saḥ* - he; *badhyate* - becomes bound up.

TRANSLATION

Anyone who regularly listens to this knowledge with faith and attention, all the while engaging in My pure devotional service, will never become bound by the reactions of material work.

TEXT 29.29

*apy uddhava tvayā brahma
sakhe samavadhāritam
api te vigato mohaḥ
śokaś cāsau mano-bhavaḥ*

api – whether; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *tvayā* – by you; *brahma* – spiritual knowledge; *sakhe* – O friend; *samavadhāritam* – sufficiently understood; *api* – whether; *te* – your; *vigataḥ* – is removed; *mohaḥ* – the illusion; *śokaḥ* – lamentation; *ca* – and; *asau* – this; *manaḥ-bhavaḥ* – born of your mind.

TRANSLATION

My dear friend Uddhava, have you now completely understood this transcendental knowledge? Are the confusion and lamentation that arose in your mind now dispelled?

PURPORT

Śrī Uddhava had been bewildered by considering manifestations of Lord Kṛṣṇa's own potency to be separate from Him. Uddhava's lamentation arose because he thought himself separated from Lord Kṛṣṇa. Actually, Śrī Uddhava is an eternally liberated soul, but the Lord placed him in bewilderment and lamentation so that this supreme knowledge of the *Uddhava-gīta* could be spoken. Lord Kṛṣṇa's question here indicates that if Uddhava had not perfectly understood this knowledge, Lord Kṛṣṇa would have explained the same thing again. According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, since Śrī Uddhava is the intimate friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord's question here was in a friendly, playful spirit. The Lord was well aware of Uddhava's complete enlightenment in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

TEXT 29.30

*naitat tvayā dāmbhikāya
nāstikāya śaṭhāya ca
aśuśrūṣor abhaktāya
durvinītāya dīyatām*

na – not; *etat* – this; *tvayā* – by you; *dāmbhikāya* – to a hypocrite; *nāstikāya* – to an atheist; *śaṭhāya* – to a cheat; *ca* – and; *aśuśrūṣoḥ* – to one who does not listen with faith; *abhaktāya* – to a nondevotee; *durvinītāya* – to one who is not humbly submissive; *dīyatām* – should be given.

TRANSLATION

You should not share this instruction with anyone who is hypocritical, atheistic or dishonest, or with anyone who will not listen faithfully, who is not a devotee, or who is simply not humble.

TEXT 29.31

*etair doṣair vihināya
brahmaṇyāya priyāya ca
sādhave śucaye brūyād
bhaktiḥ syāc chūdra-yoṣitām*

etaiḥ – of these; *doṣaiḥ* – faulty qualities; *vihīnāya* – to the person who is devoid; *brahmaṇyāya* – to one dedicated to the welfare of the *brāhmaṇas*; *priyāya* – kindly disposed; *ca* – and; *sādhave* – saintly; *śucaye* – pure; *brūyāt* – one should speak; *bhaktiḥ* – devotion; *syāt* – if it is present; *śūdra* – of the common workers; *yoṣitām* – and women.

TRANSLATION

This knowledge should be taught to one who is free from these bad qualities, who is dedicated to the welfare of the brāhmaṇas, and who is kindly disposed, saintly and pure. And if common workers and women are found to have devotion for the Supreme Lord, they are also to be accepted as qualified hearers.

TEXT 29.32

*naitad vijñāya jijñāsoḥ
jñātavyam avaśiṣyate
pītvā pīyūṣam amṛtaṁ
pātavyaṁ nāvaśiṣyate*

na – not; *etat* – this; *vijñāya* – fully understanding; *jijñāsoḥ* – of the inquisitive person; *jñātavyam* – matter to be understood; *avaśiṣyate* – remains; *pītvā* – having drunk; *pīyūṣam* – palatable; *amṛtam* – nectarean beverage; *pātavyam* – to be drunk; *na* – nothing; *avaśiṣyate* – remains.

TRANSLATION

When an inquisitive person comes to understand this knowledge, he has nothing further to know. After all, one who has drunk the most palatable nectar cannot remain thirsty.

TEXT 29.33

*jñāne karmaṇi yoge ca
vārtāyām daṇḍa-dhāraṇe
yāvān artho nṛṇām tāta
tāvāns te'haṁ catur-vidhaḥ*

jñāne – in the process of knowledge; *karmaṇi* – in fruitive work; *yoge* – in mystic *yoga*; *ca* – and; *vārtāyām* – in ordinary business; *daṇḍa-dhāraṇe* – in political rule; *yāvān* – whatever; *arthaḥ* – accomplishment; *nṛṇām* – of men; *tāta* – My dear Uddhava; *tāvān* – that much; *te* – to you; *ahaṁ* – I; *catur-vidhaḥ* – fourfold (i.e., the fourfold goals of human life: religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation).

TRANSLATION

Through analytic knowledge, ritualistic work, mystic yoga, mundane business and political rule, people seek to advance in religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. But because you are My devotee, whatever men can accomplish in these multifarious ways you will very easily find within Me.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa is the basis of all that exists, and one who takes exclusive shelter of the Lord never suffers any loss whatsoever for his intelligent decision to surrender to Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 29.34

*martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me
tadāmṛtatvaṁ pratipadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai*

martyaḥ – a mortal; *yadā* – when; *tyakta* – having given up; *samasta* – all; *karmā* – his fruitive activities; *nivedita-ātmā* – having offered his very self; *vicikīrṣitaḥ* – desirous of doing something special; *me* – for Me; *tadā* – at that time; *amṛtatvam* – immortality; *pratipadyamānaḥ* – in the process of attaining; *mayā* – with Me; *ātma-bhūyāya* – for equal opulence; *ca* – also; *kalpate* – he becomes qualified; *vai* – indeed.

TRANSLATION

A person who gives up all fruitive activities and offers himself entirely unto Me, eagerly desiring to render service unto Me, achieves liberation from birth and death and is promoted to the status of sharing My own opulences.

TEXT 29.35

*śrī-śuka uvāca
sa evam ādarśita-yoga-mārgas
tadottamaḥśloka-vaco niśamya
baddhāñjaliḥ prīty-uparuddha-kaṅṭho
na kiñcid ūce 'śru-pariplutākṣaḥ*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *saḥ* – he (Uddhava); *evam* – thus; *ādarśita* – shown; *yoga-mārgaḥ* – the path of yoga; *tadā* – then; *uttamaḥ-śloka* – of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *vacaḥ* – the words; *niśamya* – having heard; *baddha-añjaliḥ* – with hands folded in prayer; *prīti* – out of love; *uparuddha* – choked; *kaṅṭhaḥ* – his throat; *na kiñcid* – nothing; *ūce* – he said; *aśru* – with tears; *paripluta* – overflowing; *akṣaḥ* – his eyes.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Hearing these words spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa, and having thus been shown the entire path of yoga, Uddhava folded his hands to offer obeisances. But his throat choked up with love and his eyes overflowed with tears; so he could say nothing.

TEXT 29.36

*viṣṭabhya cittam praṇayāvaghūrṇam
dhairyena rājan bahu-manyamānaḥ
kṛtāñjaliḥ prāha yadu-pravīram
śīrṣṇā sprśanś tac-caraṇāravindam*

viṣṭabhya – restraining; *cittam* – his mind; *praṇaya* – with love; *avaghūrṇam* – completely agitated; *dhairyena* – with steadfastness; *rājan* – O King; *bahu-manyamānaḥ* – feeling grateful; *kṛta-añjaliḥ* – his hands folded; *prāha* – he spoke; *yadu-pravīram* – to the greatest hero of the Yadus; *śīrṣṇā* – with his head; *sprśan* – touching; *tac* – His; *caraṇa-aravindam* – lotus feet.

TRANSLATION

Steadying his mind, which had become overwhelmed with love, Uddhava felt extremely grateful to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the greatest hero of the Yadu dynasty. My dear King Parīkṣit, Uddhava bowed down to touch the Lord’s lotus feet with his head and then spoke with folded hands.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the fear of separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa was continually entering the mind of Śrī Uddhava, and thus he tried to maintain his enthusiasm by remembering the Lord’s great kindness upon him. He steadied his mind with feelings of gratitude toward the Lord.

TEXT 29.37

*śrī-uddhava uvāca
vidrāvito moha-mahāndhakāro
ya āśrito me tava sannidhānāt
vibhāvasoḥ kim nu samīpa-gasya
śītam tamo bhīḥ prabhavanty ajādyā*

śrī-uddhavaḥ uvāca – Śrī Uddhava said; *vidrāvitaḥ* – is driven away; *moha* – of delusion; *mahā-andhakāraḥ* – the great darkness; *yaḥ* – which; *āśritaḥ* – was taken shelter of; *me* – by me; *tava* – Your; *sannidhānāt* – by the presence; *vibhāvasoḥ* – of the sun; *kim* – what; *nu* – indeed; *samīpa-gasya* – for one who has come into the proximity; *śītam* – cold; *tamaḥ* – darkness; *bhīḥ* – fear; *prabhavanti* – have power; *ajā* – O unborn; *ādya* – O primeval Lord.

TRANSLATION

Śrī Uddhava said: O unborn, primeval Lord, although I had fallen into the great darkness of illusion, my ignorance has now been dispelled by Your merciful association. Indeed, how can cold, darkness and fear exert their power over one who has approached the brilliant sun?

PURPORT

Although Śrī Uddhava feared separation from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, he now understands that in a fundamental sense the Lord is everything. Kṛṣṇa consciousness can never be threatened or diminished for one who has taken full shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord.

TEXT 29.38

*pratyarpito me bhavatānukampinā
bhṛtyāya vijñāna-mayaḥ pradīpaḥ
hitvā kṛta-jñas tava pāda-mūlam
ko'nyam samīyāc charaṇam tvadīyam*

pratyarpitaḥ – offered in return; *me* – to me; *bhavatā* – by Your good self; *anukampinā* – who is merciful; *bhṛtyāya* – to Your servant; *vijñāna-mayaḥ* – of transcendental knowledge; *pradīpaḥ* – the torchlight; *hitvā* – giving up; *kṛta-jñas* – who is grateful; *tava* – Your; *pāda-mūlam* – the sole of the lotus foot; *kaḥ* – who; *anyam* – to another; *samīyāt* – can go; *śaraṇam* – for shelter; *tvadīyam* – Your.

TRANSLATION

In return for my insignificant surrender, You have mercifully bestowed upon me, Your servant, the torchlight of transcendental knowledge. Therefore, what devotee of Yours who has any gratitude could ever give up Your lotus feet and take shelter of another master?

TEXT 29.39

*vṛkṇas ca me su-dṛḍhaḥ sneha-pāśo
dāśārha-vṛṣṇi-andhaka-sātvateṣu
prasāritaḥ sṛṣṭi-vivṛddhaye tvayā
sva-māyayā hy ātma-subodha-hetinā*

vṛkṇas – cut off; *ca* – and; *me* – my; *su-dṛḍhaḥ* – very firm; *sneha-pāśas* – binding rope of affection; *dāśārha-vṛṣṇi-andhaka-sātvateṣu* – for the Dāśārhas, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas and Sātvatas; *prasāritaḥ* – cast; *sṛṣṭi* – of Your creation; *vivṛddhaye* – for the increase; *tvayā* – by You; *sva-māyayā* – through Your illusory energy; *hi* – indeed; *ātma* – of the soul; *su-bodha* – of proper knowledge; *hetinā* – by the sword.

TRANSLATION

The firmly binding rope of my affection for the families of the Dāśārhas, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas and Sātvatas – a rope You originally cast over me by Your illusory energy for the purpose of developing Your creation – is now cut off by the weapon of transcendental knowledge of the self.

PURPORT

Although the members of the families mentioned in this verse are eternal associates of Lord Kṛṣṇa and thus proper objects of affection, Śrī Uddhava had regarded them as his personal relatives rather than simply as pure

devotees of the Lord. Influenced by the Lord's illusory potency, Uddhava had desired the prosperity and victory of these dynasties. But now, by hearing Lord Kṛṣṇa's instructions, he has again fixed his mind exclusively upon Lord Kṛṣṇa, and thus he regards his so-called family members without any mundane conception – as eternal servants of the Lord.

TEXT 29.40

*namo'stu te mahā-yogin
prapannam anuśādhi mām
yathā tvac-caraṇāmbhoje
ratiḥ syād anapāyinī*

namaḥ astu – let me offer my obeisances; *te* – unto You; *mahā-yogin* – O greatest of mystics; *prapannam* – who am surrendered; *anuśādhi* – please instruct; *mām* – me; *yathā* – how; *tvac* – Your; *caraṇa-ambhoje* – at the lotus feet; *ratiḥ* – transcendental attraction; *syāt* – may be; *anapāyinī* – undeviating.

TRANSLATION

Obeisances unto You, O greatest of yogīs. Please instruct me, who am surrendered unto You, how I may have undeviating attachment to Your lotus feet.

TEXTS 29.41-44

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
gacchoddhava mayādiṣṭo
badary-ākhyam mamāśramam
tatra mat-pāda-tīrthode
snānopasparśanaiḥ śuciḥ
īkṣayālananandāyā
vidhūtāśeṣa-kalmaṣaḥ
vasāno valkalāny aṅga
vanya-bhuk sukha-niḥsprhaḥ
titikṣur dvandva-mātrāṇām
suśīlaḥ saṁyatendriyaḥ
śāntaḥ samāhita-dhiyā
jñāna-vijñāna-saṁyutaḥ
matto'nuśikṣitaḥ yat te
viviktam anubhāvayan
mayy āveśita-vāk-citto
mad-dharma-nirato bhava
ativrajya gatīs tisro
mām eṣyasi tataḥ param*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *gaccha* – please go; *uddhava* – O Uddhava; *mayā* – by Me; *ādiṣṭaḥ* – ordered; *badarī-ākhyam* – named Badarikā; *mama* – My; *āśramam* – to the hermitage; *tatra* – there; *mat-pāda* – emanating from My feet; *tīrtha* – of the holy places; *ude* –

in the water; *snāna* – by bathing; *upasparśanaḥ* – and by touching for purification; *śuciḥ* – cleansed; *īkṣayā* – by glancing; *alakanandāyāḥ* – upon the river Gaṅgā; *vidhūta* – cleansed; *aśeṣa* – of all; *kalmaṣaḥ* – sinful reactions; *vasānaḥ* – wearing; *valkalāni* – bark; *aṅga* – My dear Uddhava; *vanya* – fruits, nuts, roots, etc., of the forest; *bhuk* – eating; *sukha* – happy; *niḥsprhaḥ* – and free from desire; *titikṣuḥ* – tolerant; *dvandva-mātrāṇām* – of all dualities; *su-śīlaḥ* – exhibiting saintly character; *saṁyata-indriyaḥ* – with controlled senses; *śāntaḥ* – peaceful; *samāhita* – perfectly concentrated; *dhiyā* – with intelligence; *jñāna* – with knowledge; *vijñāna* – and realization; *saṁyutaḥ* – endowed; *mattaḥ* – from Me; *anúśikṣitam* – learned; *yat* – that which; *te* – by you; *viviktam* – ascertained with discrimination; *anubhāvayan* – thoroughly meditating upon; *mayi* – in Me; *āveśita* – absorbed; *vāk* – your words; *cittaḥ* – and mind; *mat-dharma* – My transcendental qualities; *nirataḥ* – constantly endeavoring to realize; *bhava* – be thus situated; *ativrajya* – crossing beyond; *gatīḥ* – the destinations of material nature; *tisraḥ* – three; *mām* – unto Me; *eṣyasi* – you will come; *tataḥ param* – thereafter.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Uddhava, take My order and go to My āśrama called Badarikā. Purify yourself by both touching and also bathing in the holy waters there, which have emanated from My lotus feet. Rid yourself of all sinful reactions with the sight of the sacred Alakanandā River. Dress yourself in bark and eat whatever is naturally available in the forest. Thus you should remain content and free from desire, tolerant of all dualities, good-natured, self-controlled, peaceful and endowed with transcendental knowledge and realization. With fixed attention, meditate constantly upon these instructions I have imparted to you and assimilate their essence. Fix your words and thoughts upon Me, and always endeavor to increase your realization of My transcendental qualities. In this way you will cross beyond the destinations of the three modes of nature and finally come back to Me.

TEXT 29.45

śrī-śuka uvāca

*sa evam ukto hari-medhasoddhavaḥ
pradakṣiṇam tam pariśṛtya pādayoḥ
śiro nidhāyāśru-kalābhir ārdra-dhīr
nyaṣiñcad advandva-paro'py apakrame*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca – Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *saḥ* – he; *evam* – thus; *uktaḥ* – addressed; *hari-medhasā* – by the Supreme Lord, whose intelligence takes away the misery of material life; *uddhavaḥ* – Uddhava; *pradakṣiṇam* – facing with his right side; *tam* – Him; *pariśṛtya* – circumambulating; *pādayoḥ* – at the two feet; *śiraḥ* – his head; *nidhāya* – placing; *aśru-kalābhīḥ* – with the teardrops; *ārdra* – melted; *dhīḥ* – whose heart; *nyaṣiñcat* – he drenched;

advandva-paraḥ – uninvolved in material dualities; *api* – although; *apakrame* – at the time of leaving.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus addressed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose intelligence destroys all the suffering of material life, Śrī Uddhava circumambulated the Lord and then fell down, placing his head upon the Lord’s feet. Although Uddhava was free from the influence of all material dualities, his heart was breaking, and at this time of departure he drenched the Lord’s lotus feet with his tears.

TEXT 29.46

*su-dustyaja-sneha-viyoga-kātarō
na śaknuvaṁs taṁ parihātum āturaḥ
kṛcchraṁ yayau mūrdhani bhartṛ-pāduke
bibhran namaskṛtya yayau punaḥ punaḥ*

su-dustyaja – impossible to give up; *sneha* – (from Him) in whom he had reposed such affection; *viyoga* – because of separation; *kātarāḥ* – beside himself; *na śaknuvan* – being incapable; *taṁ* – Him; *parihātum* – to abandon; *āturaḥ* – overwhelmed; *kṛcchraṁ yayau* – he experienced great pain; *mūrdhani* – upon his head; *bhartṛ* – of his master; *pāduke* – the slippers; *bibhran* – carrying; *namaskṛtya* – bowing down to offer obeisances; *yayau* – he went away; *punaḥ punaḥ* – again and again.

TRANSLATION

Greatly fearing separation from Him for whom he felt such indestructible affection, Uddhava was distraught, and he could not give up the Lord’s company. Finally, feeling great pain, he bowed down to the Lord again and again, placed the slippers of his master upon his head, and departed.

PURPORT

According to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.4.5), while Uddhava was enroute to Badarikāśrama he heard about the Lord’s journey to Prabhāsa. Turning back and following Lord Kṛṣṇa from behind, he saw the Lord alone just after the withdrawal of the Yadu dynasty. After being again mercifully instructed by the Personality of Godhead (along with Maitreya, who had just arrived), Uddhava felt his knowledge of the truth reawaken, and then, by the order of the Lord, he went on his way.

TEXT 29.47

*tatas tam antar hṛdi sanniveśya
gato mahā-bhāgavato viśālām
yathopadiṣṭāṁ jagad-eka-bandhunā
tapaḥ samāsthāya harer agād gatim*

tataḥ – then; *tam* – Him; *antaḥ* – within; *hṛdi* – his mind; *sanniveśya* – placing; *gataḥ* – going; *mahā-bhāgavataḥ* – the great devotee; *viśālām* – to Badarikāśrama; *yathā* – as; *upadiṣṭāṁ* – described; *jagat* – of the universe;

eka – by the only; *bandhunā* – friend; *tapaḥ* – austerities; *samāsthāya* – properly executing; *hareḥ* – of the Supreme Lord; *agāt* – he attained; *gatim* – the destination.

TRANSLATION

Thereupon, placing the Lord deeply within his heart, the great devotee Uddhava went to Badarikāśrama. By engaging there in austerities, he attained to the Lord’s personal abode, which had been described to him by the only friend of the universe, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

PURPORT

Śrī Uddhava returned to Dvārakā in the spiritual sky, according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

TEXT 29.48

*ya etad ānanda-samudra-sambhṛtaṁ
jñānāmṛtaṁ bhāgavatāya bhāṣitam
kṛṣṇena yogeśvara-sevitāṅghriṇā
sat-śraddhayāsevya jagad vimucyate*

yaḥ – anyone who; *etat* – this; *ānanda* – of ecstasy; *samudra* – ocean; *sambhṛtaṁ* – collected; *jñāna* – of knowledge; *amṛtaṁ* – the nectar; *bhāgavatāya* – to His devotee; *bhāṣitam* – spoken; *kṛṣṇena* – by Kṛṣṇa; *yoga-īśvara* – by the masters of *yoga*; *sevita* – served; *āṅghriṇā* – whose lotus feet; *sat* – true; *śraddhayā* – with faith; *āsevya* – rendering service; *jagat* – the whole world; *vimucyate* – becomes liberated.

TRANSLATION

Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose lotus feet are served by all great yoga masters, spoke to His devotee this nectarean knowledge, which comprises the entire ocean of spiritual bliss. Anyone within this universe who receives this narration with great faith is assured of liberation.

TEXT 29.49

*bhava-bhayam apahantum jñāna-vijñāna-sāraṁ
nigama-kṛd upajahre bhṛṅga-vad veda-sāraṁ
amṛtam udadhitaś cāpāyayat bhṛtya-vargān
puruṣam ṛṣabham ādyam kṛṣṇa-samjñam nato’smi*

bhava – of material life; *bhayam* – the fear; *apahantum* – in order to take away; *jñāna-vijñāna* – of knowledge and self-realization; *sāraṁ* – the essence; *nigama* – of the *Vedas*; *kṛt* – the author; *upajahre* – delivered; *bhṛṅga-vat* – like a bee; *veda-sāraṁ* – the essential meaning of the *Vedas*; *amṛtam* – the nectar; *udadhitaḥ* – from the ocean; *ca* – and; *apāyayat* – made to drink; *bhṛtya-vargān* – His many devotees; *puruṣam* – to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ṛṣabham* – the greatest; *ādyam* – the first of all beings; *kṛṣṇa-samjñam* – named Lord Kṛṣṇa; *nataḥ* – bowed down; *asmi* – I am.

TRANSLATION

I offer my obeisances to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, the original and greatest of all beings, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is the author of the Vedas, and just to destroy His devotees' fear of material existence, like a bee He has collected this nectarean essence of all knowledge and self-realization. Thus He has awarded to His many devotees this nectar from the ocean of bliss, and by His mercy they have drunk it.

PURPORT

Just as a bee extracts nectar from a flower without harming the flower, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa extracts the essence of all Vedic knowledge without disturbing the elaborate system of Vedic advancement. In other words, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa establishes Himself as the goal of Vedic knowledge without destroying preliminary, inferior processes that may be applicable to grossly materialistic men. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī thus concludes by offering his obeisances to the spiritual master of the entire universe, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Twenty-ninth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled "Bhakti-yoga."

CHAPTER THIRTY

The Disappearance of the Yadu Dynasty

This chapter discusses the destruction of the Yadu dynasty in connection with the winding up of the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After Śrī Uddhava left for Badarikāśrama, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, taking note of many bad omens, advised the Yādavas to abandon Dvārakā and go to Prabhāsa, on the bank of the Sarasvatī, to perform *svasty-ayana* and other rituals for counteracting bad fortune. They followed His advice and went to Prabhāsa. There they became absorbed in festivity, and by the illusory power of Lord Kṛṣṇa they became intoxicated from drinking liquor. Thus losing their intelligence, they quarreled among themselves and began killing one another, until not a man was left alive.

Afterward, Śrī Baladeva went to the shore of the ocean and by the mystic strength of *yoga* gave up His body. Seeing the disappearance of Baladeva, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa sat down silently upon the ground. Then a hunter named Jarā, mistaking the sole of the Lord's left foot for a deer, pierced it with an arrow. The hunter immediately understood his mistake and, falling at the feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, begged to be punished. In reply Lord Kṛṣṇa told the hunter that what he had done was actually according to His own desire. The Lord then sent the hunter to Vaikuṅṭha.

When Dārūka, Kṛṣṇa's charioteer, arrived on the scene and saw Lord Kṛṣṇa in that condition, he began to lament. Kṛṣṇa told him that he should go to Dvārakā, inform the residents about the annihilation of the Yadu dynasty, and advise them all to leave Dvārakā for Indraprastha. Dārūka obediently carried out this order.

TEXT 30.1

śrī-rājovāca
tato mahā-bhāgavata
uddhave nirgate vanam
dvāravatyām kim akarod
bhagavān bhūta-bhāvanaḥ

śrī-rājā uvāca – the king said; *tataḥ* – then; *mahā-bhāgavate* – the great devotee; *uddhave* – Uddhava; *nirgate* – when he had gone; *vanam* – to the forest; *dvāravatyām* – in Dvārakā; *kim* – what; *akarot* – did; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhūta* – of all living beings; *bhāvanaḥ* – the protector.

TRANSLATION

King Parīkṣit said: After the great devotee Uddhava left for the forest, what did the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the protector of all living beings, do in the city of Dvārakā?

PURPORT

Parīkṣit Mahārāja now inquires from Śukadeva Gosvāmī about the topic of Chapter One of this canto, namely the annihilation of the Yadu dynasty and Lord Kṛṣṇa's return to the spiritual sky. Because Lord Kṛṣṇa was playing the part of an ordinary member of the Yadu dynasty, He appeared to react to the curse of the *brāhmaṇas* by giving up His earthly pastimes. Lord Kṛṣṇa cannot

actually be cursed by anyone. Nārada Muni and the other sages who cursed the Yadu dynasty are eternal devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa and could hardly curse Him. Therefore, in giving up His pastimes and leaving the earth with the Yadu dynasty, Lord Kṛṣṇa demonstrated His internal potency and personal will, since no one can challenge the supreme potency of the Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 30.2

*brahma-śāpopasaṁsṛṣṭe
sva-kule yādavarṣabhaḥ
preyasīm sarva-netrāṅām
tanuṁ sa katham atyajat*

brahma-śāpa - by the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*; *upasaṁsṛṣṭe* - having been destroyed; *sva-kule* - His own family; *yādava-ṛṣabhaḥ* - the chief of the Yadus; *preyasīm* - most dear; *sarva-netrāṅām* - to all eyes; *tanuṁ* - the body; *saḥ* - He; *katham* - how; *atyajat* - gave up.

TRANSLATION

After His own dynasty met destruction from the curse of the brāhmaṇas, how could the best of the Yadus give up His body, the dearest object of all eyes?

PURPORT

In relation to this verse, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that the Personality of Godhead never gives up His spiritual body, which is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge. The word *katham* therefore indicates “How is it possible?”, meaning it is not actually possible for Lord Kṛṣṇa to give up His eternal form, which is *preyasīm sarva-netrāṅām*, the most attractive object of pleasure for the eyes and all other senses.

TEXT 30.3

*pratyākraṣṭuṁ nayanam abalā yatra lagnaṁ na śekuḥ
karṇāviṣṭaṁ na sarati tato yat satām ātma-lagnaṁ
yac-chrīr vācām janayati ratim kim nu mānam kavīnām
drṣṭvā jiṣṇor yudhi ratha-gataṁ yac ca tat-sāmyam īyuh*

pratyākraṣṭuṁ - to withdraw; *nayanam* - their eyes; *abalāḥ* - the women; *yatra* - in which; *lagnaṁ* - attached; *na śekuḥ* - were not able; *karṇa* - the ears; *āviṣṭam* - having entered; *na sarati* - would not leave; *tataḥ* - thence; *yat* - which; *satām* - of the sages; *ātma* - in their hearts; *lagnaṁ* - attached; *yac* - of which; *śrīḥ* - the beauty; *vācām* - of the words; *janayati* - generates; *ratim* - special pleasurable attraction; *kim nu* - what to speak of; *mānam* - the reputation; *kavīnām* - of the poets; *drṣṭvā* - seeing; *jiṣṇor* - of Arjuna; *yudhi* - on the battlefield; *ratha-gataṁ* - on the chariot; *yac* - which; *ca* - and; *tat-sāmyam* - an equal status with Him; *īyuh* - they attained.

TRANSLATION

Once their eyes were fixed upon His transcendental form, women were unable to withdraw them, and once that form had entered the

ears of the sages and become fixed in their hearts, it would never depart. What to speak of acquiring fame, the great poets who described the beauty of the Lord's form would have their words invested with transcendently pleasing attraction. And by seeing that form on Arjuna's chariot, all the warriors on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained the liberation of gaining a spiritual body similar to the Lord's.

PURPORT

Transcendental, liberated personalities such as the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana and Rukmiṇī, the original goddess of fortune, were constantly meditating on the Lord's spiritual body. Great liberated sages (*satām*), having heard about Lord Kṛṣṇa's body, could not take it out of their hearts. The Lord's bodily beauty expanded the love and poetic output of great liberated poets, and simply by seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa's body, the warriors at Kurukṣetra achieved spiritual liberation with an eternal body similar to the Lord's. Therefore it is impossible to imagine Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal form of bliss to be in any way material. Those who imagine that Lord Kṛṣṇa gave up His eternal form are certainly bewildered by the Lord's illusory energy.

TEXT 30.4

*śrī ṛṣir uvāca
divi bhuvy antarikṣe ca
mahotpātān samutthitān
dṛṣṭvāsīnān su-dharmāyām
kṛṣṇaḥ prāha yadūn idam*

śrī-ṛṣiḥ uvāca - the sage (Śukadeva Gosvāmī) said; *divi* - in the sky; *bhuvi* - on the earth; *antarikṣe* - in outer space; *ca* - and; *mahā-utpātān* - great disturbances; *samutthitān* - which had appeared; *dṛṣṭvā* - seeing; *āsīnān* - who were seated; *su-dharmāyām* - in the legislative assembly called the Sudharmā; *kṛṣṇaḥ* - Lord Kṛṣṇa; *prāha* - spoke; *yadūn* - to the Yadus; *idam* - this.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Having observed many disturbing signs in the sky, on the earth and in outer space, Lord Kṛṣṇa addressed the Yadus assembled in the Sudharmā council hall as follows.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, the inauspicious sign in the sky was the appearance of a halo around the sun, on the earth there were small earthquakes, and in outer space there was an unnatural redness on the horizon. These and other, similar omens were impossible to counteract, because they were personally arranged by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXT 30.5

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
ete ghorā mahotpātā
dvārvatyām yama-ketavaḥ
muhūrtam api na stheyam
atra no yadu-puṅgavāḥ*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *ete* – these; *ghorāḥ* – fearful; *mahā* – great; *utpātāḥ* – inauspicious omens; *dvārvatyām* – in Dvārakā; *yama* – of the king of death; *ketavaḥ* – the flags; *muhūrtam* – a moment; *api* – even; *na stheyam* – should not remain; *atra* – here; *naḥ* – we; *yadu-puṅgavāḥ* – O best of the Yadus.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: O leaders of the Yadu dynasty, please note all these terrible omens that have appeared in Dvārakā just like the flags of death. We should not remain here a moment longer.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given a great amount of evidence from the Vedic literatures proving that the humanlike form of the Personality of Godhead and His holy name, abode, paraphernalia and associates are all eternal, spiritual manifestations without any tinge of material contamination. (See Appendix). In this regard the *ācārya* has further explained that because the living entities must suffer the reactions to their sinful activities, the Lord arranges for them to be punished during the Kali-yuga. In other words, it is not Lord Kṛṣṇa's desire that conditioned souls be sinful and suffer, but since they are already sinful, the Lord creates an appropriate age during which they can experience the bitter fruits of irreligiosity.

Since Lord Kṛṣṇa personally establishes religious principles in His various appearances in this material world, at the end of Dvāpara-yuga religion on the earth was overwhelmingly powerful. All the significant demons had been killed; the great sages, saints and devotees had been greatly encouraged, enlightened and fortified; and there was little scope for irreligion. Had Lord Kṛṣṇa ascended to the spiritual sky in His spiritual body before the eyes of the world, it would have been very difficult for Kali-yuga to flourish. Lord Kṛṣṇa left the world in exactly that way during His appearance as Rāmacandra, and hundreds of thousands of years later, hundreds of millions of pious persons still discuss this wonderful pastime of the Lord. To pave the way for Kali-yuga, however, Lord Kṛṣṇa left this world in a way that puzzles those who are not His staunch devotees.

The eternal form of the Lord is described throughout Vedic literature, and His eternal form constitutes the highest understanding of the Absolute Truth according to all great *ācāryas*, including Śaṅkarācārya and Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Yet although Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal, spiritual form is a realized fact for advanced devotees, for those who are weak in Kṛṣṇa consciousness the inconceivable pastimes and plan of the Lord are sometimes hard to appreciate properly.

TEXT 30.6

*striyo bālāś ca vṛddhāś ca
śaṅkhoddhāraṁ vrajantv itaḥ
vayaṁ prabhāsaṁ yāsyāmo
yatra pratyak sarasvatī*

striyaḥ – the women; *bālāḥ* – children; *ca* – and; *vṛddhāḥ* – old men; *ca* – and; *śaṅkha-uddhāram* – to the holy place called Śaṅkhoddhāra (about halfway between Dvārakā and Prabhāsa); *vrajantu* – they should go; *itaḥ* – from here; *vayam* – we; *prabhāsam* – to Prabhāsa; *yāsyāmaḥ* – shall go; *yatra* – where; *pratyak* – flowing west; *sarasvatī* – the river Sarasvatī.

TRANSLATION

The women, children and old men should leave this city and go to Śaṅkhoddhāra. We shall go to Prabhāsa-kṣetra, where the river Sarasvatī flows toward the west.

PURPORT

The word *vayam* here refers to the able-bodied male members of the Yadu dynasty.

TEXT 30.7

*tatrābhiścya śucaya
upoṣya su-samāhitāḥ
devatāḥ pūjayiṣyāmaḥ
snapanālepanārhaṇaiḥ*

tatra – there; *abhiścya* – taking bath; *śucayaḥ* – cleansed; *upoṣya* – fasting; *su-samāhitāḥ* – fixing our minds; *devatāḥ* – the demigods; *pūjayiṣyāmaḥ* – we shall worship; *snapana* – by bathing; *ālepana* – smearing with sandalwood; *arhaṇaiḥ* – and by various offerings.

TRANSLATION

There we should bathe for purification, fast, and fix our minds in meditation. We should then worship the demigods by bathing their images, anointing them with sandalwood pulp, and presenting them various offerings.

TEXT 30.8

*brāhmaṇāṁs tu mahā-bhāgān
kṛta-svastyayanā vayam
go-bhū-hiraṇya-vāsobhir
gajāśva-ratha-veśmabhiḥ*

brāhmaṇān – the *brāhmaṇas*; *tu* – and; *mahā-bhāgān* – greatly fortunate; *kṛta* – having performed; *svasti-ayanāḥ* – the ceremonies for good fortune; *vayam* – we; *go* – with cows; *bhū* – land; *hiraṇya* – gold; *vāsobhiḥ* – and

clothing; *gaja* – with elephants; *aśva* – horses; *ratha* – chariots; *veśmabhiḥ* – and houses.

TRANSLATION

After performing the expiatory rituals with the help of greatly fortunate brāhmaṇas, we will worship those brāhmaṇas by offering them cows, land, gold, clothing, elephants, horses, chariots and dwelling places.

TEXT 30.9

*vidhir eṣa hy ariṣṭa-ghno
maṅgalāyanam uttamam
deva-dvija-gavām pūjā
bhūteṣu paramo bhavaḥ*

vidhiḥ – the prescribed process; *eṣaḥ* – this; *hi* – indeed; *ariṣṭa* – inauspicious obstacles; *ghnaḥ* – which destroys; *maṅgala-ayanam* – which brings good fortune; *uttamam* – the best; *deva* – of the demigods; *dvija* – brāhmaṇas; *gavām* – and cows; *pūjā* – worship; *bhūteṣu* – among living beings; *paramaḥ* – excellent; *bhavaḥ* – rebirth.

TRANSLATION

This is indeed the appropriate process for counteracting our imminent adversity, and it is sure to bring about the highest good fortune. Such worship of the demigods, brāhmaṇas and cows can earn the highest birth for all living entities.

TEXT 30.10

*iti sarve samākarṇya
yadu-vṛddhā madhu-dviṣaḥ
tatheti naubhir uttīrya
prabhāsam prayayū rathaiḥ*

iti – thus; *sarve* – all of them; *samākarṇya* – hearing; *yadu-vṛddhāḥ* – the elders of the Yadu dynasty; *madhu-dviṣaḥ* – from Lord Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of the demon Madhu; *tathā* – so be it; *iti* – thus saying; *naubhiḥ* – by boats; *uttīrya* – crossing over (the ocean); *prabhāsam* – to Prabhāsa; *prayayūḥ* – they went; *rathaiḥ* – in chariots.

TRANSLATION

Having heard these words from Lord Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Madhu, the elders of the Yadu dynasty gave their assent, saying, “So be it.” After crossing over the ocean in boats, they proceeded on chariots to Prabhāsa.

TEXT 30.11

*tasmin bhagavatādiṣṭam
yadu-devena yādavāḥ
cakruḥ paramayā bhaktyā
sarva-śreyopabṛmhitam*

tasmin - there; *bhagavatā* - by the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ādiṣṭam* - what was instructed; *yadu-devena* - by the Lord of the Yadus; *yādavāḥ* - the Yadus; *cakruḥ* - performed; *paramayā* - with transcendental; *bhaktyā* - devotion; *sarva* - all; *śreyāḥ* - with auspicious rituals; *upabṛmhitam* - enriched.

TRANSLATION

There, with great devotion, the Yādavas performed the religious ceremonies according to the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, their personal Lord. They also performed various other auspicious rituals.

TEXT 30.12

*tatas tasmin mahā-pānaṁ
papur maireyakam madhu
diṣṭa-vibhramśita-dhiyo
yad-dravair bhraśyate matiḥ*

tataḥ - then; *tasmin* - there; *mahā* - a large amount; *pānam* - drink; *papuḥ* - they drank; *maireyakam* - called *maireya*; *madhu* - sweet-tasting; *diṣṭa* - by destiny; *vibhramśita* - having lost; *dhiyaḥ* - their intelligence; *yat* - of which beverage; *dravaiḥ* - by the liquid ingredients; *bhraśyate* - is disrupted; *matiḥ* - the mind.

TRANSLATION

Then, their intelligence covered by Providence, they liberally indulged in drinking the sweet maireya beverage, which can completely intoxicate the mind.

PURPORT

The word *diṣṭa* here indicates the desire of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the First Chapter of this canto, “The Curse upon the Yadu Dynasty,” this incident is elaborately explained.

TEXT 30.13

*mahā-pānābhimmattānām
vīraṇām dṛpta-cetasām
kṛṣṇa-māyā-vimūḍhānām
saṅgharṣaḥ su-mahān abhūt*

mahā-pāna - by the excessive drinking; *abhimmattānām* - who became intoxicated; *vīraṇām* - of the heroes; *dṛpta* - becoming arrogant; *cetasām* - their minds; *kṛṣṇa-māyā* - by the illusory energy of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vimūḍhānām* - who became bewildered; *saṅgharṣaḥ* - friction; *su-mahān* - very great; *abhūt* - arose.

TRANSLATION

The heroes of the Yadu dynasty became intoxicated from their extravagant drinking and began to feel arrogant. When they were thus bewildered by the personal potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa, a terrible quarrel arose among them.

TEXT 30.14

*yuyudhuḥ krodha-saṁrabdhā
velāyām ātatāyinaḥ
dhanurbhir asibhir bhallair
gadābhis tomararṣṭibhiḥ*

yuyudhuḥ – they fought; *krodha* – with anger; *saṁrabdhāḥ* – thoroughly agitated; *velāyām* – on the shore; *ātatāyinaḥ* – bearing weapons; *dhanurbhiḥ* – with bows; *asibhiḥ* – with swords; *bhallaiḥ* – with a peculiarly shaped arrow; *gadābhiḥ* – with clubs; *tomara* – with lances; *rṣṭibhiḥ* – and spears.

TRANSLATION

Infuriated, they seized their bows and arrows, swords, bhallas, clubs, lances and spears and attacked one another on the shore of the ocean.

TEXT 30.15

*patat-patākai ratha-kuñjarādibhiḥ
kharoṣṭra-gobhir mahiṣair narair api
mithaḥ sametyāśvataraiḥ su-durmadā
nyahan śarair dadbhir iva dvipā vane*

patat-patākaiḥ – with flags flying; *ratha* – on chariots; *kuñjara* – elephants; *ādibhiḥ* – and other carriers; *khara* – on asses; *uṣṭra* – camels; *gobhiḥ* – and bulls; *mahiṣaiḥ* – on buffalos; *naraiḥ* – on human beings; *api* – even; *mithaḥ* – together; *sametya* – meeting; *āśvataraiḥ* – and on mules; *su-durmadāḥ* – very much enraged; *nyahan* – they attacked; *śaraiḥ* – with arrows; *dadbhiḥ* – with their tusks; *iva* – as if; *dvipāḥ* – elephants; *vane* – in the forest.

TRANSLATION

Riding on elephants and chariots with flags flying, and also on donkeys, camels, bulls, buffalos, mules and even human beings, the extremely enraged warriors came together and violently attacked one another with arrows, just as elephants in the forest attack one another with their tusks.

TEXT 30.16

*pradyumna-sāmbau yudhi rūḍha-matsarāv
akrūra-bhojāv aniruddha-sātyakī
subhadra-saṅgrāmajitau su-dāruṇau
gadau sumitrā-surathau samīyatuḥ*

pradyumna-sāmbau – Pradyumna and Sāmba; *yudhi* – in the battle; *rūḍha* – aroused; *matsarau* – their enmity; *akrūra-bhojau* – Akrūra and Bhoja; *aniruddha-sātyakī* – Aniruddha and Sātyaki; *subhadra-saṅgrāmajitau* – Subhadra and Saṅgrāmajit; *su-dāruṇau* – ferocious; *gadau* – the two Gadas

(one the brother of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the other His son); *sumitrā-surathau* – Sumitra and Suratha; *samīyatuḥ* – met together.

TRANSLATION

Their mutual enmity aroused, Pradyumna fought fiercely against Sāmba, Akrūra against Kuntibhoja, Aniruddha against Sātyaki, Subhadra against Saṅgrāmajit, Sumitra against Suratha, and the two Gadas against each other.

TEXT 30.17

*anye ca ye vai niśaṭholmukādayaḥ
sahasrajic-chatajid-bhānu-mukhyāḥ
anyonyam āsādya madāndha-kāritā
jaghnur mukundena vimohitā bhṛśam*

anye – others; *ca* – and; *ye* – those who; *vai* – indeed; *niśaṭha-ulmaka-ādayaḥ* – Niśaṭha, Ulmuka and so on; *sahasrajit-śatajit-bhānu-mukhyaḥ* – headed by Sahasrajit, Śatajit and Bhānu; *anyonyam* – each other; *āsādya* – meeting; *mada* – by intoxication; *andha-kāritāḥ* – blinded; *jaghnuḥ* – they killed; *mukundena* – by Lord Mukunda; *vimohitāḥ* – confused; *bhṛśam* – totally.

TRANSLATION

Others also, such as Niśaṭha, Ulmuka, Sahasrajit, Śatajit and Bhānu, confronted and killed one another, being blinded by intoxication and thus completely bewildered by Lord Mukunda Himself.

TEXT 30.18

*dāśārha-vṛṣṇy-andhaka-bhoja-sātvatā
madhv-arbudā māthura-śūrasenāḥ
visarjanāḥ kukurāḥ kuntayaś ca
mithas tu jaghnuḥ su-visṛjya sauhṛdam*

dāśārha-vṛṣṇi-andhaka-bhoja-sātvatāḥ – the Dāśārhas, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas, Bhojas and Sātvatas; *madhu-arbudāḥ* – the Madhus and Arbudas; *māthura-śūrasenāḥ* – the inhabitants of Mathurā and Śūrasena; *visarjanāḥ* – the Visarjanas; *kukurāḥ* – the Kukuras; *kuntayaḥ* – the Kuntis; *ca* – also; *mithaḥ* – each other; *tu* – and; *jaghnuḥ* – they killed; *su-visṛjya* – completely abandoning; *sauhṛdam* – their friendship.

TRANSLATION

Completely abandoning their natural friendship, the members of the various Yadu clans – the Dāśārhas, Vṛṣṇis and Andhakas, the Bhojas, Sātvatas, Madhus and Arbudas, the Māthuras, Śūrasenas, Visarjanas, Kukuras and Kuntis – all slaughtered one another.

TEXT 30.19

*putrā ayudhyan piṭṛbhir bhrātṛbhiś ca
svasṛīya-dauhitra-piṭṛvya-mātulaiḥ
mitrāṇi mitraiḥ suhṛdaḥ suhṛdbhir
jñātīms tv ahan jñātaya eva mūḍhāḥ*

putrāḥ – sons; *ayudhyan* – fought; *pitṛbhiḥ* – with their fathers; *bhrāṭṛbhiḥ* – with brothers; *ca* – and; *svasṛīya* – with the sons of sisters; *dauhitra* – the sons of daughters; *pitṛvya* – paternal uncles; *mātulaiḥ* – and maternal uncles; *mitrāṇi* – friends; *mitraiḥ* – with friends; *suhṛdaḥ* – well-wishers; *suhṛdbhiḥ* – with well-wishers; *jñātīn* – intimate relatives; *tu* – and; *ahan* – killed; *jñātayaḥ* – intimate relatives; *eva* – indeed; *mūḍhāḥ* – bewildered.

TRANSLATION

Thus bewildered, sons fought with fathers, brothers with brothers, nephews with paternal and maternal uncles, and grandsons with grandfathers. Friends fought with friends, and well-wishers with well-wishers. In this way intimate friends and relatives all killed one another.

TEXT 30.20

*śareṣu hīyamāneṣu
bhajyamāneṣu dhanvasu
śastreṣu kṣīyamāneṣu
muṣṭibhir jahrur erakāḥ*

śareṣu – the arrows; *hīyamāneṣu* – as they became depleted; *bhajyamāneṣu* – as they became broken; *dhanvasu* – the bows; *śastreṣu* – the missile weapons; *kṣīyamāneṣu* – as they were used up; *muṣṭibhiḥ* – with their fists; *jahruḥ* – they seized; *erakāḥ* – cane stalks.

TRANSLATION

When all their bows had been broken and their arrows and other missiles spent, they seized the tall stalks of cane with their bare hands.

TEXT 30.21

*tā vajra-kalpā hy abhavan
parighā muṣṭinā bhṛtāḥ
jaghnur dviṣas taiḥ kṛṣṇena
vāryamāṇās tu tam ca te*

tāḥ – those stalks; *vajra-kalpāḥ* – as strong as thunderbolts; *hi* – indeed; *abhavan* – became; *parighāḥ* – iron staffs; *muṣṭinā* – with their fists; *bhṛtāḥ* – held; *jaghnuḥ* – they attacked; *dviṣaḥ* – their enemies; *taiḥ* – with these; *kṛṣṇena* – by Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vāryamāṇāḥ* – being checked; *tu* – although; *tam* – Him; *ca* – as well; *te* – they.

TRANSLATION

As soon as they took these cane stalks in their fists, the stalks changed into iron rods as hard as thunderbolts. With these weapons the warriors began attacking one another again and again, and when Lord Kṛṣṇa tried to stop them they attacked Him as well.

TEXT 30.22

*pratyanīkaṃ manyamānā
balabhadraṃ ca mohitāḥ
hantum kṛta-dhiyo rājann
āpannā ātatāyinaḥ*

pratyanīkam - an enemy; *manyamānāḥ* - thinking; *balabhadram* - Lord Balarāma; *ca* - also; *mohitāḥ* - confused; *hantum* - to kill; *kṛta-dhiyaḥ* - having made up their minds; *rājan* - O King Parīkṣit; *āpannāḥ* - they set upon Him; *ātatāyinaḥ* - wielding weapons.

TRANSLATION

In their confused state, O King, they also mistook Lord Balarāma for an enemy. Weapons in hand, they ran toward Him with the intention of killing Him.

TEXT 30.23

*atha tāv api saṅkrudhāv
udyamya kuru-nandana
erakā-muṣṭi-parighau
carantau jaghnatur yudhi*

atha - then; *tau* - those two (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma); *api* - also; *saṅkrudhau* - greatly angered; *udyamya* - joining the fight; *kuru-nandana* - O favorite son of the Kurus; *erakā-muṣṭi* - the canes in their fists; *parighau* - using as clubs; *carantau* - moving about; *jaghnatur* - they began to kill; *yudhi* - in the battle.

TRANSLATION

O son of the Kurus, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then became very angry. Picking up cane stalks, They moved about within the battle and began to kill with these clubs.

TEXT 30.24

*brahma-śāpopasṛṣṭānām
kṛṣṇa-māyāvṛtātmanām
spardhā-krodhaḥ kṣayam ninye
vaiṇavo'gnir yathā vanam*

brahma-śāpa - by the curse of the *brāhmaṇas*; *upasṛṣṭānām* - who were overtaken; *kṛṣṇa-māyā* - by the illusory energy of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *āvṛta* - covered; *ātmanām* - of those whose minds; *spardhā* - arising from rivalry; *krodhaḥ* - the anger; *kṣayam* - to destruction; *ninye* - led; *vaiṇavaḥ* - of bamboo trees; *agniḥ* - a fire; *yathā* - as; *vanam* - the forest.

TRANSLATION

The violent anger of these warriors, who were overcome by the brāhmaṇas' curse and bewildered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency, now led them to their annihilation, just as a fire that starts in a bamboo grove destroys the entire forest.

TEXT 30.25

*evam̐ naṣṭeṣu sarveṣu
kuleṣu sveṣu keśavaḥ
avatārito bhuvo bhāra
iti mene'vaśeṣitaḥ*

evam - in this way; *naṣṭeṣu* - when they had been destroyed; *sarveṣu* - all; *kuleṣu* - the clans of the dynasty; *sveṣu* - His own; *keśavaḥ* - Lord Kṛṣṇa; *avatāritaḥ* - diminished; *bhuvaḥ* - of the earth; *bhāraḥ* - the burden; *iti* - thus; *mene* - He thought; *avaśeṣitaḥ* - remaining.

TRANSLATION

When all the members of His own dynasty were thus destroyed, Lord Kṛṣṇa thought to Himself that at last the burden of the earth had been removed.

TEXT 30.26

*rāmaḥ samudra-velāyām
yogam āsthāya pauruṣam
tatyāja lokam̐ mānuṣyam̐
saṁyojyātmānam ātmani*

rāmaḥ - Lord Balarāma; *samudra* - of the ocean; *velāyām* - on the shore; *yogam* - meditation; *āsthāya* - resorting to; *pauruṣam* - upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tatyāja* - He gave up; *lokam* - the world; *mānuṣyam* - human; *saṁyojya* - merging; *ātmānam* - Himself; *ātmani* - within Himself.

TRANSLATION

Lord Balarāma then sat down on the shore of the ocean and fixed Himself in meditation upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Merging Himself within Himself, He gave up this mortal world.

TEXT 30.27

*rāma-niryāṇam ālokya
bhagavān devakī-sutaḥ
niṣasāda dharopasthe
tuṣṇīm āsādya pippalam*

rāma-niryāṇam - the departure of Lord Balarāma; *ālokya* - observing; *bhagavān* - the Supreme Lord; *devakī-sutaḥ* - the son of Devakī; *niṣasāda* - sat down; *dharā-upasthe* - on the lap of the earth; *tuṣṇīm* - silently; *āsādya* - finding; *pippalam* - a *pippala* tree.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, having seen the departure of Lord Rāma, sat down silently on the ground under a nearby pippala tree.

TEXTS 30.28-32

*bibhrac catur-bhujam̐ rūpam̐
bhrājiṣṇu prabhayā svayā
diśo vitimirāḥ kurvan
vidhūma iva pāvakaḥ*

śrīvatsāṅkaṁ ghana-śyāmaṁ
 tapta-hāṭaka-varcasam
 kauśeyāmbara-yugmena
 parivītaṁ su-maṅgalam
 sundara-smīta-vaktrābjaṁ
 nīla-kuntala-maṅḍitam
 puṇḍarīkābhirāmākṣaṁ
 sphuraṇa makara-kuṇḍalam
 kaṭi-sūtra-brahma-sūtra-
 kirīṭa-kaṭakāṅgadaiḥ
 hāra-nūpura-mudrābhiḥ
 kaustubhena virājitam
 vana-mālā-parītāṅgaṁ
 mūrtimadbhir nijāyudhaiḥ
 kṛtvorau dakṣiṇe pādama
 āsīnaṁ paṅkajāruṇam

bibhrat – bearing; *catuḥ-bhujam* – with four arms; *rūpam* – His form; *bhrājīṣṇu* – brilliant; *prabhayā* – with its effulgence; *svayā* – own; *diśaḥ* – all the directions; *vitimirāḥ* – devoid of darkness; *kurvan* – making; *vidhūmaḥ* – without smoke; *iva* – as; *pāvakaḥ* – a fire; *śrīvatsa-aṅkam* – with the mark of Śrīvatsa; *ghana-śyāmam* – dark blue like the clouds; *tapta* – molten; *hāṭaka* – like gold; *varcasam* – His glowing effulgence; *kauśeya* – of silk; *ambara* – of garments; *yugmena* – a pair; *parivītam* – wearing; *su-maṅgalam* – all-auspicious; *sundara* – beautiful; *smīta* – with smiling; *vaktra* – His face; *abjam* – like a lotus; *nīla* – blue; *kuntala* – with locks of hair; *maṅḍitam* – (His head) adorned; *puṇḍarīka* – lotus; *abhirāma* – charming; *akṣam* – eyes; *sphurat* – trembling; *makara* – shaped like sharks; *kuṇḍalam* – His earrings; *kaṭi-sūtra* – with belt; *brahma-sūtra* – sacred thread; *kirīṭa* – helmet; *kaṭaka* – bracelets; *āṅgadaiḥ* – and arm ornaments; *hāra* – with necklaces; *nūpura* – ankle bells; *mudrābhiḥ* – and His royal symbols; *kaustubhena* – with the Kaustubha gem; *virājitam* – splendid; *vana-mālā* – by a flower garland; *parīta* – encircled; *aṅgam* – His limbs; *mūrti-madbhiḥ* – personified; *nija* – His own; *āyudhaiḥ* – and by the weapons; *kṛtvā* – placing; *urau* – on His thigh; *dakṣiṇe* – right; *pādama* – His foot; *āsīnam* – sitting; *paṅkaja* – like a lotus; *aruṇam* – reddish.

TRANSLATION

The Lord was exhibiting His brilliantly effulgent four-armed form, the radiance of which, just like a smokeless fire, dissipated the darkness in all directions. His complexion was the color of a dark blue cloud and His effulgence the color of molten gold, and His all-auspicious form bore the mark of Śrīvatsa. A beautiful smile graced His lotus face, locks of dark blue hair adorned His head, His lotus eyes were very attractive, and His shark-shaped earrings glittered. He wore a pair of silken garments, an ornamental belt, the sacred thread, bracelets and arm ornaments, along with a helmet, the

Kaustubha jewel, necklaces, anklets and other royal emblems. Encircling His body were flower garlands and His personal weapons in their embodied forms. As He sat He held His left foot, with its lotus-red sole, upon His right thigh.

TEXT 30.33

*muṣalāvaśeṣāyaḥ-khaṇḍa-
kṛteṣur lubdhako jarā
mṛgāsyākāraṁ tac-caraṇam
vivyādha mṛga-śaṅkayā*

muṣala – from the iron club; *avaśeṣa* – remaining; *ayaḥ* – of iron; *khaṇḍa* – with the fragment; *kṛta* – who had made; *iṣuḥ* – his arrow; *lubdhakaḥ* – the hunter; *jarā* – named Jarā; *mṛga* – of a deer; *āśya* – of the face; *ākāram* – having the form; *tac* – His; *caraṇam* – lotus foot; *vivyādha* – pierced; *mṛga-śaṅkayā* – thinking it to be a deer.

TRANSLATION

Just then a hunter named Jarā, who had approached the place, mistook the Lord’s foot for a deer’s face. Thinking he had found his prey, Jarā pierced the foot with his arrow, which he had fashioned from the remaining iron fragment of Sāmba’s club.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the statement that the arrow “pierced the Lord’s foot” expresses the point of view of the hunter, who thought he had struck a deer. In fact the arrow merely touched the Lord’s lotus foot and did not pierce it, since the Lord’s limbs are composed of eternity, knowledge and bliss. Otherwise, in the description of the next verse (that the hunter became fearful and fell down with his head upon the Lord’s feet), Śukadeva Gosvāmī would have stated that he extracted his arrow from the Lord’s foot.

TEXT 30.34

*catur-bhujaṁ taṁ puruṣam
dṛṣṭvā sa kṛta-kilbiṣaḥ
bhītaḥ papāta śirasā
pādayor asura-dviṣaḥ*

catur-bhujaṁ – four-armed; *taṁ* – that; *puruṣam* – personality; *dṛṣṭvā* – seeing; *saḥ* – he; *kṛta-kilbiṣaḥ* – having committed an offense; *bhītaḥ* – afraid; *papāta* – fell; *śirasā* – with his head; *pādayoḥ* – at the feet; *asura-dviṣaḥ* – of the Supreme Lord, the enemy of the demons.

TRANSLATION

Then, seeing that four-armed personality, the hunter became terrified of the offense he had committed, and he fell down, placing his head upon the feet of the enemy of the demons.

TEXT 30.35

*ajānatā kṛtam idam
pāpena madhusūdana
kṣantum arhasi pāpasya
uttamaḥśloka me'nagha*

ajānatā - who was acting without knowledge; *kṛtam* - has been done; *idam* - this; *pāpena* - by a sinful person; *madhusūdana* - O Madhusūdana; *kṣantum arhasi* - please forgive; *pāpasya* - of the sinful person; *uttamaḥśloka* - O glorious Lord; *me* - my; *anagha* - O sinless one.

TRANSLATION

Jarā said: O Lord Madhusūdana, I am a most sinful person. I have committed this act out of ignorance. O purest Lord, O Uttamaḥśloka, please forgive this sinner.

TEXT 30.36

*yasyānusmaraṇam nṛṇām
ajñāna-dhvānta-nāśanam
vadanti tasya te viṣṇo
mayāsādhu kṛtam prabho*

yasya - of whom; *anusmaraṇam* - the constant remembrance; *nṛṇām* - of all men; *ajñāna* - of ignorance; *dhvānta* - the darkness; *nāśanam* - that which destroys; *vadanti* - they say; *tasya* - toward Him; *te* - You; *viṣṇo* - O Lord Viṣṇu; *mayā* - by me; *asādhu* - wrongly; *kṛtam* - this has been done; *prabho* - O master.

TRANSLATION

O Lord Viṣṇu, the learned say that for any man, constant remembrance of You will destroy the darkness of ignorance. O master, I have wronged You!

TEXT 30.37

*tan māśu jahi vaikuṅṭha
pāpmānaṁ mṛga-lubdhakam
yathā punar ahaṁ tv evaṁ
na kuryām sad-atikramam*

tat - therefore; *mā* - me; *āśu* - quickly; *jahi* - please kill; *vaikuṅṭha* - O Lord of Vaikuṅṭha; *pāpmānam* - the sinful; *mṛga-lubdhakam* - hunter of deer; *yathā* - so that; *punaḥ* - again; *ahaṁ* - I; *tu* - indeed; *evaṁ* - thus; *na kuryām* - may not do; *sat* - against saintly persons; *atikramam* - transgression.

TRANSLATION

Therefore, O Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, please kill this sinful hunter of animals immediately so he may not again commit such offenses against saintly persons.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the fratricidal battle of the Yadu dynasty and the hunter's attack upon Lord Kṛṣṇa are clearly activities

of the Lord's internal potency for the purpose of fulfilling the Lord's pastime desires. According to the evidence, the quarrel among the members of the Yadu dynasty occurred at sunset; then the Lord sat down on the bank of the Sarasvatī River. It is stated that a hunter then arrived with the intention of killing a deer, but it is highly unlikely – when more than 560 million warriors had just been killed in a great uproarious battle and the place had been flooded with blood and strewn with corpses – that a simple hunter would somehow come along trying to kill a deer. Since deer are by nature fearful and timid, how could any deer possibly be on the scene of such a huge battle, and how could a hunter calmly go about his business in the midst of such carnage? Therefore, the withdrawal of the Yadu dynasty and Lord Kṛṣṇa's own disappearance from this earth were not material historical events; they were instead a display of the Lord's internal potency for the purpose of winding up His manifest pastimes on earth.

TEXT 30.38

*yasyātmā-yoga-racitaṁ na vidur viriñco
rudrādayo'sya tanayāḥ patayo girāṁ ye
tvan-māyayā pihita-dṛṣṭaya etad añjaḥ
kim tasya te vayam asad-gatayo grṇīmaḥ*

yasya – whose; *ātma-yoga* – by the personal mystic power; *racitam* – produced; *na viduḥ* – they do not understand; *viriñcaḥ* – Lord Brahmā; *rudrādayaḥ* – Śiva and others; *asya* – his; *tanayāḥ* – sons; *patayaḥ* – masters; *girāṁ* – of the words of the Vedas; *ye* – who are; *tvan-māyayā* – by Your illusory potency; *pihita* – covered; *dṛṣṭayaḥ* – whose vision; *etat* – of this; *añjaḥ* – directly; *kim* – what; *tasya* – of Him; *te* – of You; *vayam* – we; *asad* – impure; *gatayaḥ* – whose birth; *grṇīmaḥ* – shall say.

TRANSLATION

Neither Brahmā nor his sons, headed by Rudra, nor any of the great sages who are masters of the Vedic mantras can understand the function of Your mystic power. Because Your illusory potency has covered their sight, they remain ignorant of how Your mystic power works. Therefore, what can I, such a low-born person, possibly say?

TEXT 30.39

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
mā bhair jare tvam uttiṣṭha
kāma eṣa kṛto hi me
yāhi tvam mad-anujñātaḥ
svargaṁ su-kṛtinām padam*

śrī-bhagavān uvāca – the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; *mā bhair* – do not fear; *jare* – O Jarā; *tvam* – you; *uttiṣṭha* – please get up; *kāmaḥ* – the desire; *eṣaḥ* – this; *kṛtaḥ* – done; *hi* – indeed; *me* – My; *yāhi* – go; *tvam* – you; *mat-anujñātaḥ* – given permission by Me; *svargaṁ* – to the spiritual world; *su-kṛtinām* – of the pious; *padam* – the abode.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Jarā, do not fear. Please get up. What has been done is actually My own desire. With My permission, go now to the abode of the pious, the spiritual world.

TEXT 30.40

*ity ādiṣṭo bhagavatā
kṛṣṇenecchā-śarīriṇā
triḥ parikramya taṁ natvā
vimānena divaṁ yayau*

iti – thus; *ādiṣṭaḥ* – instructed; *bhagavatā* – by the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *kṛṣṇena* – by Lord Kṛṣṇa; *icchā-śarīriṇā* – whose transcendental body is manifested simply by His own will; *triḥ* – three times; *parikramya* – circumambulating; *taṁ* – to Him; *natvā* – bowing down; *vimānena* – by a celestial airplane; *divam* – into the sky; *yayau* – he went.

TRANSLATION

So instructed by the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, who assumes His transcendental body by His own will, the hunter circumambulated the Lord three times and bowed down to Him. Then the hunter departed in an airplane that had appeared just to carry him to the spiritual sky.

TEXT 30.41

*dārukaḥ kṛṣṇa-padavīm
anvicchann adhigamya tām
vāyum tulasikāmodam
āghrāyābhimukhaṁ yayau*

dārukaḥ – Dārūka, the chariot driver of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *kṛṣṇa* – of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *padavīm* – the trail; *anvicchann* – seeking out; *adhigamya* – coming upon; *tām* – it; *vāyum* – the air; *tulasikā-āmodam* – fragrant with the aroma of *tulasī* flowers; *āghrāya* – scenting; *abhimukham* – toward Him; *yayau* – he went.

TRANSLATION

At that time Dārūka was searching for his master, Kṛṣṇa. As he neared the place where the Lord was sitting, he perceived the aroma of tulasī flowers in the breeze and went in its direction.

TEXT 30.42

*taṁ tatra tigma-dyubhir āyudhair vṛtaṁ
hy aśvattha-mūle kṛta-ketanaṁ patim
sneha-plutātmā nipapāta pādayo
rathād avaplutya sa-bāṣpa-locanaḥ*

taṁ – Him; *tatra* – there; *tigma* – brilliant; *dyubhiḥ* – the effulgence of which; *āyudhaiḥ* – by His weapons; *vṛtaṁ* – surrounded; *hi* – indeed; *aśvattha* – of the banyan tree; *mūle* – at the base; *kṛta-ketanam* – resting; *patim* – his

master; *sneha* - with affection; *pluta* - overwhelmed; *ātmā* - his heart; *nipapāta* - he fell down; *pādayoḥ* - at His feet; *rathāt* - from the chariot; *avaplutya* - rushing down; *sa-bāṣpa* - filled with tears; *locanaḥ* - his eyes.

TRANSLATION

Upon seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa resting at the foot of a banyan tree, surrounded by His shining weapons, Dārūka could not control the affection he felt in his heart. His eyes filled with tears as he rushed down from the chariot and fell at the Lord's feet.

TEXT 30.43

*apaśyatas tvac-caraṇāmbujaṁ prabho
dṛṣṭiḥ praṇaṣṭā tamasi praviṣṭā
diśo na jāne na labhe ca śāntim
yathā niśāyām uḍupe praṇaṣṭe*

apaśyataḥ - of me, who am not seeing; *tvac* - Your; *caraṇa-ambujam* - lotus feet; *prabho* - O master; *dṛṣṭiḥ* - the power of vision; *praṇaṣṭā* - is destroyed; *tamasi* - into darkness; *praviṣṭā* - having entered; *diśaḥ* - the directions; *na jāne* - I do not know; *na labhe* - I cannot obtain; *ca* - and; *śāntim* - peace; *yathā* - just as; *niśāyām* - in the night; *uḍupe* - when the moon; *praṇaṣṭe* - has become new.

TRANSLATION

Dārūka said: Just as on a moonless night people are merged into darkness and cannot find their way, now that I have lost sight of Your lotus feet, my Lord, I have lost my vision and am wandering blindly in darkness. I cannot tell my direction, nor can I find any peace.

TEXT 30.44

*iti bruvati sūte vai
ratho garuḍa-lāñchanaḥ
kham utpapāta rājendra
sāśva-dhvaja udīkṣataḥ*

iti - thus; *bruvati* - while he was speaking; *sūte* - the chariot driver; *vai* - indeed; *rathaḥ* - the chariot; *garuḍa-lāñchanaḥ* - marked with the flag of Garuḍa; *kham* - into the sky; *utpapāta* - arose; *rāja-indra* - O king of kings (Parīkṣit); *sa-aśva* - along with the horses; *dhvajaḥ* - and flag; *udīkṣataḥ* - as he looked up, watching.

TRANSLATION

[Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued:] O foremost of kings, while the chariot driver was still speaking, before his very eyes the Lord's chariot rose up into the sky along with its horses and its flag, which was marked with the emblem of Garuḍa.

TEXT 30.45

*tam anvagacchan divyāni
viṣṇu-praharaṇāni ca
tenāti-vismitātmānaṁ
sūtam āha janārdanaḥ*

tam – that chariot; *anvagacchan* – they followed; *divyāni* – divine; *viṣṇu* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *praharaṇāni* – the weapons; *ca* – and; *tena* – by that occurrence; *ati-vismita* – astonished; *ātmānam* – his mind; *sūtam* – to the driver; *āha* – spoke; *janārdanaḥ* – Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

TRANSLATION

All the divine weapons of Viṣṇu rose up and followed the chariot. The Lord, Janārdana, then spoke to His chariot driver, who was most astonished to see all this.

TEXT 30.46

*gaccha dvāravatīm sūta
jñātīnām nidhanaṁ mithaḥ
saṅkarṣaṇasya niryāṇam
bandhubhyo brūhi mad-daśām*

gaccha – just go; *dvāravatīm* – to Dvārakā; *sūta* – O chariot driver; *jñātīnām* – of their close relatives; *nidhanam* – the destruction; *mithaḥ* – mutual; *saṅkarṣaṇasya* – of Lord Balarāma; *niryāṇam* – the passing away; *bandhubhyaḥ* – to Our family members; *brūhi* – speak; *mat-daśām* – My condition.

TRANSLATION

O driver, go to Dvārakā and tell Our family members how their loved ones destroyed one another. Also tell them of the disappearance of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa and of My present condition.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa sent His chariot driverless back to Vaikuṅṭha, along with the horses and weapons, because the chariot driver, Dāruka, had some final service to do on earth.

TEXT 30.47

*dvārakāyām ca na stheyam
bhavadbhiś ca sva-bandhubhiḥ
mayā tyaktām yadu-purīm
samudraḥ plāvayiṣyati*

dvārakāyām – in Dvārakā; *ca* – and; *na stheyam* – should not remain; *bhavadbhiḥ* – you; *ca* – and; *sva-bandhubhiḥ* – along with your relatives; *mayā* – by Me; *tyaktām* – abandoned; *yadu-purīm* – the capital of the Yadus; *samudraḥ* – the ocean; *plāvayiṣyati* – will drown.

TRANSLATION

You and your relatives should not remain in Dvārakā, the capital of the Yadus, because once I have abandoned that city it will be inundated by the ocean.

TEXT 30.48

*svaṁ svaṁ parigrahaṁ sarve
ādāya pitarau ca naḥ
arjunenāvitāḥ sarva
indraprasthaṁ gamiṣyatha*

svam svam – each his own; *parigraham* – family; *sarve* – all of them; *ādāya* – taking; *pitarau* – parents; *ca* – and; *naḥ* – Our; *arjunena* – by Arjuna; *avitāḥ* – protected; *sarve* – all; *indraprastham* – to Indraprastha; *gamiṣyatha* – you should go.

TRANSLATION

You should all take your own families, together with My parents, and under Arjuna’s protection go to Indraprastha.

TEXT 30.49

*tvam tu mad-dharmam āsthāya
jñāna-niṣṭha upekṣakaḥ
man-māyā-racitām etām
vijñāyopaśamaṁ vraja*

tvam – you; *tu* – however; *mat-dharmam* – in My devotional service; *āsthāya* – remaining firm; *jñāna-niṣṭhaḥ* – fixed in knowledge; *upekṣakaḥ* – indifferent; *mat-māyā* – by My illusory energy; *racitām* – created; *etām* – this; *vijñāya* – understanding; *upaśamaṁ* – cessation from agitation; *vraja* – obtain.

TRANSLATION

You, Dāruka, should be firmly situated in devotion to Me, remaining fixed in spiritual knowledge and unattached to material considerations. Understanding these pastimes to be a display of My illusory potency, you should remain peaceful.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the word *tu* here emphasizes that Dāruka is an eternally liberated associate of Lord Kṛṣṇa, having descended from Vaikuṅṭha. Therefore, even though others might be bewildered by the Lord’s pastimes, Dāruka should remain peaceful and fixed in spiritual knowledge.

TEXT 30.50

*ity uktas taṁ parikramya
namaskṛtya punaḥ punaḥ
tat-pādaḥ śīrṣṇy upādhāya
durmanāḥ prayayau purīm*

iti – thus; *uktaḥ* – spoken to; *taṁ* – Him; *parikramya* – circumambulating; *namaḥ-kṛtya* – offering obeisances; *punaḥ punaḥ* – again and again; *tat-*

pādau – His lotus feet; *śīrṣṇi* – upon his head; *upādhāya* – placing; *durmanāḥ* – unhappy in his mind; *prayayau* – he went; *purīm* – to the city.

TRANSLATION

Thus ordered, Dārūka circumambulated the Lord and offered obeisances to Him again and again. He placed Lord Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet upon his head and then with a sad heart went back to the city.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Thirtieth Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Disappearance of the Yadu Dynasty.”

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

The Disappearance of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa

This chapter describes the return of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to His own abode, along with all the Yadus.

Upon learning from Dārūka that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa had returned to His abode, Vasudeva and all the others remaining in Dvārakā became very much agitated by lamentation and went out from the city to find Him. All the demigods who, in pursuance of the desire of Lord Kṛṣṇa, had taken birth in the Yadu dynasty to render assistance in His pastimes followed Lord Kṛṣṇa and returned to their respective abodes. The Lord's activities of creating a life for Himself and then dismantling it are simply tricks of Māyā, like an actor's performance. Actually, He creates the entire universe, and then He enters within it as the Supersoul. In the end, He again winds up the entire universe within Himself and, remaining in His private glory, desists from external pastimes.

Though overcome by feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna was nevertheless able to pacify himself by remembering all the various instructions given to him by the Lord. Arjuna then carried out the rituals of offering *piṇḍa* and so on for his dead relatives. At that time the ocean swallowed up all of Dvārakā-purī except for the Lord's own residence. Arjuna took the remaining members of the Yadu dynasty to Indraprastha, where he installed Vajra upon the throne. Hearing of these events, the Pāṇḍavas, led by Yudhiṣṭhira, placed Parīkṣit upon their throne and left for the great journey.

TEXT 31.1

*śrī-śuka uvāca
atha tatrāgamat brahmā
bhavānyā ca samam bhavaḥ
mahendra-pramukhā devā
munayaḥ sa-prajeśvarāḥ*

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca - Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; *atha* - then; *tatra* - there; *āgamat* - came; *brahmā* - Lord Brahmā; *bhavānyā* - his consort, Bhavānī; *ca* - and; *samam* - along with; *bhavaḥ* - Lord Śiva; *mahā-indra-pramukhāḥ* - led by Lord Indra; *devāḥ* - the demigods; *munayaḥ* - the sages; *sa* - with; *prajā-īśvarāḥ* - the progenitors of the universe's population.

TRANSLATION

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Then Lord Brahmā arrived at Prabhāsa along with Lord Śiva and his consort, the sages, the Prajāpatis and all the demigods, headed by Indra.

TEXTS 31.2-3

*pitarāḥ siddha-gandharvā
vidyādhara-mahoragāḥ
cāraṇā yakṣa-rakṣāṁsi
kinnarāpsaraso dvijāḥ*

*draṣṭu-kāmā bhagavato
niryāṇam paramotsukāḥ
gāyantaś ca gr̥ṇantaś ca
śaureḥ karmāṇi janma ca*

pītarāḥ – the forefathers; *siddha-gandharvāḥ* – the Siddhas and Gandharvas; *vidyādhara-mahā-uragāḥ* – the Vidyādharas and the great serpents; *cāraṇāḥ* – the Cāraṇas; *yakṣa-rakṣāṁsi* – the Yakṣas and Rākṣasas; *kinnara-apsarasaḥ* – the Kinnaras and Apsarās; *dvijāḥ* – the great birds; *draṣṭu-kāmāḥ* – desirous of seeing; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *niryāṇam* – the passing away; *parama-utsukāḥ* – very eager; *gāyantaḥ* – chanting; *ca* – and; *gr̥ṇantaḥ* – praising; *ca* – and; *śaureḥ* – of Lord Śauri (Kṛṣṇa); *karmāṇi* – the activities; *janma* – the birth; *ca* – and.

TRANSLATION

The forefathers, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas and great serpents also came, along with the Cāraṇas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Kinnaras, Apsarās and relatives of Garuḍa, greatly eager to witness the departure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As they were coming, all these personalities variously chanted and glorified the birth and activities of Lord Śauri [Kṛṣṇa].

TEXT 31.4

*vavṛṣuḥ puṣpa-varṣāṇi
vimānāvalibhir nabhaḥ
kurvantaḥ saṅkulaṁ rājan
bhaktyā paramayā yutāḥ*

vavṛṣuḥ – they showered; *puṣpa-varṣāṇi* – showers of flowers; *vimāna* – of airplanes; *āvalibhiḥ* – by great numbers; *nabhaḥ* – the sky; *kurvantaḥ* – making; *saṅkulaṁ* – filled up; *rājan* – O King Parīkṣit; *bhaktyā* – with devotion; *paramayā* – transcendental; *yutāḥ* – endowed.

TRANSLATION

O King, crowding the sky with their many airplanes, they showered down flowers with great devotion.

TEXT 31.5

*bhagavān pitāmahaṁ vīkṣya
vibhūtīr ātmano vibhuḥ
saṁyojyātmani cātmānaṁ
padma-netre nyamīlayat*

bhagavān – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pitāmahaṁ* – Lord Brahmā; *vīkṣya* – seeing; *vibhūtīḥ* – the powerful expansions, the demigods; *ātmanaḥ* – His own; *vibhuḥ* – the Almighty Lord; *saṁyojya* – fixing; *ātmani* – in Himself; *ca* – and; *ātmānaṁ* – His consciousness; *padma-netre* – His lotus eyes; *nyamīlayat* – closed.

TRANSLATION

Seeing before Him Brahmā, the grandfather of the universe, along with the other demigods, who are all His personal and powerful expansions, the Almighty Lord closed His lotus eyes, fixing His mind within Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, Lord Kṛṣṇa had previously answered the prayers of Lord Brahmā and the other demigods, who had requested the Lord to descend within this universe for the protection of His servants, the demigods. Now the demigods arrived before the Lord, each one desiring to take the Lord to his own planet. To avoid these innumerable social obligations, the Lord closed His eyes as if absorbed in *samādhi*.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī adds that Lord Kṛṣṇa closed His eyes to instruct the *yogīs* how to leave this mortal world without attachment to one's mystic opulences. All the demigods, including Brahmā, are mystic expansions of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and yet the Lord closed His eyes to emphasize that one should fix one's mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead when departing from this world.

TEXT 31.6

*lokābhirāmām sva-tanum
dhāraṇā-dhyāna-maṅgalam
yoga-dhāraṇayāgneyyā-
dagdhvā dhāmāviśat svakam*

loka – to all the worlds; *abhirāmām* – most attractive; *sva-tanum* – His own transcendental body; *dhāraṇā* – of all trance; *dhyāna* – and meditation; *maṅgalam* – the auspicious object; *yoga-dhāraṇayā* – by mystic trance; *āgneyyā* – focused on fire; *adagdhvā* – without burning; *dhāma* – the abode; *āviśat* – He entered; *svakam* – His own.

TRANSLATION

Without employing the mystic āgneyī meditation to burn up His transcendental body, which is the all-attractive resting place of all the worlds and the object of all contemplation and meditation, Lord Kṛṣṇa entered into His own abode.

PURPORT

A *yogī* empowered to select the moment of leaving his body can cause it to burst into flames by engaging in the yogic meditation called *āgneyī*, and thus he passes into his next life. The demigods similarly employ this mystic fire when being transferred to the spiritual world. But the Supreme Personality of Godhead is completely different from conditioned souls like *yogīs* and demigods, since the Lord's eternal, spiritual body is the source of all existence, as indicated here by the words *lokābhirāmām sva-tanum*. Lord Kṛṣṇa's body is the source of pleasure for the entire universe. The word *dhāraṇā-dhyāna-maṅgalam* indicates that those trying for spiritual elevation through meditation and *yoga* achieve all auspiciousness through meditation

on the Lord's body. Since *yogīs* are liberated simply by thinking of Lord Kṛṣṇa's body, that body is certainly not material and therefore not subject to burning by mundane mystic fire or any other type of fire.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura reminds us of Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement in the Eleventh Canto, Chapter Fourteen, verse 37: *vahni-madhye smared rūpaṁ mamaitad dhyāna-maṅgalam*. "Within the fire one should meditate upon My form, which is the auspicious object of all meditation." Since Lord Kṛṣṇa's transcendental form is present within fire as the maintaining principle, how can fire affect that form? Thus although the Lord appeared to enter the mystic *yoga* trance, the word *adagdhvā* indicates that the Lord, since His body is purely spiritual, bypassed the formality of burning and directly entered His own abode in the spiritual sky. This point has also been elaborately explained by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī in his commentary to this verse.

TEXT 31.7

*divi dundubhayo neduḥ
petuḥ sumanasaś ca khāt
satyaṁ dharmo dhṛtir bhūmeḥ
kīrtiḥ śrīś cānu tam yayuḥ*

divi – in heaven; *dundubhayaḥ* – kettledrums; *neduḥ* – sounded; *petuḥ* – fell; *sumanasaḥ* – flowers; *ca* – and; *khāt* – from the sky; *satyam* – Truth; *dharmah* – Religion; *dhṛtiḥ* – Faithfulness; *bhūmeḥ* – from the earth; *kīrtiḥ* – Fame; *śrīḥ* – Beauty; *ca* – and; *anu* – following; *tam* – Him; *yayuḥ* – they went.

TRANSLATION

As soon as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa left the earth, Truth, Religion, Faithfulness, Glory and Beauty immediately followed Him. Kettledrums resounded in the heavens and flowers showered from the sky.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, all the demigods were jubilant because each one thought Lord Kṛṣṇa was coming to his own planet.

TEXT 31.8

*devādayo brahma-mukhyā
na viśantam sva-dhāmani
avijñāta-gatiṁ kṛṣṇam
dadṛśuś cāti-vismitāḥ*

deva-ādayaḥ – the demigods and others; *brahma-mukhyāḥ* – headed by Brahmā; *na* – not; *viśantam* – entering; *sva-dhāmani* – His own abode; *avijñāta* – unknown; *gatiṁ* – His movements; *kṛṣṇam* – Lord Kṛṣṇa; *dadṛśuḥ* – they saw; *ca* – and; *ati-vismitāḥ* – very amazed.

TRANSLATION

Most of the demigods and other higher beings led by Brahmā could not see Lord Kṛṣṇa as He was entering His own abode, since He did

not reveal His movements. But some of them did catch sight of Him, and they were extremely amazed.

TEXT 31.9

*saudāmanyā yathākāśe
yāntyā hitvābhra-maṇḍalam
gatiḥ na lakṣyate martyaiḥ
tathā kṛṣṇasya daivataiḥ*

saudāmanyāḥ – of lightning; *yathā* – just as; *ākāśe* – in the sky; *yāntyāḥ* – which is traveling; *hitvā* – having left; *abhra-maṇḍalam* – the clouds; *gatiḥ* – the movement; *na lakṣyate* – cannot be ascertained; *martyaiḥ* – by mortals; *tathā* – similarly; *kṛṣṇasya* – of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *daivataiḥ* – by the demigods.

TRANSLATION

Just as ordinary men cannot ascertain the path of a lightning bolt as it leaves a cloud, the demigods could not trace out the movements of Lord Kṛṣṇa as He returned to His abode.

PURPORT

The sudden movements of a lightning bolt are seen by the demigods but not by human beings. Similarly, the sudden departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa could be understood by the Lord's intimate associates in the spiritual sky but not by the demigods.

TEXT 31.10

*brahma-rudrādayas te tu
dṛṣṭvā yoga-gatiḥ hareḥ
vismitās tāṁ praśaṁsantaḥ
svaṁ svaṁ lokam yayuḥ tadā*

brahma-rudra-ādayaḥ – Brahmā, Rudra and others; *te* – they; *tu* – but; *dṛṣṭvā* – seeing; *yoga-gatiḥ* – the mystic power; *hareḥ* – of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vismitāḥ* – astonished; *tāṁ* – that power; *praśaṁsantaḥ* – glorifying; *svaṁ svaṁ* – each to his own; *lokam* – world; *yayuḥ* – went; *tadā* – then.

TRANSLATION

A few of the demigods, however - notably Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva - could ascertain how the Lord's mystic power was working, and thus they became astonished. All the demigods praised the Lord's mystic power and then returned to their own planets.

PURPORT

Although the demigods are virtually omniscient within this universe, they could not understand the movements of Lord Kṛṣṇa's mystic potency. Thus they were astonished.

TEXT 31.11

*rājan parasya tanu-bhṛj-jananāpyayehā
māyā-vidambanam avehi yathā naṭasya*

*sṛṣṭvātmanedam anuviśya vihr̥tya cānte
sambhṛtya cātma-mahinoparataḥ sa āste*

rājan – O King Parīkṣit; *parasya* – of the Supreme; *tanu-bhṛt* – resembling the embodied living beings; *janana* – of birth; *apyaya* – and disappearance; *ihāḥ* – the activities; *māyā* – of His illusory potency; *viḍambanam* – the false show; *avehi* – you should understand; *yathā* – just as; *naṭasya* – of an actor; *sṛṣṭvā* – creating; *ātmanā* – by Himself; *idam* – this universe; *anuviśya* – entering it; *vihr̥tya* – playing; *ca* – and; *ante* – in the end; *sambhṛtya* – winding it up; *ca* – and; *ātma-mahinā* – with His own glory; *uparataḥ* – having ceased; *saḥ* – He; *āste* – remains.

TRANSLATION

My dear King, you should understand that the Supreme Lord’s appearance and disappearance, which resemble those of embodied conditioned souls, are actually a show enacted by His illusory energy, just like the performance of an actor. After creating this universe He enters into it, plays within it for some time, and at last winds it up. Then the Lord remains situated in His own transcendental glory, having ceased from the functions of cosmic manifestation.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, the so-called fight among the members of the Yadu dynasty was actually a display of the pastime potency of the Lord, since Lord Kṛṣṇa’s personal associates are never subject to ordinary birth and death like conditioned souls. This being the case, certainly the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself is transcendental to material birth and death, as clearly stated in this verse.

The word *naṭasya*, “of an actor or magician,” is significant here. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura tells the following story of a certain magician who exhibits the trick of dying:

“In front of a great king, a magician approaches a stack of valuable garments, jewels, coins and so forth, all placed there by the king. Taking a jeweled necklace, the magician tells the king, ‘Now I am taking this necklace, and you can’t have it,’ and he makes the necklace disappear. ‘Now I’m taking this gold coin, and you can’t have it,’ he says, and makes the gold coin disappear. Next, challenging the king in the same way, the magician makes seven thousand horses disappear. Then the magician creates the illusion that the king’s children, grandchildren, brothers and other family members have attacked each other and that nearly all are dead from the violent quarrel. The king hears the magician speaking and at the same time observes these things taking place before him as he sits in the great assembly hall.

“Then the magician says, ‘O King, I no longer wish to live. Just as I have studied magic, so also, by the mercy of the lotus feet of my *guru*, I have learned the mystic meditation of *yoga*. One is supposed to give up one’s body while meditating in a holy place, and since you have performed so

many pious activities, you are a holy place yourself. Therefore I shall now give up my body.'

"Thus speaking, the magician sits down in the proper *yoga* posture, fixes himself in *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*, and becomes silent. A moment later, a fire generated from his trance blazes forth out of his body and burns it to ashes. Then all the wives of the magician, distraught with lamentation, enter into that fire.

"Three or four days later, after the magician has returned to his own province, he sends one of his daughters to the king. The daughter tells him, 'O King, I have just come to your palace, bringing along with me, invisibly, all your sons, grandsons and brothers in good health - along with all the jewels and other items given by you. Please, therefore, give me whatever you consider fitting remuneration for the wisdom of the magic that has been exhibited before you.' In this way, even by ordinary magic one can simulate birth and death."

It is not difficult to understand, therefore, that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although transcendental to the laws of nature, exhibits His illusory potency so that ordinary fools will think the Lord has left His body like a human being. Actually, Lord Kṛṣṇa returned to His abode in His own eternal body, as confirmed throughout the Vedic literature.

TEXT 31.12

*martyena yo guru-sutaṁ yama-loka-nītaṁ
tvāṁ cānayac charaṇa-daḥ paramāstra-dagdham
jigye'ntakāntakam apīśam asāv anīśaḥ
kiṁ svāvane svar anayan mṛgayuṁ sa-deham*

martyena - in the same human body; *yaḥ* - who; *guru-sutam* - the son of His spiritual master; *yama-loka* - to the planet of Yamarāja; *nītam* - brought; *tvāṁ* - you; *ca* - and; *ānayac* - brought back; *śaraṇa-daḥ* - the giver of shelter; *parama-asthra* - by the supreme weapon, the *brahmāstra*; *dagdham* - burned; *jigye* - He conquered; *antaka* - of the agents of death; *antakam* - who is the death; *api* - even; *īśam* - Lord Śiva; *asau* - He, Kṛṣṇa; *anīśaḥ* - incapable; *kim* - whether; *sva* - of Himself; *avane* - in the protection; *svaḥ* - to the spiritual world; *anayat* - brought; *mṛgayum* - the hunter; *sa-deham* - in the same body.

TRANSLATION

Lord Kṛṣṇa brought the son of His guru back from the planet of the lord of death in the boy's selfsame body, and as the ultimate giver of protection He saved you also when you were burned by the brahmāstra of Aśvatthāmā. He conquered in battle even Lord Śiva, who deals death to the agents of death, and He sent the hunter Jarā directly to Vaikuṅṭha in his human body. How could such a personality be unable to protect His own Self?

PURPORT

To mitigate his own and Parīkṣit Mahārāja's distress at the narration of Lord Kṛṣṇa's departure from this world, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī here gives several clear examples proving that Lord Kṛṣṇa is far beyond the influence of death. Although the son of Lord Kṛṣṇa's spiritual master (Sāndīpani Muni) had been taken by death, the Lord brought him back in his same body. Similarly, the power of Brahman cannot touch Lord Kṛṣṇa, since Parīkṣit Mahārāja, though burned by the *brahmāstra* weapon, was easily saved by the Lord. Lord Śiva was clearly defeated by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the battle with Bāṇāsura, and the hunter Jarā was sent to a Vaikuṅṭha planet in his same human body. Death is an insignificant expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa's external potency and cannot possibly act upon the Lord Himself. Those who actually understand the transcendental nature of Lord Kṛṣṇa's activities will find convincing evidence in these examples.

TEXT 31.13

*tathāpy aśeṣa-sthiti-sambhavāpyayeṣv
ananya-hetur yad aśeṣa-śakti-dhṛk
naicchat praṇetum vapur atra śeṣitam
martyena kim sva-stha-gatiṁ pradarsayan*

tathā api – nevertheless; *aśeṣa* – of all created beings; *sthiti* – in the maintenance; *sambhava* – creation; *apyayeṣu* – and annihilation; *ananya-hetuḥ* – the exclusive cause; *yat* – because; *aśeṣa* – unlimited; *śakti* – potencies; *dhṛk* – possessing; *na icchat* – He did not desire; *praṇetum* – to keep; *vapuḥ* – His transcendental body; *atra* – here; *śeṣitam* – remaining; *martyena* – with this mortal world; *kim* – what use; *sva-stha* – of those who are fixed in Him; *gatiṁ* – the destination; *pradarsayan* – showing.

TRANSLATION

Although Lord Kṛṣṇa, being the possessor of infinite powers, is the only cause of the creation, maintenance and destruction of innumerable living beings, He simply did not desire to keep His body in this world any longer. Thus He revealed the destination of those fixed in the self and demonstrated that this mortal world is of no intrinsic value.

PURPORT

Although Lord Kṛṣṇa descended to this world to save the fallen souls, He did not want to encourage people in the future to loiter here unnecessarily. In other words, as soon as possible one should perfect one's Kṛṣṇa consciousness and go back home, back to Godhead. If Lord Kṛṣṇa had remained longer on the earth, He would have unnecessarily increased the prestige of the material world.

As stated by Śrī Uddhava in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.11), *ādāyāntar adhād yas tu sva-bimbarṁ loka-locanam*: "Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who manifested His eternal form before the vision of all on the earth, performed His disappearance by removing His form from the sight of those who are unable

to see Him [as He is] due to not executing the required penance.” Uddhava also states in the *Bhāgavatam* (3.2.10):

*devasya māyayā sprṣṭā
ye cānyad-asad-āśritāḥ
bhrāmyate dhīr na tad-vākyair
ātmany uptātmano harau*

“Under no circumstances can the words of persons bewildered by the illusory energy of the Lord deviate the intelligence of those who are completely surrendered souls.” One who follows the Vaiṣṇava authorities in his attempt to understand Lord Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental disappearance easily appreciates that the Lord is the omnipotent Personality of Godhead and that His spiritual body is identical with His eternal spiritual potency.

TEXT 31.14

*ya etāṁ prātar utthāya
kṛṣṇasya padavīm parām
prayataḥ kīrtayed bhaktyā
tām evāpnoty anuttamām*

yaḥ – anyone who; *etām* – this; *prātaḥ* – early in the morning; *utthāya* – getting up; *kṛṣṇasya* – of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *padavīm* – the destination; *parām* – supreme; *prayataḥ* – with careful attention; *kīrtayet* – glorifies; *bhaktyā* – with devotion; *tām* – that destination; *eva* – indeed; *āpnoti* – he obtains; *anuttamam* – unsurpassable.

TRANSLATION

Anyone who regularly rises early in the morning and carefully chants with devotion the glories of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental disappearance and His return to His own abode will certainly achieve that same supreme destination.

TEXT 31.15

*dāruko dvārakām etya
vasudevograsenayoḥ
patitvā caraṇāv asrair
nyaṣiñcat kṛṣṇa-vicyutaḥ*

dārukaḥ – Dāruka; *dvārakām* – in Dvārakā; *etya* – arriving; *vasudeva-ugrasenayoḥ* – of Vasudeva and Ugrasena; *patitvā* – falling down; *caraṇau* – at the feet; *asraiḥ* – with his tears; *nyaṣiñcat* – drenched; *kṛṣṇa-vicyutaḥ* – deprived of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TRANSLATION

As soon as Dāruka reached Dvārakā, he threw himself at the feet of Vasudeva and Ugrasena and drenched their feet with his tears, lamenting the loss of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

TEXTS 31.16-17

*kathayām āsa nidhanam
vṛṣṇīnām kṛtsnaśo nṛpa
tat chrutvodvigna-hṛdayā
janāḥ śoka-virmūrcchitāḥ
tatra sma tvaritā jagmuḥ
kṛṣṇa-viśleṣa-vihvalāḥ
vyasavaḥ śerate yatra
jñātayo ghnanta ānanam*

kathayām āsa – he related; *nidhanam* – the destruction; *vṛṣṇīnām* – of the Vṛṣṇis; *kṛtsnaśaḥ* – total; *nṛpa* – O King Parīkṣit; *tat* – that; *śrutvā* – hearing; *udvigna* – agitated; *hṛdayāḥ* – their hearts; *janāḥ* – the people; *śoka* – by sorrow; *virmūrcchitāḥ* – rendered senseless; *tatra* – there; *sma* – indeed; *tvaritāḥ* – swiftly; *jagmuḥ* – they went; *kṛṣṇa-viśleṣa* – by separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa; *vihvalāḥ* – overwhelmed; *vyasavaḥ* – lifeless; *śerate* – they lay; *yatra* – where; *jñātayaḥ* – their relatives; *ghnantaḥ* – striking; *ānanam* – their own faces.

TRANSLATION

Dārūka delivered the account of the total destruction of the Vṛṣṇis, and upon hearing this, O Parīkṣit, the people became deeply distraught in their hearts and stunned with sorrow. Feeling the overwhelming pain of separation from Kṛṣṇa, they struck their own faces while hurrying to the place where their relatives lay dead.

TEXT 31.18

*devakī rohiṇī caiva
vasudevas tathā sutau
kṛṣṇa-rāmāv apaśyantaḥ
śokārtā vijahuḥ smṛtim*

devakī – Devakī; *rohiṇī* – Rohiṇī; *ca* – also; *eva* – indeed; *vasudevaḥ* – Vasudeva; *tathā* – as well; *sutau* – their two sons; *kṛṣṇa-rāmau* – Kṛṣṇa and Rāma; *apaśyantaḥ* – not seeing; *śoka-ārtāḥ* – feeling the pain of lamentation; *vijahuḥ* – they lost; *smṛtim* – their consciousness.

TRANSLATION

When Devakī, Rohiṇī and Vasudeva could not find their sons, Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, they lost consciousness out of anguish.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the original Devakī, Rohiṇī and other ladies of Dvārakā actually remained in Dvārakā, invisible to the eyes of the material world, whereas the demigods who represented partial aspects of Devakī, Rohiṇī and so on went to Prabhāsa to see their dead relatives.

TEXT 31.19

*prāṇāmś ca vijahus tatra
bhagavad-virahāturāḥ*

*upaguhya patīms tāta
citām āruruhuḥ striyaḥ*

prāṇān – their lives; *ca* – and; *vijahuḥ* – they gave up; *tatra* – there; *bhagavat* – from the Personality of Godhead; *viraha* – because of separation; *āturāḥ* – tormented; *upagahya* – embracing; *patīn* – their husbands; *tāta* – my dear Parīkṣit; *citām* – the funeral pyre; *āruruhuḥ* – they climbed upon; *striyaḥ* – the wives.

TRANSLATION

Tormented by separation from the Lord, His parents gave up their lives at that very spot. My dear Parīkṣit, the wives of the Yādavas then climbed onto the funeral pyres, embracing their dead husbands.

TEXT 31.20

*rāma-patnyaś ca tad-deham
upaguhyaḥ agnim āviśan
vasudeva-patnyas tad-gātram
pradyumnādīn hareḥ snuṣāḥ
kṛṣṇa-patnyo'viśann agniṁ
rukmiṇy-ādyās tad-ātmikāḥ*

rāma-patnyaḥ – the wives of Lord Balarāma; *ca* – and; *tad-deham* – His body; *upaguhya* – embracing; *agnim* – the fire; *āviśan* – entered; *vasudeva-patnyaḥ* – the wives of Vasudeva; *tad-gātram* – his body; *pradyumna-ādīn* – Pradyumna and the others; *hareḥ* – of Lord Hari; *snuṣāḥ* – the daughters-in-law; *kṛṣṇa-patnyaḥ* – the wives of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *aviśan* – entered; *agnim* – the fire; *rukmiṇī-ādyāḥ* – led by Queen Rukmiṇī; *tad-ātmikāḥ* – whose consciousness was completely absorbed in Him.

TRANSLATION

The wives of Lord Balarāma also entered the fire and embraced His body, and Vasudeva's wives entered his fire and embraced his body. The daughters-in-law of Lord Hari entered the funeral fires of their respective husbands, headed by Pradyumna. And Rukmiṇī and the other wives of Lord Kṛṣṇa - whose hearts were completely absorbed in Him - entered His fire.

PURPORT

It is understood that the anguished scene described here is a display of the Lord's illusory potency, adding a final dramatic note to Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes on the earth. In reality, Lord Kṛṣṇa returned to His eternal abode in His original body, and His eternal associates returned with Him. This final heartbreaking scene of the Lord's pastimes is a creation of the Lord's internal potency that brings the Lord's manifest pastimes to a perfect dramatic end.

TEXT 31.21

*arjunaḥ preyasah sakhyuḥ
kṛṣṇasya virahāturaḥ
ātmānaṁ sāntvayām āsa
kṛṣṇa-gītaiḥ sad-uktibhiḥ*

arjunaḥ – Arjuna; *preyasah* – of his dear; *sakhyuḥ* – friend; *kṛṣṇasya* – Lord Kṛṣṇa; *viraha* – because of the separation; *āturaḥ* – distressed; *ātmānam* – himself; *sāntvayām āsa* – consoled; *kṛṣṇa-gītaiḥ* – with the song sung by Lord Kṛṣṇa (the *Bhagavad-gītā*); *sat-uktibhiḥ* – with the transcendental words.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna felt great distress over separation from Lord Kṛṣṇa, his dearest friend. But he consoled himself by remembering the transcendental words the Lord had sung to him.

PURPORT

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, Arjuna remembered such verses from the *Gītā* as:

*nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya
yoga-māyā-samāvṛtaḥ
mūḍho'yaṁ nābhijānāti
loko mām ajam avyayam*

(Bg. 7.25)

“I am never manifest to the foolish and unintelligent. For them I am covered by My eternal creative potency (*yoga-māyā*), and so the deluded world knows Me not, who am unborn and infallible.”

Similarly, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has mentioned the *Gītā* verse *mām evaiṣyasi satyaṁ te pratijāne priyo 'si me* (Bg. 18.65): “You will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend.” He has also quoted from the *Svarga-parva* of the *Mahābhārata* as follows:

*dadarśa tatra govindaṁ
brahmaṇe vapuṣānvitam
tenaiva dṛṣṭa-pūrveṇa
sādṛśyenopasūcitam
dīpyamānaṁ sva-vapuṣā
divyair astrair upaskṛtam
cakra-prabhṛtibhir ghorair
divyaiḥ puruṣa-vigrahaiḥ
upāsyamānaṁ vīreṇa
phālgunena su-varcasā
yathā-svarūpaṁ kaunteya
tathaiva madhusūdanam
tāv ubhau puruṣa-vyāghrau
samudvīkṣya yudhiṣṭhiram
yathārhaṁ pratipedāte
pūjayā deva-pūjitaḥ*

“There Yudhiṣṭhira saw Lord Govinda as the Absolute Truth in His original, personal form. He appeared just as Yudhiṣṭhira had seen Him before, with all

the same characteristics. He was glowing brilliantly with the effulgence coming from His own body, and He was surrounded by His transcendental weapons – the disc and so on – which appeared in their fearsome personified forms. O descendant of Kuntī, Lord Madhusūdana was being worshiped by the effulgent hero Arjuna, who also appeared in his original form. When these two lions among men, who are worshipable by the demigods, noticed the presence of Yudhiṣṭhira, they approached him with proper respect and offered him worship.”

TEXT 31.22

*bandhūnām naṣṭa-gotrāṇām
arjunaḥ sāmparāyikam
hatānām kārayām āsa
yathā-vad anupūrvaśaḥ*

bandhūnām – of the relatives; *naṣṭa-gotrāṇām* – who had no remaining immediate family members; *arjunaḥ* – Arjuna; *sāmparāyikam* – the funeral rites; *hatānām* – of the killed; *kārayām āsa* – had executed; *yathā-vat* – as prescribed in the *Vedas*; *anupūrvaśaḥ* – in order of the seniority of the deceased.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna then saw to it that the funeral rites were properly carried out for the dead, who had no remaining male family members. He executed the required ceremonies for each of the Yadus, one after another.

TEXT 31.23

*dvārakām hariṇā tyaktām
samudro'plāvayat kṣaṇāt
varjayitvā mahā-rāja
śrīmad-bhagavad-ālayam*

dvārakām – Dvārakā; *hariṇā* – by Lord Hari; *tyaktām* – abandoned; *samudraḥ* – the ocean; *aplāvayat* – overflowed; *kṣaṇāt* – immediately; *varjayitvā* – except for; *mahā-rāja* – O King; *śrīmat-bhagavat* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ālayam* – the residence.

TRANSLATION

As soon as Dvārakā was abandoned by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ocean flooded it on all sides, O King, sparing only His palace.

PURPORT

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains that whereas the external manifestation of the Lord’s abode was covered by the ocean, the Lord’s eternal Dvārakā exists beyond the material universe and certainly beyond the material ocean. Dvārakā had been constructed by Viśvakarmā, the architect of the demigods, and the Sudharmā assembly hall had been brought from heaven. In that city there were many beautiful and splendid residences of the

aristocratic Yadu dynasty, and the most beautiful residence of all was that of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mentions that even in the modern age, people who live near the site of the original Dvārakā sometimes catch a glimpse of it in the ocean. Ultimately, the Lord's associates and abode are eternal, and one who understands this is qualified to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious.

TEXT 31.24

*nityam sannihitas tatra
bhagavān madhusūdanaḥ
smṛtyāśeṣāśubha-haram
sarva-maṅgala-maṅgalam*

nityam – eternally; *sannihitaḥ* – present; *tatra* – there; *bhagavān* – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *madhusūdanaḥ* – Madhusūdana; *smṛtyā* – by remembrance; *śeṣa-aśubha* – of everything inauspicious; *haram* – which takes away; *sarva-maṅgala* – of all auspicious things; *maṅgalam* – the most auspicious.

TRANSLATION

Lord Madhusūdana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is eternally present in Dvārakā. It is the most auspicious of all auspicious places, and merely remembering it destroys all contamination.

TEXT 31.25

*strī-bāla-vṛddhān ādāya
hata-śeṣān dhanañjayaḥ
indraprastham samāveśya
vajram tatrābhyāsecayat*

strī – the women; *bāla* – children; *vṛddhān* – and elders; *ādāya* – taking; *hata* – of the killed; *śeṣān* – the survivors; *dhanañjayaḥ* – Arjuna; *indraprastham* – in the capital of the Pāṇḍavas; *samāveśya* – resettling; *vajram* – Vajra, the son of Aniruddha; *tatra* – there; *abhyāsecayat* – placed upon the throne.

TRANSLATION

Arjuna took the survivors of the Yadu dynasty – the women, children and old men – to Indraprastha, where he installed Vajra as ruler of the Yadus.

TEXT 31.26

*śrutvā suhṛd-vadham rājann
arjunāt te pitāmahāḥ
tvām tu vaṁśa-dharam kṛtvā
jagmuḥ sarve mahā-patham*

śrutvā – hearing; *suhṛt* – of their friend; *vadham* – the death; *rājan* – O King; *arjunāt* – from Arjuna; *te* – your; *pitāmahāḥ* – grandfathers (Yudhiṣṭhira and his brothers); *tvām* – you; *tu* – and; *vaṁśa-dharam* – the maintainer of the

dynasty; *kṛtvā* – making; *jagmuḥ* – they left; *sarve* – all of them; *mahā-patham* – for the great journey.

TRANSLATION

Hearing from Arjuna of the death of their friend, my dear King, your grandfathers established you as the maintainer of the dynasty and left to prepare for their departure from this world.

TEXT 31.27

*ya etad deva-devasya
viṣṇoḥ karmāṇi janma ca
kīrtayec chraddhayā martyaḥ
sarva-pāpaiḥ pramucyate*

yaḥ – who; *etat* – these; *deva-devasya* – of the Lord of lords; *viṣṇoḥ* – of Lord Viṣṇu; *karmāṇi* – the activities; *janma* – the birth; *ca* – and; *kīrtayet* – chants; *śraddhayā* – with faith; *martyaḥ* – a human being; *sarva-pāpaiḥ* – from all sins; *pramucyate* – becomes completely liberated.

TRANSLATION

A person who with faith engages in chanting the glories of these various pastimes and incarnations of Viṣṇu, the Lord of lords, will gain liberation from all sins.

TEXT 31.28

*ittham harer bhagavato rucirāvatāra-
vīryāṇi bāla-caritāni ca śantamāni
anyatra ceḥa ca śrutāni gṛṇan manuṣyo
bhaktim parām paramahaṁsa-gatau labheta*

ittham – thus; *hareḥ* – of Lord Hari; *bhagavataḥ* – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *rucira* – attractive; *avatāra* – of the incarnations; *vīryāṇi* – the exploits; *bāla* – childhood; *caritāni* – pastimes; *ca* – and; *śam-tamāni* – most auspicious; *anyatra* – elsewhere; *ca* – and; *iha* – here; *ca* – also; *śrutāni* – heard; *gṛṇan* – clearly chanting; *manuṣyaḥ* – a person; *bhaktim* – devotional service; *parām* – transcendental; *paramahaṁsa* – of the perfect sages; *gatau* – for the destination (Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa); *labheta* – will attain.

TRANSLATION

The all-auspicious exploits of the all-attractive incarnations of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and also the pastimes He performed as a child, are described in this Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and in other scriptures. Anyone who clearly chants these descriptions of His pastimes will attain transcendental loving service unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the goal of all perfect sages.

Thus end the purports of the humble servants of His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda to the Eleventh Canto, Thirty-first Chapter, of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, entitled “The Disappearance of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

The Eleventh Canto was completed at the New Gokula South American pilgrimage site, state of São Paulo, Brazil, on Friday, March 26, 1982.

END OF THE ELEVENTH CANTO

Appendixes

The Absolute Nature of the Supreme Lord

In his commentary on Text 5, Chapter 30, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura quotes several statements by Śrī Uddhava from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.7-12) that nicely explain the transcendental nature of Lord Kṛṣṇa's disappearance from this world. The reader is referred to that portion of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for further illumination on this subject.

Next, from various Vedic scriptures Viśvanātha Cakravartī cites many important verses that clearly establish the absolute, eternal nature of the Personality of Godhead's forms, names, abodes, qualities, pastimes and entourage.

Forms: The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (1.38) states, *govindaṁ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaṁ vṛndāvana-sura-bhūraha-talāsīnaṁ satataṁ sa-marud-gaṇo 'haṁ paramayā stutyā toṣayāmi*: "With transcendental prayers, I and the Maruts are always trying to satisfy Lord Govinda, whose personal form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, and who is sitting amidst the celestial desire trees of Vṛndāvana."

Similarly, in his *Vedānta-bhāṣya* Śrīla Madhvācārya cites the following passage from the *śruti*: *vāsudevaḥ saṅkarṣaṇaḥ pradyumno 'niruddho 'haṁ matsyaḥ kūrmo varāho narasiṁho vāmano rāmo rāmaḥ kṛṣṇo buddhaḥ kalkir ahaṁ śatadhāhaṁ sahasradhāham amito 'haṁ ananto 'haṁ naivaite jāyante naivaite mriyante naiṣāṁ ajñāna-bandho na muktiḥ sarva eva hy ete pūrṇā ajarā amṛtāḥ paramāḥ paramānandāḥ*. "I am Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. I am Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Narasiṁha, Vāmana, the three Rāmas [Rāmacandra, Paraśurāma and Balarāma], Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki. Immeasurable and unlimited, I appear in hundreds and thousands of forms, none of which ever takes birth or dies. These forms of Mine are not bound by ignorance, nor do they have to strive for liberation. They are all complete, free from old age, immortal, supreme and supremely blissful."

The *Dhyāna-bindu Upaniṣad* states, *nirdoṣa-pūrṇa-guṇa-vigraha ātma-tantro niścetanātmaka-śarīra-guṇaiś ca hīnaḥ/ ānanda-mātra-mukha-pāda-saroruhādiḥ*: "[The Lord's] personal form possesses complete and faultless transcendental qualities. Indeed, the form of the completely independent Lord is free from all lifeless bodily characteristics. His lotus face and lotus feet consist simply of pure ecstasy."

The *Vāsudeva Upaniṣad* states, *sad-rūpam advayaṁ brahma madhyādy-anta-vivarjitam/ sva-prabhaṁ sac-cid-ānandaṁ bhaktyā jānati cāvyayam*: "[The Lord's] transcendental form is the Absolute Truth, devoid of duality or of middle, beginning or end. It is self-effulgent, eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. Only through devotional service can one understand that form to be infallible."

The *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* states, *nanda-vraja-janānandī sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*: [Bs. 5.1], “The body of the Lord, who gives ecstasy to the residents of King Nanda’s pastures, is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss.” The *Mahā-varāha Purāṇa* states, *sarve nityāḥ śāsvatās ca dehās tasya parātmanaḥ/ hānopadāna-rahitā naiva prakṛti-jāḥ kvacit*: “The bodies of that Supreme Soul are all eternal and primeval. Since they are not born of material nature, they are not subject to destruction or creation.”

The *Nṛsimha Purāṇa* states, *yuge yuge viṣṇur anādi-mūrtim āsthāya śiṣṭam paripāti duṣṭa-hā*: “In each age, Lord Viṣṇu assumes His various eternal forms in order to protect those who are civilized [the devotees] and to destroy those who are evil [the demons].” The *Bṛhad-vaiṣṇava-smṛti* states, *yo vetti bhautikaṁ dehaṁ kṛṣṇasya paramātmanaḥ/ sa sarvasmād bahiṣkāryaḥ śrauta-smārta-vidhānataḥ/ mukhaṁ tasyāvalokyāpi sa-celaṁ snānam ācaret*: “If a person thinks the body of the Supreme Soul, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is made of matter, he should be excluded from all ceremonies, both of the *śruti* and the *smṛti*. One who even glances upon such a person’s face must immediately take a bath with all his clothes on.” The *Mahābhārata* states, *na bhūta-saṅgha-samsthāno deho ’sya paramātmanaḥ*: “The body of the Supreme Soul is not composed of a combination of material elements.” Also from the *Mahābhārata*: *amṛtāṁśo ’mṛta-vapuḥ*. “His personal expansions and personal bodies are all immortal.”

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* itself contains many passages attesting to the absolute nature of the Lord’s forms. Here are a few: *śābdam-brahma dadhad vapuḥ*. “Appearing in Your transcendental form as the *Vedas* and as the personal feature of the Absolute Truth ...” *Yat tad vapur bhāti vibhūṣaṇāyudhair avyakta-cid-vyaktam adhārayad vibhuḥ* (8.18.12): “That transcendental body which is appearing with its ornaments and weapons has been assumed by the Almighty Lord as the spiritual manifestation of Himself, who is materially unmanifested.” *Babandha prākṛtaṁ yathā* (10.9.14): “She bound Him up just like an ordinary child.” *Satya-jñānānantānanda-mātraika-rasa-mūrtyaḥ* (10.13.54): “The *viṣṇu-mūrtis* all had eternal, unlimited forms full of knowledge and bliss and existing beyond the influence of time.” *Svecchā-mayasya na tu bhūta-mayasya* (10.14.2): “His body is composed of His own desire, rather than of material elements.” And *tvayy eva nitya-sukha-bodha-tanau*: “In You, whose body is full of eternal happiness and consciousness ...”

Names: The *Ṛg Veda* states, *om āsya jānanto nāma cid viviktan*: “If we understand even a little of the glories of His holy name ...” The *Bhāgavatam* (10.8.15) contains the following passage: *bahūni santi nāmāni rūpaṇi ca sutasya te guṇa-karmānurūpāṇi*. “For this son of yours there are many forms and names according to His transcendental qualities.” That this passage is in the present tense indicates that the Lord’s names are absolute and eternal. The *Padma Purāṇa* states, *yat tv anāma-rūpa evāyaṁ bhagavān harir īśvaraḥ/ akarteti ca yo vedaiḥ smṛtibhiś cābhidhīyate*: “It is the Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, whom the *Vedas* and *smṛtis* describe as that which has

no name or form and which does nothing.” The *Vāsudevādhyātma* reconciles the apparent contradiction thus raised: *aprasiddhes tad-guṇānām anāmo 'sau prakīrtitaḥ/ aprākṛtatvād rūpasyāpy arūpo 'sāv udīryate/ sambandhena pradhānasya harer nāsty eva kartatā/ akartāram ataḥ prāhuḥ purāṇam tam purā vidaḥ*. “Because His qualities are generally unknown, He is said to have no name. Because His form is not material, He is said to be formless. And because Lord Hari does nothing in relationship with the material nature, He is said to be inactive.”

Abodes: The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (2.36) states, *tāsām madhye sākṣād brahma gopāla-purī:* “Among all these [abodes], the residence of Lord Gopāla is directly the Absolute Truth.” And the *Padma Purāṇa* states, *nityam me mathurām vidhi purīm dvāravatīm tathā:* “You should know that My cities of Mathurā and Dvārakā are both eternal.” An alternate reading for this verse is *nityam me mathurām vidhi vanam vṛndāvanam tathā*, in which case the translation is “You should know that both My Mathurā and My forest of Vṛndāvana are eternal.”

Qualities: The *Bhāgavatam* (1.16.29) states, *ete cānye ca bhagavan nityā yatra mahā-guṇāḥ/prārthyā mahattvam icchadbhir na viyanti sma karhicit:* “In Him reside these and many other transcendental qualities, which are eternally present and never to be separated from Him.”

Pastimes: The *Puruṣa-bodhanī Upaniṣad*, of the *Pippalāda-śākha* of the *Atharva Veda*, states, *eko devo nitya-līlānurakto bhakta-vyāpī bhakta-hṛdy antar-ātmā:* “He is the one Supreme Lord, always attached to His eternal pastimes, extending Himself to His devotees, and present as the Supreme Soul within the hearts of His devotees.” In the *Bhāgavatam* (10.90.48) we find the verse beginning *jayati jana-nivāsaḥ*, which contains the phrase *dorbhir asyann adharmam*, “with His arms casting out irreligion.” The same verse also states, *vraja-pura-vanitānām vardhayan kāma-devam*, “increasing the lusty desires of the young women of Vṛndāvana village.” The *Bhāgavatam* (10.29.15) states, *kāmaṁ krodhaṁ bhayaṁ sneham aikyaṁ sauhṛdam eva vā/ nityam harau vidadhato yānti tan-mayatām hi te:* “Persons who constantly direct their lust, anger, fear, protective affection, feeling of impersonal oneness or friendship toward Lord Hari are sure to become absorbed in thought of Him.” That all these passages employ the present tense indicates that the Lord is eternally enacting His pastimes.

Entourage: The *Padma Purāṇa* states, *eta hi yādavāḥ sarve mad-gaṇā eva bhāvini/ sarvathā mat-priyā devi mat-tulya-guṇa-śālinaḥ:* “My dear lady, all these Yādavas are My personal associates. They are in all respects very dear to Me, O goddess, and their characters are equal to Mine.”

To summarize, we may cite the following verse from the Vedic literature: *nityāv avatāre bhagavān nitya-mūrtir jagat-patiḥ/ nitya-rūpo nitya-gandho nityaiśvarya-sukhānubhūḥ:* “In His eternal incarnation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of the universe, exhibits His eternal personal form. His bodily beauty, His fragrance, His opulence and His happiness are also all eternal.”

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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Brahma-saṁhitā

Brahma-sūtra

Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad

Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

Caitanya-bhāgavata

Caitanya-candrāmṛta

Caitanya-caritāmṛta

Caṇḍī

Chāndogya Upaniṣad

Gīta-govinda

Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa

Hari-varṁśa

Hitopadeśa

Īsopaniṣad

Kaṭha Upaniṣad

Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha

Mahābhārata

Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad

Nārada-pañcarātra

Padma Purāṇa

Padyāvali

Prema-vivarta

Rāmāyaṇa

Ṣaḍ-gosvāmy-aṣṭaka

Śikṣāṣṭaka

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad

Tantra-bhāgavata

Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī

Vāmana Purāṇa

Vedānta-sūtra

Viṣṇu Purāṇa

Viśva-kośa

Glossary

Absolute Truth – the ultimate source of all energies.

Ācamana – purifying by sipping water and chanting names of the Lord, especially before a sacrifice.

Ācārya – a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Acyuta – the Supreme Lord, who can never fall down from His position.

Adhibhautika misery – misery caused by other living beings.

Adhidaivika misery – misery caused by nature.

Adhyātmika misery – misery caused by one's own body and mind.

Aditi – the mother of the demigods.

Advaita Prabhu – an incarnation of Viṣṇu who appeared as a principal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Agni – the demigod in charge of fire.

Agnihotra-yajña – a ceremony in which offerings are made into a sacrificial fire.

Ajāmila – a fallen *brāhmaṇa* who was saved from hell by chanting the name of Lord Nārāyaṇa at the time of death.

Akrūra – an uncle of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Amara-kośa dictionary – a dictionary of the Sanskrit language.

Ambarīṣa Mahārāja – a great devotee king who perfectly executed all nine devotional practices (hearing, chanting, etc.).

Ananta – the Lord's thousand-headed serpent incarnation, who serves as the bed of Viṣṇu and sustains the planets on His hoods.

Anilāyāma – See: *Prāṇāyāma*

Aṇimā-siddhi – the mystic power to become as small as an atom.

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.

Arjuna – one of the five Pāṇḍava brothers; Kṛṣṇa became his chariot driver and spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* to him.

Āśrama – one of the four spiritual orders of life. See also: *Brahmacarya, Gṛhastha, Vānaprastha, Sannyāsa*.

Aṣṭāṅga-yoga – the mystic *yoga* system propounded by Patañjali.

Aśvinī deities – demigods in charge of the nostrils and sense of smell.

Atharva Veda – one of the four *Vedas*, the original revealed scriptures spoken by the Lord Himself.

Avadhūta – a very saintly and renounced person who may live outside regulative principles, having surpassed any need for them.

Badarikāśrama – a sacred place of pilgrimage in the Himālayas.

Balarāma (Baladeva) – a plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead appearing as the son of Rohiṇī and elder brother of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Bali Mahārāja – the king of the demons who gave three paces of land to Vāmanadeva, the Lord’s dwarf-*brāhmaṇa* incarnation.

Bāṇāsura – a thousand-armed demon slain by Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Battle of Kurukṣetra – a battle between the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas, which took place five thousand years ago and before which Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna.

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.

Bhagavān – the Supreme Lord, who possesses all opulences in full.

Bhakti – devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhakti-mārga – the path of developing devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu – Rūpa Gosvāmī’s definitive explanation of the science of devotional service.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura – (1874–1937) the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, and thus the spiritual grandfather of the present-day Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. A powerful preacher, he founded sixty-four missions in India.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura – (1838–1915) the great-grandfather of the present-day Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the spiritual master of Śrīla Gaurakīśora dāsa Bābājī, the father of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, and the grand-spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga – linking with the Supreme Lord by devotional service.

Bharata Mahārāja – a great devotee of the Lord who developed an attachment causing him to take birth as a deer. In his next life, as the *brāhmaṇa* Jaḍa Bharata, he attained 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.

Bhṛgu – the most powerful of the sages born directly from Brahmā.

Bhūr – the lower material planets.

Bhuvā – the middle material planets.

Bihar – a state in northwestern India.

Brahmā – the first created living being and secondary creator of the material universe.

Brahmacārya – celibate student life; the first order of Vedic spiritual life.

Brahmaloka – the highest planet of the universe, that of the demigod Brahmā.

Brāhma-muhūrta – the period of the day just before dawn. It is especially favorable for spiritual practices.

Brahman – the Absolute Truth; especially the impersonal aspect of the Absolute.

Brāhmaṇa – a member of the intellectual, priestly class; the first Vedic social order.

Brahmaṇa thread – a multistranded thread worn by *brāhmaṇas* across the left shoulder and chest.

Brahma-saṁhitā – a very ancient Sanskrit scripture recording the prayers of Brahmā to the Supreme Lord, Govinda.

Brahmāstra – a nuclear weapon produced by chanting *mantras*.

Brahma-sūtra – *the Vedānta-sūtra*.

Bṛhaspati – the spiritual master of King Indra and chief priest of the demigods.

Caitanya-caritāmṛta – Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja’s authorized biography of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, presenting the Lord’s pastimes and teachings.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu – (1486–1534) the Supreme Lord, appearing as His own greatest devotee to teach love of Godhead, especially through the process of *saṅkīrtana*.

Camasa Ṛṣi – one of the nine Yogendras.

Candra – the demigod in charge of the moon.

Candraloka – the moon planet.

Cātur-māsya – the four months of the rainy season in India. Devotees take special vows of austerity during this time.

Cātur-varṇyam – the four occupational divisions of society (*brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras*).

Citraketu – a member of the royal order who became fully enlightened in spiritual knowledge.

Daityas – demons; a race of demons descending from Diti.

Daiva-varṇāśrama – the social system given by God for the upliftment of humankind. *See also: Varṇāśrama*

Dakṣa – one of the sons of Brahmā and a chief progenitor of universal population.

Daṇḍa – a staff carried by those in the renounced order of life.

Daśaratha – the father of Lord Rāmacandra.

Daśavatāra-stotra – the introduction to Jayadeva Gosvāmī’s *Gīta-govinda*.

Dattātreya – an incarnation of the Supreme Lord who appeared as the son of Atri Muni to teach the path of mystic *yoga*.

Deity of the Lord – the authorized form of Kṛṣṇa worshiped in temples.

Demigods – universal controllers and residents of the higher planets.

Demons – impious beings who do not follow the instructions of the Lord.

Devahūti – the daughter of Svāyambhuva Manu who was the wife of Kardama Muni and the mother of the Lord’s incarnation Lord Kapila.

Devakī – the wife of Vasudeva and mother of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Devotional service – the process of worshiping Lord Kṛṣṇa by dedicating one’s thoughts, words and actions to Him with love.

Dhenukāsura – a mystic demon who took the form of a donkey and was killed by Kṛṣṇa.

Diti – a wife of Kaśyapa Muni, and the mother of the demons Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu.

Draupadī – the wife of the five Pāṇḍavas. She was a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Duḥśāsana – a member of the Kuru dynasty and a brother of Duryodhana.

Durvāsa Muni – a powerful mystic *yogī*, famous for his fearful curses.

Duryodhana – the eldest son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and chief rival of the Pāṇḍavas.

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.

Dvīda – a huge, apelike demon killed by Lord Balarāma.

Ekadaṇḍa – the staff, made of a single rod, carried by a *sannyāsī* of the Māyāvāda (impersonalist) school.

Ekādaśī – a special day for increased remembrance of Kṛṣṇa, which comes on the eleventh day after both the full and new moon. Abstinence from grains and beans is prescribed.

False ego – the conception that “I am this material body.”

Gandharvas – demigod singers and musicians.

Garbhodaka Ocean – the body of water that fills the bottom part of each material universe.

Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu – the second Viṣṇu expansion, who enters each universe and, by His glance, creates the diverse material manifestations.

Garga Muni – the family priest for the Yadu dynasty.

Garuḍa – Lord Viṣṇu’s eternal carrier, a great devotee in a birdlike form.

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas – devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa coming in disciplic succession from Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava sampradāya – the authorized Vaiṣṇava disciplic succession of bona fide spiritual masters coming through Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; also, the followers in that tradition.

Gaurakṛṣṇa – See: Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Gaura-Pūrṇimā – the appearance day of Lord Caitanya.

Gāyatrī mantra – the prayer chanted silently by *brāhmaṇas* at sunrise, noon and sunset.

Godhead – the ultimate source of all energies.

Gopīs – Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s cowherd girlfriends, who are His most surrendered and confidential devotees.

Govinda – the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, who gives pleasure to the land, the cows and the senses.

Gṛhastha – regulated household life; the second order of Vedic spiritual life.

Gujarat – a province in northwestern India.

Guṇas – the three modes, or qualities, of material nature: goodness, passion and ignorance.

Guru – a spiritual master.

Haihayas – a dynasty of demoniac kings destroyed by Lord Paraśurāma.

Haṁsa – the swan incarnation of the Lord.

Hanumān – the great monkey servitor of Lord Rāmacandra.

Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra – the great chant for deliverance: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Hari – the Supreme Lord, who removes all obstacles to spiritual progress.

Haridāsa Ṭhākura – a great devotee and associate of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who chanted three hundred thousand names of God a day.

Hari-kathā – topics of Lord Hari, Kṛṣṇa.

Hari-varṁśa – the appendix to the *Mahābhārata*. It is a summary of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes by Śrīla Vyāsadeva.

Hastināpura – the ancient capital of Bhārata-varṣa, or India. It occupies a portion of what is today called New Delhi.

Heavenly planets – the higher planets of the universe, residences of the demigods.

Hell – hellish planets within this universe meant for the punishment and rectification of the sinful.

Hindu – a newly-concocted name for members of various social and religious groups of India. The term has no spiritual significance.

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.

Indraloka – the planet of Indra.

ISKCON – the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Īsopaniṣad – one of the principal *Upaniṣads*.

Iṣṭā – the performance of public welfare activities such as digging wells or planting trees.

Jaḍa Bharata – Bharata Mahārāja in his final birth as the renounced *brāhmaṇa* who gave wonderful spiritual instructions to Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa.

Jagāi and Mādhāi – two debauchees whom Lord Nityānanda converted into Vaiṣṇavas.

Jaimini – the author of the *Karma-mīmāṃsā-sūtras*, which explain the *Vedas* in ritualistic terms.

Jāmbavatī – the daughter of Jāmbavān. She is one of the eight principal queens of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Janaloka – a heavenly planet.

Janmāṣṭamī – the celebration of Lord Kṛṣṇa's appearance in the material world.

Japa – the soft recitation of the Lord's holy names as a private meditation.

Jaya and Vijaya – two doorkeepers of Vaikuṅṭha who were cursed for offending the four Kumāra Ṛṣis but who attained liberation after three births as demons.

Jayadeva Gosvāmī – the great Vaiṣṇava poet who wrote *Gīta-govinda*.

Jāyanteyas – nine great sages, sons of King Bharata, who were also known as the nine Yogendras.

Jīva (jīvatmā) – the living entity, who is an eternal individual soul, part and parcel of the Supreme Lord.

Jīva Gosvāmī – one of the six Vaiṣṇava spiritual masters who directly followed Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and systematically presented His teachings.

Jīva-tattva – the living entities, atomic parts of the Supreme Lord.

Jñāna – knowledge.

Jñāna-kāṇḍa – the portions of the *Vedas* containing knowledge of Brahma, or spirit.

Jñāna-yoga – the process of approaching the Supreme by the cultivation of knowledge.

Jñānī – one who cultivates knowledge by empirical speculation.

Kaivalya – the impersonal liberation of merging into the spiritual effulgence emanating from the Lord.

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.

Kāmadhenu – spiritual cows in the spiritual world who yield unlimited quantities of milk.

Kaṁsa – a demoniac king of the Bhoja dynasty and maternal uncle of Kṛṣṇa.

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.

Karma-kāṇḍa – the portions of the *Vedas* describing rituals to be performed for material benefit.

Karma-yoga – action in devotional service; also, fruitive actions performed in accordance with Vedic injunctions.

Karmī – one engaged in *karma* (fruitive activity); a materialist.

Kārṣṇas – the members of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s family.

Kaśyapa – a great saint who was the father of many demigods and also of the Supreme Lord’s incarnation Vāmanadeva.

Kaupīna – the thick belt and underwear worn by sages.

Keśava – the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, who has fine black hair.

Kikaṭa – the present state of Gaya, in north-central India.

Kinnaras – minor demigods inhabiting the heavenly planets. They can change their form at will.

Kīrtana – the devotional process of chanting the names and glories of the Supreme Lord.

Kriyā-vidhāna – injunctions for Vedic rituals.

Kṛṣṇa – the Supreme Personality of Godhead appearing in His original, two-armed form.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja – the great Vaiṣṇava spiritual master who recorded the biography and teachings of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa – **See: Vyāsadeva**

Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana – the chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s names and pastimes.

Kṛta-yuga – Satya-yuga.

Kṣatriya – a warrior or administrator; the second Vedic social order.

Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu – the expansion of the Supreme Lord who enters the heart of every living being as the Supersoul.

Kumāras – four learned ascetic sons of Lord Brahmā appearing eternally as children.

Kuntī – an aunt of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the mother of the Pāṇḍavas.

Kurara – a type of osprey (female, *kurarī*).

Kuru – the founder of the dynasty in which the Pāṇḍavas and their archrivals, the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, took birth.

Kurus – the family of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who were enemies of the Pāṇḍavas.

Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta – a book by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī describing Kṛṣṇa, His incarnations and His devotees.

Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa – the transcendental couple of Lord Kṛṣṇa in His four-armed form and the goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī.

Liberation – freedom from the material conception of life; being situated in one’s constitutional position as an eternal servant of God.

Locana dāsa Ṭhākura – a spiritual master in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*.

Mādhukarī – a system of begging adopted by a mendicant.

Mādhurya-līlā – Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes of conjugal love with His eternal associates.

Madhusudana – the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, killer of the demon Madhu.

Madhvācārya – a thirteenth-century Vaiṣṇava spiritual master who preached the theistic philosophy of dualism.

Mahābhārata – Vyāsadeva’s epic history of greater India, which includes the events of the Kurukṣetra war and the narration of the *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Mahābhārata-tātparya-nirṇaya – Madhvācārya’s commentary on the *Mahābhārata*.

Mahā-prasādam – the remnants of food directly offered to the Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Mahārāja – a title for a great king or sage.

Maharloka – a heavenly planet.

Mahat-tattva – the original, undifferentiated form of the total material energy, from which the material world is manifest.

Mahā-Viṣṇu – the expansion of the Supreme Lord from whom all material universes emanate.

Maitreya Muni – the great sage who spoke *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to Vidura.

Mantra – a transcendental sound or Vedic hymn, which can deliver the mind from illusion.

Manu-saṁhitā – the scriptural law book for humankind, given by Manu.

Mathurā – Lord Kṛṣṇa’s abode, surrounding Vṛndāvana, where He took birth and to which He later returned after performing His childhood pastimes.

Māyā – the inferior, illusory energy of the Supreme Lord, which rules over this material creation; forgetfulness of one’s relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

Māyāvādīs – impersonalist philosophers who conceive of the Absolute Truth as ultimately formless and the living entity as equal to God.

Mitra – the demigod who controls death.

Mukunda – the Supreme Lord, who is the giver of liberation.

Mūla-mantra – a short Sanskrit incantation uttered before one offers an item of worship to the Deity of Kṛṣṇa or His expansions.

Murāri – Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of the demon Mura.

Mystic yoga – *yoga* performed for the purpose of developing subtle material powers.

Nāgas – a race of serpents.

Nanda Mahārāja – the king of Vraja and foster father of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

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.

Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi – an incarnation of the Supreme Lord appearing as two sages to teach by example the practice of austerities.

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.”

Navadvīpa – the place where Lord Caitanya appeared in this world.

Niyama – restraint of the senses.

Nimi – a devotee king, ruler of Videha.

Nityānanda Prabhu – the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared as the principal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Nṛsimhadeva – the half-man, half-lion incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who killed the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu and saved His devotee, Prahlāda Mahārāja.

Oṃkāra – the sacred sound *om*, which is the beginning of many Vedic *mantras* and which represents the Supreme Lord.

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.

Pāṇḍu – the prince of the Kuru dynasty whose five sons (the Pāṇḍavas) were opposed by the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the Kurukṣetra war.

Paramahansa – a topmost, swanlike devotee of the Supreme Lord; highest stage of *sannyāsa*.

Paramātmā – the Supersoul; Viṣṇu as manifest in the heart of each embodied living entity and throughout material nature.

Pārijāta flower – a wonderful flower found in the heavenly planets.

Parikṣit Mahārāja – the emperor of the world who heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from Śukadeva Gosvāmī and thus attained perfection.

Pātālaloka – the lowest of the universe’s fourteen planetary systems; also, the lower planets in general.

Paunḍraka – an enemy of Lord Kṛṣṇa who attempted to imitate Him.

Phala-śrutis – Sanskrit verses granting various benedictions.

Prabhāsa-tīrtha – a holy place near Dvārakā.

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 Nṛsimhadeva.

Prajāpatis – the demigods in charge of populating the universe.

Prākṛta-sahajiyās – pseudodevotees of Kṛṣṇa.

Prakṛti – material nature; an energy of the Supreme Lord; the enjoyed.

Prāṇa – the life air.

Prāṇāyāma – breath control used in *yoga* practice, especially *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*.

Prasādam – the Lord’s mercy; food or other items spiritualized by being first offered to the Supreme Lord.

Prema-bhakti – pure love of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the highest stage in the progressive development of devotional service.

Prśni – the name of Devakī in a previous birth.

Prthā – Kuntī, the aunt of Lord Kṛṣṇa who was the mother of the Pāṇḍavas.

Prthu Mahārāja – an empowered incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who demonstrated how to be an ideal ruler.

Purāṇas – the eighteen Vedic supplementary literatures, historical scriptures.

Pūrtam – performance of sacrifice.

Purūravā – a king who was captivated by the celestial woman Urvaśī.

Puruṣa – the enjoyer, or male; the living entity or the Supreme Lord.

Rādhārāṇī – Lord Kṛṣṇa’s most intimate consort, who is the personification of His internal, spiritual potency.

Rākṣasas – man-eating demons.

Rāmacandra – an incarnation of the Supreme Lord as the perfect king.

Ratha-yātrā – an annual festival in which Deities of the Supreme Lord are drawn in procession on huge, gaily decorated, canopied chariots.

Ṛk-saṁhitā – the *mantra* text of the *Ṛg Veda*.

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.

Ṛṣi – a sage.

Rudra – See: Śiva

Rukmī – a brother of Kṛṣṇa’s queen Rukmiṇī.

Rukmiṇī – Lord Kṛṣṇa’s principal queen in Dvārakā.

Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhiśa – the transcendental couple manifested as Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Dvārakā, and His queen Rukmiṇī.

Rūpa Gosvāmī – the chief of the six Vaiṣṇava spiritual masters who directly followed Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and systematically presented His teachings.

Sacred thread – a thread worn by persons initiated into the chanting of the *Gāyatrī mantra*.

Sādhyas – demigods inhabiting the heavenly planets.

Śālagrāma-śilā – a Deity incarnation of the Supreme Lord in the form of a stone.

Samādhi – trance; complete absorption in God consciousness.

Sāma Veda – one of the four original *Vedas*. It consists of sacrificial hymns set to music.

Sāmba – a son of Lord Kṛṣṇa by His wife Jāmbavatī.

Sampradāya – a disciplic succession of spiritual masters, and the followers in that tradition.

Śaṅkarācārya – the incarnation of Lord Śiva as the great philosopher who, on the order of the Supreme Lord, preached impersonalism based on the *Vedas*.

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. *See also: Sāṅkhya-yoga*

Sāṅkhya-yoga – the process of linking with the Supreme by intellectually tracing out the source of creation.

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.

Śāstra – revealed scripture, such as the Vedic literature.

Sātvata-pañcarātra – one of the *Pañcarātras*, consisting of a conversation between Nārada Muni and Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa describing the rules and regulations of devotional service.

Satyavrata Muni – one of the administrative demigods who are the fathers and lawgivers of humankind.

Satya-yuga – the first and best in the cycle of the four ages of the universe. It lasts 1,728,000 years.

Siddha – a perfected person, or mystic; a demigod from Siddhaloka.

Śikṣāṣṭaka – eight verses by Lord Caitanya glorifying the chanting of the Lord's holy names.

Śiśupāla – a king who was an enemy of Kṛṣṇa.

Sītā – the eternal consort of Lord Rāmacandra.

Śiva – the special incarnation of the Lord as the demigod in charge of the mode of ignorance and the destruction of the material manifestation.

Smṛti – revealed scriptures supplementary to the *śruti*.

Smṛty-ācārya – a spiritual master expert in the supplementary Vedic literatures.

Soma-rasa – a life-extending heavenly beverage available to demigods on the higher planets.

Soul – the eternal living entity, who is the marginal energy, eternally part and parcel of the Supreme Lord.

Sparśas – the consonants in the Sanskrit alphabet.

Śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ – the devotional process of hearing and chanting about Lord Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīdhara Svāmī – an early Vaiṣṇava commentator on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Śrī(la) – a title indicating possession of exceptional spiritual qualities.

Śrīvatsa – the sign of the goddess of fortune on the chest of Lord Viṣṇu, or Nārāyaṇa.

Śruti – knowledge via hearing; the original Vedic scriptures (the *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*), given directly by the Supreme Lord.

Śruti-mantras – the hymns of the *Vedas*.

Sudarśana cakṛa – the disc weapon of the Supreme Lord.

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.

Śukla-yajur Veda – a version of the *Yajur Veda*.

Sutapā – the name of Vasudeva in a previous birth.

Svābhāvya – a scripture.

Svar – the upper material planets.

Svāyambhuva Manu – the Manu who appeared first in Brahmā’s day and who was the grandfather of Dhruva Mahārāja.

Śvetadvīpa – the spiritual planet where Lord Viṣṇu resides within the material universe.

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad – one of the 108 *Upaniṣads*. It very clearly presents the Vaiṣṇava point of view regarding the Lord and the living entity.

Tantras – minor scriptures describing various rituals, mostly for persons in the mode of ignorance.

Tapas – See: *Tapoloka*

Tapoloka – a heavenly planet.

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.

Tri-daṇḍa – a staff, made of three rods, carried by *sannyāsīs* who are devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, signifying service with mind, body and words.

Tridaṇḍi-sannyāsī – a member of the renounced order who accepts the personal nature of the Absolute Truth.

Tulasī – a sacred plant dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa and worshiped by His devotees.

Uddhava – a learned disciple of Bṛhaspati and confidential friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s in Dvārakā.

Ugrasena – the king of the Yadu dynasty.

Upadeśāmṛta – a short Sanskrit work by Rūpa Gosvāmī containing important instructions about devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Upaniṣads – the most significant philosophical section of the *Vedas*.

Upāsanā-kāṇḍa – the portions of the *Vedas* dealing with ceremonies of worship, especially demigod worship.

Urvaśī – a woman from the heavenly planets who became enamored of King Purūravā.

Uttamaśloka – the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, who is worshiped by select poetry.

Vaikuṅṭha – the spiritual world, where there is no anxiety.

Vaiṣṇava – a devotee of Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord.

Vaiṣṇava-dharma – the eternal principle of service to the Supreme Lord, Viṣṇu.

Vaiśyas – farmers and merchants; members of the third Vedic social order.

Vāmana – the incarnation of the Supreme Lord as a dwarf *brāhmaṇa*, to whom Bali Mahārāja surrendered everything.

Vānaprastha – one who has retired from family life; the third order of Vedic spiritual life.

Varṇa – one of the four Vedic social-occupational divisions of society, distinguished by quality of work and situation with regard to the modes of nature (*guṇas*). *See also: Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra.*

Varṇāśrama-dharma – the Vedic social system of four social and four spiritual orders. *See also: Varṇa, Āśrama.*

Varuṇa – the demigod in charge of the oceans.

Vasudeva – the father of Kṛṣṇa and half-brother of Nanda Mahārāja.

Vāyu – air; the demigod in charge of the wind.

Veda-cakṣuḥ – literally, seeing through the eyes of the *Vedas*.

Vedānta – the philosophy of the *Vedānta-sūtra* of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, containing a conclusive summary of Vedic philosophical knowledge and showing the Supreme Lord as the goal of life.

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.

Veda-vāda-rata – one who gives his own explanation of the *Vedas*; a *smārta*.

Vedic – pertaining to a culture in which all aspects of human life are under the guidance of the *Vedas*.

Videharāja Nimi – a devotee king, ruler of Videha.

Vidura – a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa who was a son of Vyāsadeva, an incarnation of Yamarāja and an uncle of the Pāṇḍavas.

Vidyādharas – a race of celestial beings who possess material knowledge.

Vīrarāghava Ācārya – a Vaiṣṇava spiritual master in the line of Rāmānujācārya, and commentator on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Viṣṇu – the Supreme Lord; Lord Kṛṣṇa’s expansions in Vaikuṅṭha and for the creation and maintenance of the material universes.

Viṣṇu-dharma – one of the eighteen *Purāṇas*, or Vedic historical scriptures.

Viṣṇu-tattva – the status or category of Godhead; applies to primary expansions of the Supreme Lord.

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.

Yādava dynasty – See: Yadu dynasty

Yadu dynasty – the dynasty in which Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared.

Yajña – a Vedic sacrifice; also, the Supreme Lord, the goal and enjoyer of all sacrifices.

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.

Yama – the process of controlling the senses.

Yamarāja – the demigod in charge of death and of punishing the sinful.

Yaśodā – the foster mother of Kṛṣṇa; the Queen of Vraja and wife of Mahārāja Nanda.

Yayāti – the king who, because of his lust, was cursed by Śukrācārya to prematurely accept old age.

Yoga – a spiritual discipline meant for linking one’s consciousness with the Supreme.

Yogendras – nine devotee sons of Ṛṣabhadeva.

Yogī – a transcendentalist striving for union with the Supreme.

Yudhiṣṭhira – one of the five Pāṇḍava brothers. He ruled the earth after the Kurukṣetra war.

Yuga-avatāras – the four incarnations of the Supreme Lord who prescribe the appropriate method for spiritual realization in each of the four *yugas*, or ages.

Yuga-dharma – the religion for the age.

Yugas – ages in the life of a universe, occurring in a repeated cycle of four.

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 **shine** and **sun**. The letter **h** is pronounced as in **home**.