

TEXT 26

सत्यव्रतं सत्यपरं त्रिसत्यं
सत्यस्य योनिं निहितं च सत्ये
सत्यस्य सत्यमृतसत्यनेत्रं
सत्यात्मकं त्वां शरणं प्रपन्नाः

satya-vratam satya-param tri-satyam
satyasya yonim nihitam ca satye
satyasya satyam ṛta-satya-netram
satyātmakam tvām śaraṇam prapannāḥ

satya-vratam—the Personality of Godhead, who never deviates from His vow^{1*}; *satya-param*—who is the Absolute Truth (as stated in the beginning of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, *satyam param dhīmahi*); *tri-satyam*—He is always present as the Absolute Truth, before the creation of this cosmic manifestation, during its maintenance, and even after its annihilation; *satyasya*—of all relative truths, which are emanations from the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa; *yonim*—t; he cause; *nihitam*—entered^{2*}; *ca*—and; *satye*—

¹The Lord vows:

yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya
tadātmānam sṛjāmy aham

(Bg. 4.7).

To honor this vow, the Lord appeared.

²The Lord enters everything, even the atom: *aṅdāntara-stha-paramāṇu-cayāntara-stham* (***Brahma-saṁhitā*** 5.35). Therefore He is called *antaryāmī*, the inner force.

in the factors that create this material world (namely, the five elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether); *satyasya*—of all that is accepted as the truth; *satyam*—the Lord is the original truth; *ṛta-satya-netram*—He is the origin of whatever truth is pleasing (*sunetram*); *satya-ātmakam*—everything pertaining to the Lord is truth (*sac-cid-ānanda*: His body is truth, His knowledge is truth, and His pleasure is truth); *tvām*—unto you, O Lord; *śaraṇam*—offering our full surrender; *prapannāḥ*—we are completely under Your protection.

The demigods prayed: O Lord, You never deviate from Your vow, which is always perfect because whatever You decide is perfectly correct and cannot be stopped by anyone. Being present in the three phases of cosmic manifestation—creation, maintenance and annihilation—You are the Supreme Truth. Indeed, unless one is completely truthful, one cannot achieve Your favor, which therefore cannot be achieved by hypocrites. You are the active principle, the real truth, in all the ingredients of creation, and therefore you are known as antaryāmī, the inner force. You are equal to everyone, and Your instructions apply for everyone, for all time. You are the beginning of all truth. Therefore, offering our obeisances, we surrender unto You. Kindly give us protection.

The demigods or devotees know perfectly well that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the true substance, whether within this material world or in the spiritual world. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* begins, therefore, with the words *om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya. .. satyam param dhīmahi* [SB 1.1.1]. Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa, is the *param satyam*, the Supreme Truth. The Supreme Truth can be approached or understood by the supreme method, as declared by the Supreme Truth: *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ* (Bg. 18.55). *Bhakti*, devotional service, is the only way to understand the Absolute Truth. For protection, therefore, the demigods surrender to the Supreme Truth, not to the relative truth. There are persons who worship various demigods, but the Supreme Truth, Kṛṣṇa, declares in *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.23), *antavat tu phalaṁ teṣāṁ tad bhavaty alpa-medhasām*: "Men of small intelligence worship the demigods, and their fruits are limited and temporary." Worship of demigods may be useful for a limited time, but the result is *antavat*, perishable. This material world is impermanent, the demigods

are impermanent, and the benedictions derived from the demigods are also impermanent, whereas the living entity is eternal (*nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām* (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.13)). Every living entity, therefore, must search for eternal happiness, not temporary happiness. The words *satyaṁ param dhīmahi* [SB 1.1.1] indicate that one should search for the Absolute Truth, not the relative truth. While offering prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nṛsiṁhadeva, Prahlāda Mahārāja said:

*bālasya neha śaraṇaṁ pitarau nṛsiṁha
nārtasya cāgadam udanvati majjato nauḥ*

Generally it is understood that the protectors for a child are his parents, but this is not actually the fact. The real protector is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

*taptasya tat-pratividhir ya ihāñjaseṣṭas
tāvad vibho tanu-bhṛtām tvad-upekṣitānām
(SB 7.9.19)*

If neglected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a child, despite the presence of his parents, will suffer, and a diseased person, despite all medical help, will die. In this material world, where there is a struggle for existence, men have invented many means for protection, but these are useless if the Supreme Personality of Godhead rejects them. Therefore the demigods purposefully say, *satyātmakaṁ tvām śaraṇaṁ praṇannāḥ*: "Real protection can be obtained from You, O Lord, and therefore we surrender unto You,"

The Lord demands that one surrender unto Him (*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja* [Bg. 18.66]), and He further says:

*sakṛd eva praṇanno yas
tavāsmīti ca yācate
abhayaṁ sarvadā tasmai
dadāmy etad vrataṁ mama*

"If one surrenders unto Me sincerely, saying, 'My Lord, from this day I am fully surrendered unto You,' I always give him protection. That is My

vow." (*Rāmāyaṇa, Yuddha-kāṇḍa* 18.33) The demigods offered their prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead because He had now appeared in the womb of His devotee Devakī to protect all the devotees harassed by Kāṁsa and his lieutenants. Thus the Lord acts as *satyavrata*. The protection given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot be compared to the protection given by the demigods. It is said that Rāvaṇa was a great devotee of Lord Śiva, but when Lord Rāmacandra went to kill him, Lord Śiva could not give him protection.

Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva, accompanied by great sages like Nārada and followed by many other demigods, had now invisibly appeared in the house of Kāṁsa. They began to pray for the Supreme Personality of Godhead in select prayers which are very pleasing to the devotees and which award fulfillment of devotional desires. The first words they spoke acclaimed that the Lord is true to His vow. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa descends upon this material world just to protect the pious and destroy the impious. That is His vow. The demigods could understand that the Lord had taken His residence within the womb of Devakī to fulfill this vow. They were very glad that the Lord was appearing to fulfill His mission, and they addressed Him as *satyaṁ param*, or the Supreme Absolute Truth.

Everyone is searching after the truth. That is the philosophical way of life. The demigods give information that the Supreme Absolute Truth is Kṛṣṇa. One who becomes fully Kṛṣṇa conscious can attain the Absolute Truth. Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth. Relative truth is not truth in all the three phases of eternal time. Time is divided into past, present and future. Kṛṣṇa is Truth always, past, present and future. In the material world, everything is being controlled by supreme time, in the course of past, present and future. But before the creation, Kṛṣṇa was existing, and when there is creation, everything is resting in Kṛṣṇa, and when this creation is finished, Kṛṣṇa will remain. Therefore, He is Absolute Truth in all circumstances, If there is any truth within this material world, it emanates from the Supreme Truth, Kṛṣṇa. If there is any opulence within this material world, the cause of the opulence is Kṛṣṇa. If there is any reputation within this material world, the cause of the reputation is Kṛṣṇa. If there is any strength within this material world, the cause of

such strength is Kṛṣṇa. If there is any wisdom and education within this material world, the cause of such wisdom and education is Kṛṣṇa.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa is the source of all relative truths.

Devotees, therefore, following in the footsteps of Lord Brahmā, pray, *govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi ***, worshiping the *ādi-puruṣa*, the supreme truth, Govinda. Everything, everywhere, is performed in terms of three principles, *jñāna-bala-kriyā*—knowledge, strength and activity. In every field, if there is not full knowledge, full strength and full activity, an endeavor is never successful. Therefore, if one wants success in everything, one must be backed by these three principles. In the *Vedas* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.8) there is this statement about the Supreme Personality of Godhead:

*na tasya kāryam karaṇam ca vidyate
na tat samaś cābhyadhikaś ca dṛśyate
parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca
[Cc. Madhya 13.65, purport]*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead does not need to do anything personally, for He has such potencies that anything He wants done will be done perfectly well through the control of material nature (*svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*). Similarly, those who are engaged in the service of the Lord are not meant to struggle for existence. The devotees who are fully engaged in spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, more than ten thousand men and women all over the world, have no steady or permanent occupation, yet we actually see that they are maintained very opulently. The Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.22):

*ananyāś cintayanto mām
ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṃ nityābhiyuktānām
yoga-kṣemaṃ vahāmy aham*

"For those who worship Me with devotion, meditating on My transcendental form, I carry to them what they lack and preserve what they have." The devotees have no anxiety over what will happen next,

where they will stay or what they will eat, for everything is maintained and supplied by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has promised, *kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*: "O son of Kuntī, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes." (Bg. 9.31) From all angles of vision, therefore, in all circumstances, if one fully surrenders unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there is no question of one's struggling for existence. In this connection, the commentary by Śrīpāda Madhvācārya, who quotes from the *Tantra-bhāgavata*, is very meaningful:

*sac-chadba uttamaṁ brūyād
ānandantīti vai vadet
yetijñānaṁ samuddiṣṭaṁ
pūrṇānanda-dṛśis tataḥ

atṛtvāc ca tadā dānāt
satyāttya cocyate vibhuḥ*

Explaining the words *satyasya yonim*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that Kṛṣṇa is the *avatārī*, the origin of all incarnations. All incarnations are the Absolute Truth, yet the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa is the origin of all incarnations. *Dīpārcir eva hi daśāntaram abhyupetya dīpāyate* (Bs. 5.46). There may be many lamps, all equal in power, yet there is a first lamp, a second lamp, a third lamp and so on. Similarly, there are many incarnations, who are compared to lamps, but the first lamp, the original Personality of Godhead, is Kṛṣṇa. *Govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi* **.

The demigods must offer worship in obedience to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but one might argue that since the Supreme Godhead was within the womb of Devakī, He was also coming in a material body. Why then should He be worshiped? Why should one make a distinction between an ordinary living entity and the Supreme Personality of Godhead? These questions are answered in the following verses.

TEXT 27

एकायनोऽसौ द्विफलत्रिमूलश्
चतूरसः पञ्चविधः षडात्मा
सप्तत्वगष्टविटपो नवाक्षो
दशच्छदी द्विखगो ह्यादिवृक्षः

*ekāyano 'sau dvi-phalas tri-mūlaś
catū-rasaḥ pañca-vidhaḥ ṣaḍ-ātmā
sapta-tvag aṣṭa-viṭapo navākṣo
daśa-cchadī dvi-khago hy ādi-vṛkṣaḥ*

eka-ayanaḥ—the body of an ordinary living being is fully dependent on the material elements; *asau*—that; *dvi-phalaḥ*—in this body we are subject to material happiness and distress, which result from *karma*; *tri-mūlaḥ*—having three roots, the three modes of nature (goodness, passion and ignorance), upon which the body is created; ³*catuḥ-rasaḥ*—four rasas, or tastes; *pañca-vidhaḥ*—consisting of five senses for acquiring knowledge (the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and touch); *ṣaḍ-ātmā*—six circumstances (lamentation, illusion, old age, death, hunger and thirst); *sapta-tvak*—having seven coverings (skin, blood, muscle, fat, bone, marrow and semen); *aṣṭa-viṭapaḥ*—eight branches (the five gross elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether—and also the mind, intelligence and ego); *nava-akṣaḥ*—nine holes; *daśa-chadī*—ten kinds of life air, resembling the leaves of a tree; *dvi-khagaḥ*—two birds (the individual soul and the Supersoul); *hi*—indeed; *ādi-vṛkṣaḥ*—this is the original tree or construction of the material body, whether individual or universal.

The body [the total body and the individual body are of the same composition] may figuratively be called "the original tree." From this tree, which fully depends on the ground of material nature, come two kinds of fruit—the enjoyment of happiness and the suffering of distress. The cause of the tree, forming its three roots, is association with the

³ As the root of a tree extracts water (*rasa*) from the earth, the body tastes *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*—religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. These are four kinds of *rāsa*, or taste.

three modes of material nature—goodness, passion and ignorance. The fruits of bodily happiness have four tastes—religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation—which are experienced through five senses for acquiring knowledge in the midst of six circumstances: lamentation, illusion, old age, death, hunger and thirst. The seven layers of bark covering the tree are skin, blood, muscle, fat, bone, marrow and semen, and the eight branches of the tree are the five gross and three subtle elements—earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego. The tree of the body has nine hollows—the eyes, the ears, the nostrils, the mouth, the rectum and the genitals—and ten leaves, the ten airs passing through the body. In this tree of the body there are two birds: one is the individual soul, and the other is the Supersoul.

This material world is composed of five principal elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether—all of which are emanations from Kṛṣṇa. Although materialistic scientists may accept these five primary elements as the cause of the material manifestation, these elements in their gross and subtle states are produced by Kṛṣṇa, whose marginal potency also produces the living entities working within this material world. The Seventh Chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā* clearly states that the entire cosmic manifestation is a combination of two of Kṛṣṇa's energies—the superior energy and the inferior energy. The living entities are the superior energy, and the inanimate material elements are His inferior energy. In the dormant stage, everything rests in Kṛṣṇa.

Material scientists cannot give such a thorough analysis of the material structure of the body. The analysis of the material scientists concerns itself only with inanimate matter, but this is inadequate because the living entity is completely separate from the material bodily structure. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.5) the Lord says:

*apareyam itas tv anyām
prakṛtīm viddhi me parām
jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho
yayedam dhāryate jagat*

"Besides this inferior nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is a superior

energy of Mine, which consists of all the living entities who are struggling with material nature and are sustaining the universe." Although the material elements emanate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, they are separated elements and are sustained by the living elements.

As indicated by the word *dvi-khagaḥ*, the living elements within the body resemble two birds in a tree. *Kha* means "sky," and *ga* means "one who flies." Thus the word *dvi-khagaḥ* refers to birds. In the tree of the body there are two birds, or two living elements, and they are always different. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.3), the Lord says, *kṣetra-jñāṁ cāpi mām viddhi sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata*: "O scion of Bharata, you should understand that I am also the knower in all bodies." The *kṣetra jñā*, the owner of the body, is also called the *khaga*, the living entity. Within the body there are two such *kṣetra jñas*—the individual soul and the Supersoul. The individual soul is the owner of his individual body, but the Supersoul is present within the bodies of all living entities. Such a thorough analysis and understanding of the bodily structure cannot be obtained anywhere but in the Vedic literature.

When two birds enter a tree, one may foolishly think that the birds become one or merge with the tree, but actually they do not. Rather, each bird keeps its individual identity. Similarly, the individual soul and the Supersoul do not become one, nor do they merge with matter. The living entity lives close to matter, but this does not mean that he merges or mixes with it (*asaṅgo hy ayaṁ puruṣaḥ*), although material scientists mistakenly see the organic and inorganic, or animate and inanimate, to be mixed.

Vedic knowledge has been kept imprisoned or concealed, but every human being needs to understand it in truth. The modern civilization of ignorance is simply engaged in analyzing the body, and thus people come to the erroneous conclusion that the living force within the body is generated under certain material conditions. People have no information of the soul, but this verse gives the perfect explanation that there are two living forces (*dvi-khaga*): the individual soul and the Supersoul. The Supersoul is present in every body (*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati* [Bg. 18.61]), whereas the individual soul

is situated only in his own body (*dehī*) and is transmigrating from one body to another.

TEXT 28

त्वमेक एवास्य सतः प्रसूतिस्
त्वं सन्निधानं त्वमनुग्रहश्च
त्वन्मायया संवृतचेतसस्त्वां
पश्यन्ति नाना न विपश्चितो ये

*tvam eka evāsyā sataḥ prasūtiḥ
tvam sannidhānam tvam anugrahaś ca
tvam-māyayā samvṛta-cetasas tvām
paśyanti nānā na vipaścito ye*

tvam—You (O Lord); *ekaḥ*—being one without a second, You are everything; *eva*—indeed; *asyā sataḥ*—of this cosmic manifestation now visible; *prasūtiḥ*—the original source; *tvam*—Your Lordship; *sannidhānam*—the conservation of all such energy when everything is annihilated; *tvam*—Your Lordship; *anugrahaḥ ca*—and the maintainer; *tvam-māyayā*—by Your illusory, external energy; *samvṛta-cetasas*—those whose intelligence is covered by such illusory energy; *tvām*—unto You; *paśyanti*—observe; *nānā*—many varieties; *na*—not; *vipaścitaḥ*—learned scholars or devotees; *ye*—who are.

The efficient cause of this material world, manifested with its many varieties as the original tree, is You, O Lord. You are also the maintainer of this material world, and after annihilation You are the one in whom everything is conserved. Those who are covered by Your external energy cannot see You behind this manifestation, but theirs is not the vision of learned devotees.

Various demigods, beginning from Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and even Viṣṇu, are supposed to be the creator, maintainer and annihilator of this material world, but actually they are not. The fact is that everything is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, manifested in varieties of energy. *Ekam evādvitīyam brahma*. There is no second existence. Those who are truly *vipaścita*, learned, are those who have reached the platform of

understanding and observing the Supreme Personality of Godhead in any condition of life. *premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti* (Bs. 5.38). Learned devotees accept even conditions of distress as representing the presence of the Supreme Lord. When a devotee is in distress, he sees that the Lord has appeared as distress just to relieve or purify the devotee from the contamination of the material world. While one is within this material world, one is in various conditions, and therefore a devotee sees a condition of distress as but another feature of the Lord. *Tat te'nukampām susamīkṣamāṇaḥ* (SB 10.14.8). A devotee, therefore, regards distress as a great favor of the Lord because he understands that he is being cleansed of contamination. *Teṣāṃ ahaṃ samuddhartā mṛtyu-saṃsāra-sāgarāt* (Bg. 12.7). The appearance of distress is a negative process intended to give the devotee relief from this material world, which is called *mṛtyu-saṃsāra*, or the constant repetition of birth and death. To save a surrendered soul from repeated birth and death, the Lord purifies him of contamination by offering him a little distress. This cannot be understood by a nondevotee, but a devotee can see this because he is *vipaścit*, or learned. A nondevotee, therefore, is perturbed in distress, but a devotee welcomes distress as another feature of the Lord. *Sarvaṃ khalv idaṃ brahma*. A devotee can actually see that there is only the Supreme Personality of Godhead and no second entity. *Ekam evādvitīyam*. There is only the Lord, who presents Himself in different energies. Persons who are not in real knowledge think that Brahmā is the creator, Viṣṇu the maintainer and Śiva the annihilator and that the different demigods are intended to fulfill diverse purposes. Thus they create diverse purposes and worship various demigods to have these purposes fulfilled (*kāmais tais tair hr̥ta jñānāḥ prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ* [Bg. 7.20]). A devotee, however, knows that these various demigods are but different parts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that these parts need not be worshiped. As the Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.23):

*ye 'py anya-devatā bhaktā
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya
yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam*

"Whatever a man may sacrifice to other gods, O son of Kuntī, is really meant for Me alone, but it is offered without true understanding." There is no need to worship the demigods, for this is *avidhi*, not in order. Simply by surrendering oneself at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, one can completely discharge one's duties; there is no need to worship various deities or demigods. These various divinities are observed by the *mūḍhas*, fools, who are bewildered by the three modes of material nature (*tribhir guṇamayair bhāvair ebhiḥ sarvam idaṃ jagat*). Such fools cannot understand that the real source of everything is the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*mohitaṃ nābhijānāti mām ebhyaḥ param avyayam* [Bg. 7.13]). Not being disturbed by the Lord's various features, one should concentrate upon and worship the Supreme Lord (*mām ekaṃ śaraṇaṃ vraja*). This should be the guiding principle of one's life.

TEXT 29

बिभर्षि रूपाण्यवबोध आत्मा
 क्षेमाय लोकस्य चराचरस्य
 सत्त्वोपपन्नानि सुखावहानि
 सतामभद्राणि मुहुः खलानाम्

*bibharṣi rūpāṅy avabodha ātmā
 kṣemāya lokasya carācarasya
 sattvoṇpapannāni sukhāvahāni
 satām abhadrāṅi muhuḥ khalānām*

bibharṣi—You accept; *rūpāṅi*—varieties of forms, such as Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Rāma and Nṛsimha; *avabodhaḥ ātmā*—in spite of having different incarnations, You remain the Supreme, full of knowledge; *kṣemāya*—for the benefit of everyone, and especially the devotees; *lokasya*—of all living entities; *cara-acarasya*—moving and nonmoving; *sattva-upapannāni*—all such incarnations are transcendental (*śuddha-sattva*); *sukha-avahāni*—full of transcendental bliss; *satām*—of the devotees; *abhadrāṅi*—all inauspiciousness or annihilation; *muhuḥ*—again and again; *khalānām*—of the nondevotees.

O Lord, You are always in full knowledge, and to bring all good fortune to

all living entities, You appear in different incarnations, all of them transcendental to the material creation. When You appear in these incarnations, You are pleasing to the pious and religious devotees, but for nondevotees You are the annihilator.

This verse explains why the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears as an incarnation again and again. The incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead all function differently, but their main purpose is *paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām* [Bg. 4.8]—to protect the devotees and annihilate the miscreants. Yet even though the *duṣkṛtīs*, or miscreants, are annihilated, this is ultimately good for them.

TEXT 30

त्वय्यम्बुजाक्षाखिलसत्त्वधाम्नि
समाधिनावेशितचेतसैके
त्वत्पादपोतेन महत्कृतेन
कुर्वन्ति गोवत्सपदं भवाब्धिम्

*tvayy ambujākṣākhila-sattva-dhāmni
samādhināveśita-cetasaike
tvat-pāda-potena mahat-kṛtena
kurvanti govatsa-padam bhavābdhim*

tvayi—in You; *ambuja-akṣa*—O lotus-eyed Lord; *akhila-sattva-dhāmni*—who are the original cause of all existence, from whom everything emanates and in whom all potencies reside; *samādhinā*—by constant meditation and complete absorption (in thoughts of You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead); *āveśita*—fully absorbed, fully engaged; *cetasā*—but by such a mentality; *eke*—the one process of always thinking of Your lotus feet; *tvat-pāda-potena*—by boarding such a boat as Your lotus feet; *mahat-kṛtena*—by that action which is considered the most powerful original existence or which is executed by *mahājanas*; *kurvanti*—they make; *govatsa-padam*—like the hoofprint of a calf; *bhava-abdhim*—the great ocean of nescience.

O lotus-eyed Lord, by concentrating one's meditation on Your lotus feet, which are the reservoir of all existence, and by accepting those lotus feet

as the boat by which to cross the ocean of nescience, one follows in the footsteps of mahājanas [great saints, sages and devotees]. By this simple process, one can cross the ocean of nescience as easily as one steps over the hoofprint of a calf.

The true mission in life is to cross the ocean of nescience, of repeated birth and death. Those in the darkness of ignorance, however, do not know this mission. Instead, being carried away by the waves of material nature (*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ* [Bg. 3.27]), they are undergoing the tribulations of *mṛtyu-saṁsāra-vartmani* [Bg. 9.3], repeated birth and death. But persons who have achieved knowledge by the association of devotees follow the *mahājanas* (*mahat-kṛtena*). Such a person always concentrates his mind upon the lotus feet of the Lord and executes one or more of the nine varieties of devotional service (*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam pāda-sevanam* [SB 7.5.23]). Simply by this process, one can cross the insurmountable ocean of nescience. Devotional service is powerful in any form. *Śrī-viṣṇoḥ śravaṇe parīkṣid abhavad vaiyāsakiḥ kīrtane* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.265). According to this verse, Mahārāja Parīkṣit became liberated by fully concentrating his mind on hearing the Lord's holy name, attributes and pastimes. Similarly, Śukadeva Gosvāmī simply glorified the Lord, and by speaking on the subject matters of Kṛṣṇa that constitute the entire *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he too was liberated. One may also be liberated simply by *sakhya*, friendly behavior with the Lord. Such is the power of devotional service, as we learn from the examples set by the Lord's many pure devotees.

*svayambhūr nāradaḥ sambhuḥ
kumāraḥ kapilo manuḥ
prahlādo janako bhīṣmo
balir vaiyāsakir vayam
[SB 6.3.20]*

We have to follow in the footsteps of such devotees, for by this one easy process one can cross the great ocean of nescience just as one might cross a small hole created by the hoof of a calf.

Here the Lord is described as *ambujākṣa*, or lotus-eyed. By seeing the

eyes of the Lord, which are compared to lotus flowers, one becomes so satisfied that one does not want to turn his eyes to anything else. Simply by seeing the transcendental form of the Lord, a devotee is at once fully absorbed in the Lord in his heart. This absorption is called *samādhī*. *Dhyānāvasthita-tad-gatena manasā paśyanti yaṁ yoginaḥ* (SB 12.13.1). A *yogī* is fully absorbed in thoughts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for he has no other business than to think of the Lord always within the heart. It is also said:

*samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ padaṁ
padaṁ padaṁ yad vipadāṁ na teṣāṁ*

"For one who has accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Murāri, the enemy of the demon Mura, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf's hoofprint. His goal is *paraṁ padaṁ*, or Vaikuṅṭha, the place where there are no material miseries, not the place where there is danger at every step." (SB 10.14.58) This process is recommended here by authorities like Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva (*svayambhūr nāradaḥ śambhuḥ* [SB 6.3.20]), and therefore we must take to this process in order to transcend nescience. This is very easy, but we must follow in the footsteps of great personalities, and then success will be possible.

In regard to the word *mahat-kṛtena*, it is also significant that the process shown by great devotees is not only for them but also for others. If things are made easy, this affords facility for the person who has made them easy and also for others who follow the same principles. The process recommended in this verse for crossing the ocean of nescience is easy not only for the devotee but also for common persons who follow the devotee (*mahājano yena gataḥ sa paṅthāḥ* [Cc. Madhya 17.186]).

TEXT 31

स्वयं समुत्तीर्य सुदुस्तरं द्युमन्
भवार्णवं भीममदभ्रसौहृदाः

भवत्पदाम्भोरुहनावमत्र ते
निधाय याताः सद्नुग्रहो भवान्

*svayaṁ samuttīrya sudustaram dyuman
bhavārṇavam bhīmam adabhra-sauhrdāḥ
bhavat-padāmbhoruha-nāvam atra te
nidhāya yātāḥ sad-anugraho bhavān*

svayam—personally; *samuttīrya*—perfectly crossing; *su-dustaram*—which is very difficult to cross; *dyuman*—O Lord, who appear exactly like the sun, illuminating the darkness of this world of ignorance; *bhava-arṇavam*—the ocean of nescience; *bhīmam*—which is extremely fierce; *adabhra-sauhrdāḥ*—devotees who are incessantly friendly to the fallen souls; *bhavat-pada-ambhoruha*—Your lotus feet; *nāvam*—the boat for crossing; *atra*—in this world; *te*—they (the Vaiṣṇavas); *nidhāya*—leaving behind; *yātāḥ*—on to the ultimate destination, Vaikuṅṭha; *sad-anugrahaḥ*—who are always kind and merciful to the devotees; *bhavān*—You.

O Lord, who resemble the shining sun, You are always ready to fulfill the desire of Your devotee, and therefore You are known as a desire tree [vāñchā-kalpataru]. When ācāryas completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross, and because You are very merciful to Your other devotees, You accept this method to help them.

This statement reveals how the merciful ācāryas and the merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead together help the serious devotee who wants to return home, back to Godhead. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in His teachings to Rūpa Gosvāmī, said:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja
(Cc. Madhya 19.151)*

One can achieve the seed of *bhakti-latā*, devotional service, by the mercy of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa. The duty of the *guru* is to find the means, according

to the time, the circumstances and the candidate, by which one can be induced to render devotional service, which Kṛṣṇa accepts from a candidate who wants to be successful in going back home, back to Godhead. After wandering throughout the universe, a fortunate person within this material world seeks shelter of such a *guru*, or *ācārya*, who trains the devotee in the suitable ways to render service according to the circumstances so that the Supreme Personality of Godhead will accept the service. This makes it easier for the candidate to reach the ultimate destination. The *ācārya's* duty, therefore, is to find the means by which devotees may render service according to references from *śāstra*. Rūpa Gosvāmī, for example, in order to help subsequent devotees, published such devotional books as *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Thus it is the duty of the *ācārya* to publish books that will help future candidates take up the method of service and become eligible to return home, back to Godhead, by the mercy of the Lord. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, this same path is being prescribed and followed. Thus the devotees have been advised to refrain from four sinful activities—illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling—and to chant sixteen rounds a day. These are bona fide instructions. Because in the Western countries constant chanting is not possible, one should not artificially imitate Haridāsa Ṭhākura, but should follow this method. Kṛṣṇa will accept a devotee who strictly follows the regulative principles and the method prescribed in the various books and literatures published by the authorities. The *ācārya* gives the suitable method for crossing the ocean of nescience by accepting the boat of the Lord's lotus feet, and if this method is strictly followed, the followers will ultimately reach the destination, by the grace of the Lord. This method is called *ācārya-sampradāya*. It is therefore said, *sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ* (*Padma Purāṇa*). The *ācārya-sampradāya* is strictly bona fide. Therefore one must accept the *ācārya-sampradāya*; otherwise one's endeavor will be futile. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura therefore sings:

*tāñdera caraṇa sevi bhakta sane vāsa
janame janame haya, ei abhilāṣa*

One must worship the lotus feet of the *ācārya* and live within the society

of devotees. Then one's endeavor to cross over nescience will surely be successful.

TEXT 32

येऽन्येऽरविन्दाक्ष विमुक्तमानिनस्
त्वय्यस्तभावादविशुद्धबुद्धयः
आरुह्य कृच्छ्रेण परं पदं ततः
पतन्त्यधोऽनादृतयुष्मदङ्घ्रयः

*ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninas
tvayy asta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ
āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ
patanty adho 'nādṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*

ye anye—anyone, or all others; *aravinda-akṣa*—O lotus-eyed one; *vimukta-māninaḥ*—falsely considering themselves free from the bondage of material contamination; *tvayi*—unto You; *asta-bhāvāt*—speculating in various ways but not knowing or desiring more information of Your lotus feet; *aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ*—whose intelligence is still not purified and who do not know the goal of life; *āruhya*—even though achieving; *kṛcchreṇa*—by undergoing severe austerities, penances and hard labor; *param padam*—the highest position (according to their imagination and speculation); *tataḥ*—from that position; *patanti*—they fall; *adhaḥ*—down into material existence again; *anādṛta*—neglecting devotion to; *yuṣmat*—Your; *aṅghrayaḥ*—lotus feet.

[Someone may say that aside from devotees, who always seek shelter at the Lord's lotus feet, there are those who are not devotees but who have accepted different processes for attaining salvation. What happens to them? In answer to this question, Lord Brahmā and the other demigods said:] **O lotus-eyed Lord, although nondevotees who accept severe austerities and penances to achieve the highest position may think themselves liberated, their intelligence is impure. They fall down from their position of imagined superiority because they have no regard for Your lotus feet.**

Aside from devotees, there are many others, nondevotees, known as

karmīs, jñānīs or *yogīs*, philanthropists, altruists, politicians, impersonalists and voidists. There are many varieties of nondevotees who have their respective ways of liberation, but simply because they do not know the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet, although they falsely think that they have been liberated and elevated to the highest position, they fall down. As clearly stated by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.3):

*aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā
dharmasyāsya parantapa
apṛāpya 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." It doesn't matter whether one is a *karmī, jñānī, yogī*, philanthropist, politician or whatever; if one has no love for the lotus feet of the Lord, one falls down. That is the verdict given by Lord Brahmā in this verse.

There are persons who advocate accepting any process and who say that whatever process one accepts will lead to the same goal, but that is refuted in this verse, where such persons are referred to as *vimukta-māninaḥ*, signifying that although they think they have attained the highest perfection, in fact they have not. In the present day, big, big politicians all over the world think that by scheming they can occupy the highest political post, that of president or prime minister, but we actually see that even in this life such big prime ministers, presidents and other politicians, because of being nondevotees, fall down (*patanty adhaḥ*). To become president or prime minister is not easy; one must work very hard (*āruhya kṛcchreṇa*) to achieve the post. And even though one may reach his goal, at any moment one may be kicked down by material nature. In human society there have been many instances in which great, exalted politicians have fallen from government and become lost in historical oblivion. The cause of this is *aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ*: [SB 10.2.32] their intelligence is impure. The *śāstra* says, *na te viduḥ svārtha-gatiṁ hi viṣṇum* (SB 7.5.31). One achieves the perfection of life by becoming a devotee of Viṣṇu, but people do not know this.

Therefore, as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.5), *kleśo 'dhikataras teṣām avyaktāsakta-cetasām*. Persons who do not ultimately accept the Supreme Personality of Godhead and take to devotional service, but who instead are attached to impersonalism and voidism, must undergo great labor to achieve their goals.

*śreyaḥ-sṛtiṁ bhaktim udasya te vibho
kliśyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave
(SB 10.14.4)*

To achieve understanding, such persons work very hard and undergo severe austerities, but their hard labor and austerities themselves are their only achievement, for they do not actually achieve the real goal of life.

Dhruva Mahārāja at first wanted to achieve the greatest material kingdom and greater material possessions than his father, but when he was actually favored by the Lord, who appeared before him to give him the benediction he desired, Dhruva Mahārāja refused it, saying, *svāmin kṛtārtho'smi varam na yāce*: [Cc. Madhya 22.42] "Now I am fully satisfied. I do not want any material benediction." (*Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* 7.28) This is the perfection of life. *Yaṁ labdhvā cāparam lābham manyate nādhikam tataḥ* (Bg. 6.22). If one achieves the shelter of the Lord's lotus feet, one is fully satisfied and does not need to ask for any material benediction.

At night, no one can see a lotus, for lotuses blossom only during the daytime. Therefore the word *aravindākṣa* is significant. One who is not captivated by the lotus eyes or transcendental form of the Supreme Lord is in darkness, exactly like one who cannot see a lotus. One who has not come to the point of seeing the lotus eyes and transcendental form of Śyāmasundara is a failure. *premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti* [Bs. 5.38]. Those who are attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in love always see the Lord's lotus eyes and lotus feet, whereas others cannot see the Lord's beauty and are therefore classified as *anāḍṛta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ*, or neglectful of the Lord's personal form. Those who neglect the Lord's form are surely failures on every path in life, but if one develops even a little love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is liberated without difficulty

(*svalpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt*). Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead recommends in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.34), *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī mām namaskuru*: [Bg. 18.65] "Simply think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me and offer some slight homage to Me." Simply by this process, one is guaranteed to return home, back to Godhead, and thus attain the highest perfection. The Lord further affirms in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.54-55):

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

*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti
yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ
tato mām tattvato jñātvā
viśate tad-anantaram*

"One who is thus 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. 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."

TEXT 33

तथा न ते माधव तावकाः क्वचिद्
भ्रश्यन्ति मार्गात्त्वयि बद्धसौहृदाः
त्वयाभिगुप्ता विचरन्ति निर्भया
विनायकानीकपमूर्धसु प्रभो

*tathā na te mādharma tāvakāḥ kvacid
bhraśyanti mārgāt tvayi baddha-sauhṛdāḥ
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā*

vināyakānīkaṇa-mūrdhasu prabho

tathā—like them (the nondevotees); *na*—not; *te*—they (the devotees); *mādhava*—O Lord, husband of the goddess of fortune; *tāvakāḥ*—the followers of the devotional path, the devotees; *kvacit*—in any circumstances; *bhraśyanti*—fall down; *mārgāt*—from the path of devotional service; *tvayi*—unto You; *baddha-sauhṛdāḥ*—because of being fully attached to Your lotus feet; *tvayā*—by You; *abhiguptāḥ*—always protected from all dangers; *vicaranti*—they move; *nirbhayāḥ*—without fear; *vināyaka-anīkaṇa*—the enemies who maintain paraphernalia to oppose the *bhakti* cult; *mūrdhasu*—on their heads; *prabho*—O Lord.

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.

Devotees generally do not fall down, but if circumstantially they do, the Lord, because of their strong attachment to Him, gives them protection in all circumstances. Thus even if devotees fall down, they are still strong enough to traverse the heads of their enemies. We have actually seen that our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement has many opponents, such as the "deprogrammers," who instituted a strong legal case against the devotees. We thought that this case would take a long time to settle, but because the devotees were protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we unexpectedly won the case in one day. Thus a case that was expected to continue for years was settled in a day because of the protection of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has promised in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.31), *kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*: "O son of Kuntī, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes." In history there are many instances of devotees like Citraketu, Indradyumna and Mahārāja Bharata who circumstantially fell down but were still protected. Mahārāja Bharata, for example, because of his attachment to a deer, thought of the deer at the time of death, and therefore in his next life he became a deer (*yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajaty ante kalevaram* [Bg. 8.6]). Because of protection by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, however, the deer remembered his

relationship with the Lord and next took birth in a good brahminical family and performed devotional service (*śucīnām śrīmatām gehe yoga-bhraṣṭo 'bhijāyate* [Bg. 6.41]). Similarly, Citraketu fell down and became a demon, Vṛtrāsura, but he too was protected. Thus even if one falls down from the path of *bhakti-yoga*, one is ultimately saved. If a devotee is strongly situated in devotional service, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has promised to protect him (*kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati* [Bg. 9.31]). But even if a devotee circumstantially falls down, he is protected by Mādhava.

The word Mādhava is significant. *Mā*, mother Lakṣmī, the mother of all opulences, is always with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and if a devotee is in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, all the opulences of the Lord are ready to help him.

*yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo
yatra pāṛtho dhanur-dharaḥ
tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtir
dhruvā nītir matir mama
(Bg. 18.78)*

Wherever there is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and His devotee Arjuna, Pārtha, there is victory, opulence, extraordinary power and morality. The opulences of a devotee are not a result of *karma-kāṇḍa-vicāra*. A devotee is always protected by all of the Supreme Lord's opulences, of which no one can deprive him (*teṣāṃ nityābhīyuktānāṃ yoga-kṣemaṃ vahāmy aham* [Bg. 9.22]). Thus a devotee cannot be defeated by any opponents. A devotee, therefore, should not deviate knowingly from the path of devotion. The adherent devotee is assured all protection from the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

TEXT 34

सत्त्वं विशुद्धं श्रयते भवान् स्थितौ
शरीरिणां श्रेयउपायनं वपुः
वेदक्रियायोगतपःसमाधिभिस्
तवार्हणं येन जनः समीहते

*sattvaṁ viśuddhaṁ śrayate bhavān sthitau
śarīriṇām śreya-upāyanam vapuḥ
veda-kriyā-yoga-tapaḥ-samādhibhis
tavārhaṇam yena janaḥ samīhate*

sattvam—existence; *viśuddham*—transcendental, beyond the three modes of material nature; *śrayate*—accepts; *bhavān*—Your Lordship; *sthitau*—during the maintenance of this material world; *śarīriṇām*—of all living entities; *śreyaḥ*—of supreme auspiciousness; *upāyanam*—for the benefit; *vapuḥ*—a transcendental form or body; *veda-kriyā*—by ritualistic ceremonies according to the directions of the Vedas; *yoga*—by practice of devotion; *tapaḥ*—by austerities; *samādhibhiḥ*—by becoming absorbed in transcendental existence; *tava*—Your; *arhaṇam*—worship; *yena*—by such activities; *janaḥ*—human society; *samīhate*—offers (its obligation unto You).

O Lord, during the time of maintenance You manifest several incarnations, all with transcendental bodies, beyond the material modes of nature. When You appear in this way, You bestow all good fortune upon the living entities by teaching them to perform Vedic activities such as ritualistic ceremonies, mystic yoga, austerities, penances, and ultimately samādhi, ecstatic absorption in thoughts of You. Thus You are worshiped by the Vedic principles.

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.3), *yajña-dāna-tapaḥ-karma na tyājyam*: the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies, charity, austerity and all such prescribed duties are never to be given up. *Yajño dānam tapaś caiva pāvanāni manīṣiṇām* (18.5): even one who is very much advanced in spiritual realization must still execute the Vedic principles. Even in the lowest stage, the *karmīs* are advised to work for the sake of the Lord.

*yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra
loko 'yaṁ karma-bandhanaḥ*

"Work done as a sacrifice for Viṣṇu has to be performed, otherwise work binds one to this material world." (Bg. 3.9) The words *yajñārthāt karmaṇaḥ* indicate that while performing all kinds of duties, one should remember that these duties should be performed to satisfy the Supreme

Lord (*sva-karmaṇā tam abhyarcya* [Bg. 18.46]). According to Vedic principles, there must be divisions of human society (*cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam* [Bg. 4.13]). There should be *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras*, and everyone should learn to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*tam abhyarcya*). This is real human society, and without this system we are left with animal society.

The modern activities of human society are described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the activities of *go-khara*, cows and asses (*sa eva go-kharaḥ* [SB 10.84.13]). Everyone is acting in a bodily concept of life involving society, friendship and love for the improvement of economic and political conditions, and thus all activities are enacted in ignorance. The Supreme Personality therefore comes to teach us how to act according to the Vedic principles. In this age of Kali, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and preached that in this age the Vedic activities cannot be systematically performed because people are so fallen. He gave this recommendation from the *śāstras*:

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatiḥ anyathā
[Cc. Ādi 17.21]*

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way." The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is therefore teaching people all over the world how to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, and this has proved very much effective in all places at all times. The Supreme Personality of Godhead appears in order to teach us Vedic principles intended for understanding Him (*vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah* [Bg. 15.15]). We should always know that when Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya appeared, They appeared in *śuddha-sattva* bodies. One should not mistake the body of Kṛṣṇa or Caitanya Mahāprabhu to be a material body like ours, for Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared as needed for the benefit of the entire human society. Out of

causeless mercy, the Lord appears in different ages in His original *śuddha-sattva* transcendental body to elevate human society to the spiritual platform upon which they can truly benefit. Unfortunately, modern politicians and other leaders stress the bodily comforts of life (*yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke* [SB 10.84.13]) and concentrate on the activities of this ism and that ism, which they describe in different kinds of flowery language. Essentially such activities are the activities of animals (*sa eva go-kharaḥ* [SB 10.84.13]). We should learn how to act from *Bhagavad-gītā*, which explains everything for human understanding. Thus we can become happy even in this age of Kali.

TEXT 35

सत्त्वं न चेद्घातरिदं निजं भवेद्
 विज्ञानमज्ञानभिदापमार्जनम्
 गुणप्रकाशैरनुमीयते भवान्
 प्रकाशते यस्य च येन वा गुणः

*sattvaṁ na ced dhātar idaṁ nijam bhaved
 vijñānam ajñāna-bhidāpamārjanam
 guṇa-prakāśair anumīyate bhavān
 prakāśate yasya ca yena vā guṇaḥ*

sattvam—*śuddha-sattva*, transcendental; *na*—not; *cet*—if; *dhātaḥ*—O reservoir of all energies, cause of all causes; *idaṁ*—this; *nijam*—personal, spiritual; *bhaved*—could have been; *vijñānam*—transcendental knowledge; *ajñāna-bhidā*—which drives away the ignorance of the material modes; *apamārjanam*—completely vanquished; *guṇa-prakāśaiḥ*—by the awakening of such transcendental knowledge; *anumīyate*—becomes manifested; *bhavān*—Your Lordship; *prakāśate*—exhibit; *yasya*—whose; *ca*—and; *yena*—by which; *vā*—either; *guṇaḥ*—quality or intelligence.

O Lord, cause of all causes, if Your transcendental body were not beyond the modes of material nature, one could not understand the difference between matter and transcendence. Only by Your presence can one understand the transcendental nature of Your Lordship, who are the

controller of material nature. Your transcendental nature is very difficult to understand unless one is influenced by the presence of Your transcendental form.

It is said, *traiguṇya-viṣayā vedā nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna*. Unless one is situated in transcendence, one cannot understand the transcendental nature of the Lord. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.29):

*athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-
prasāda-leśānugṛhīta eva hi
jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno
na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvan*

Only by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead can one understand Him. Those who are in the modes of material nature, although speculating for thousands of years, cannot understand Him. The Lord has innumerable forms (*rāmādi-mūrtiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan* [Bs. 5.39]), and unless these forms, such as Lord Rāmacandra, Nṛsiṁhadeva, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, were transcendental, how could they be worshiped by devotees since time immemorial? *Bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ* (Bg. 18.55). Devotees who awaken their transcendental nature in the presence of the Lord and who follow the rules and regulations of devotional service can understand Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Rāmacandra and other incarnations, who are not of this material world but who come from the spiritual world for the benefit of people in general. If one does not take to this process, one imagines or manufactures some form of God according to material qualities and can never awaken a real understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The words *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ* signify that unless one worships the Lord according to the regulative devotional principles, one cannot awaken the transcendental nature. Deity worship, even in the absence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, awakens the transcendental nature of the devotee, who thus becomes increasingly attached to the Lord's lotus feet.

The appearance of Kṛṣṇa is the answer to all imaginative iconography of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Everyone imagines the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead according to his mode of material

nature. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is said that the Lord is the oldest person. Therefore a section of religionists imagine that God must be very old, and therefore they depict a form of the Lord like a very old man. But in the same *Brahma-saṁhitā*, that is contradicted; although He is the oldest of all living entities, He has His eternal form as a fresh youth. The exact words used in this connection in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are *vijñānam ajñāna-bhidāpamārjanam*. *Vijñāna* means transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality; *vijñāna* is also experienced knowledge. Transcendental knowledge has to be accepted by the descending process of disciplic succession as Brahmā presents the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. *Brahma-saṁhitā* is *vijñāna* as realized by Brahmā's transcendental experience, and in that way he presented the form and the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in the transcendental abode. *Ajñāna-bhidā* means "that which can match all kinds of speculation." In ignorance, people are imagining the form of the Lord; sometimes He has no form and sometimes He has form, according to their different imaginations. But the presentation of Kṛṣṇa in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* is *vijñāna*—scientific, experienced knowledge given by Lord Brahmā and accepted by Lord Caitanya. There is no doubt about it. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute, Kṛṣṇa's color—everything is reality. Here it is said that this *vijñānam* is always defeating all kinds of speculative knowledge. "Therefore," the demigods prayed, "without Your appearing as Kṛṣṇa, as You are, neither *ajñāna-bhidā* (the nescience of speculative knowledge) nor *vijñānam* would be realized. *Ajñāna-bhidāpamārjanam*—by Your appearance the speculative knowledge of ignorance will be vanquished, and the real, experienced knowledge of authorities like Lord Brahmā will be established. Men influenced by the three modes of material nature imagine their own God according to the modes of material nature. In this way God is presented in various ways, but Your appearance will establish what the real form of God is." The highest blunder committed by the impersonalist is to think that when the incarnation of God comes, He accepts a form of matter in the mode of goodness. Actually the form of Kṛṣṇa or Nārāyaṇa is transcendental to any material idea. Even the greatest impersonalist, Śaṅkarācārya, has admitted, *nārāyaṇaḥ paro 'vyaktāt*: the material creation is caused by the *avyakta*, the impersonal manifestation of

matter or the nonphenomenal total reservoir of matter, and Kṛṣṇa is transcendental to that material conception. This is expressed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as *śuddha-sattva*, or transcendental. The Lord does not belong to the material mode of goodness, for He is above the position of material goodness. He belongs to the transcendental, eternal status of bliss and knowledge.

"Dear Lord," the demigods prayed, "when You appear in Your different incarnations, You take different names and forms according to different situations. Lord Kṛṣṇa is Your name because You are all-attractive; You are called Śyāmasundara because of Your transcendental beauty. *Śyāma* means blackish, yet they say that You are more beautiful than thousands of cupids. *Kandarpa-koṭi-kamanīya*. Although You appear in a color which is compared to that of a blackish cloud, You are the transcendental Absolute, and therefore Your beauty is many, many times more attractive than the delicate body of Cupid. Sometimes You are called Giridhārī because You lifted the hill known as Govardhana. You are sometimes called Nanda-nandana or Vāsudeva or Devakī-nandana because You appear as the son of Mahārāja Nanda or Devakī or Vasudeva. Impersonalists think that Your many names or forms are according to a particular type of work and quality because they accept You from the position of a material observer.

"Our dear Lord, the way of understanding is not to study Your absolute nature, form and activities by mental speculation. One must engage himself in devotional service; then one can understand Your absolute nature and Your transcendental form, name and quality. Actually, only a person who has a little taste for the service of Your lotus feet can understand Your transcendental nature or form and quality. Others may go on speculating for millions of years, but it is not possible for them to understand even a single part of Your actual position." In other words, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, cannot be understood by the nondevotees because there is a curtain of *yogamāyā* which covers Kṛṣṇa's actual features. As confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.25), *nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya*. The Lord says, "I am not exposed to anyone and everyone." When Kṛṣṇa came, He was actually present on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra, and everyone saw Him. But not everyone could understand that He was the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Still,

everyone who died in His presence attained complete liberation from material bondage and was transferred to the spiritual world. Because foolish *mūḍhas* do not awaken their spiritual nature, they do not understand Kṛṣṇa or Rāma (*avajānanti mām mūḍhā mānuṣīm tanum āśritam* [Bg. 9.11]). Even big academic scholars, not considering the endeavors of the *ācāryas* who have recommended devotional service in many elaborate commentaries and notes, think that Kṛṣṇa is fictitious. This is due to a lack of transcendental knowledge and a failure to awaken Kṛṣṇa consciousness. One should have the common sense to ask why, if Kṛṣṇa or Rāma were fictitious, stalwart scholars like Śrīdhara Svāmī, Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Vīrarāghava, Vijayadhvaja, Vallabhācārya and many other recognized *ācāryas* would have spent so much time to write about Kṛṣṇa in notes and commentaries on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

TEXT 36

न नामरूपे गुणजन्मकर्मभिर्
 निरूपितव्ये तव तस्य साक्षिणः
 मनोवचोभ्यामनुमेयवर्त्मनो
 देव क्रियायां प्रतियन्त्यथापि हि

*na nāma-rūpe guṇa-janma-karmabhir
 nirūpitavye tava tasya sākṣiṇaḥ
 mano-vacobhyām anumeya-vartmano
 deva kriyāyām pratiyanty athāpi hi*

na—not; *nāma-rūpe*—the name and form; *guṇa*—with attributes; *janma*—appearance; *karmabhiḥ*—activities or pastimes; *nirūpitavye*—are not able to be ascertained; *tava*—Your; *tasya*—of Him; *sākṣiṇaḥ*—who is the direct observer; *manaḥ*—of the mind; *vacobhyām*—words; *anumeya*—hypothesis; *vartmanaḥ*—the path; *deva*—O Lord; *kriyāyām*—in devotional activities; *pratiyanti*—they realize; *atha api*—still; *hi*—indeed (You can be realized by the devotees).

O Lord, Your transcendental name and form are not ascertained by those who merely speculate on the path of imagination. Your name, form and

attributes can be ascertained only through devotional service.

As stated in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ
[Cc. Madhya 17.136]

"One cannot understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through one's 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." Since Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental name, form and activities are all of a transcendental nature, ordinary persons or those who are only slightly advanced cannot understand them. Even big scholars who are nondevotees think that Kṛṣṇa is fictitious. Yet although so-called scholars and commentators do not believe that Kṛṣṇa was factually a historical person whose presence on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra is recorded in the history of *Mahābhārata*, they feel compelled to write commentaries on *Bhagavad-gītā* and other historical records. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*: [Brs. 41.2.234] Kṛṣṇa's transcendental name, form, attributes and activities can be revealed only when one engages in His service in full consciousness. This confirms Kṛṣṇa's own words in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.55):

4ataḥ 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." (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.234)

*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti
yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ
tato mām tattvato jñātvā
viśate tad-anantaram*

"One can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead 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." Only by *sevonmukha*, by engaging oneself in the Lord's service, can one realize the name, form and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

"O Lord," the demigods say, "the impersonalists, who are nondevotees, cannot understand that Your name is identical with Your form." Since the Lord is absolute, there is no difference between His name and His actual form. In the material world there is a difference between form and name. The mango fruit is different from the name of the mango. One cannot taste the mango fruit simply by chanting, "Mango, mango, mango." But the devotee who knows that there is no difference between the name and the form of the Lord chants Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, and realizes that he is always in Kṛṣṇa's company.

For persons who are not very advanced in absolute knowledge of the Supreme, Lord Kṛṣṇa exhibits His transcendental pastimes. They can simply think of the pastimes of the Lord and get the full benefit. Since there is no difference between the transcendental name and form of the Lord, there is no difference between the transcendental pastimes and the form of the Lord. For those who are less intelligent (like women, laborers or the mercantile class), the great sage Vyāsadeva wrote *Mahābhārata*. In the *Mahābhārata*, Kṛṣṇa is present in His different activities. *Mahābhārata* is history, and simply by studying, hearing, and memorizing the transcendental activities of Kṛṣṇa, the less intelligent can also gradually rise to the standard of pure devotees.

The pure devotees, who are always absorbed in the thought of the transcendental lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and who are always engaged in devotional service in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, are never to be considered to be in the material world. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has

explained that those who are always engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by body, mind and activities are to be considered liberated even within this body. This is also confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: those who are engaged in the devotional service of the Lord have already transcended the material position.

Kṛṣṇa appears in order to give a chance to both the devotees and the nondevotees for realization of the ultimate goal of life. The devotees get the direct chance to see Him and worship Him. Those who are not on that platform get the chance to become acquainted with His activities and thus become elevated to the same position.

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.38) says:

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

Although Kṛṣṇa's transcendental form is presented as black, devotees who are in love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead appreciate the Lord as Śyāmasundara, having a very beautiful blackish form. The Lord's form is so beautiful that the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.30) also states:

*veṅuṁ kvaṇantam aravinda-dalāyatākṣaṁ
barhāvataṁsam asitāmbuda-sundarāṅgam
kandarpa-koṭi-kamaṇīya-viśeṣa-śobhaṁ
govindam ādi-ṣuruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who plays on His transcendental flute. His eyes are like lotus flowers, He is decorated with peacock plumes, and His bodily color resembles the color of a fresh black cloud, although His bodily features are more beautiful than millions of Cupids." This beauty of the Supreme Lord can be seen by devotees who are in love with Him, devotees whose eyes are anointed with love of Godhead (*premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena* [Bs. 5.38]).

The Lord is also known as Giridhārī or Girivara-dhārī. Because Kṛṣṇa, for the sake of His devotees, lifted Govardhana Hill, the devotees appreciate the Lord's inconceivable strength; but nondevotees, in spite

of directly perceiving the Lord's inconceivable strength and power, regard the Lord's activities as fictitious. This is the difference between a devotee and a nondevotee. Nondevotees cannot give any nomenclature for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, yet the Lord is known as Śyāmasundara and Giridhārī. Similarly, the Lord is known as Devakī-nandana and Yaśodā-nandana because He accepted the role of son for mother Devakī and mother Yaśodā, and He is known as Gopāla because He enjoyed the sport of maintaining the cows and calves. Therefore, although He has no mundane name, He is addressed by devotees as Devakī-nandana, Yaśodā-nandana, Gopāla and Śyāmasundara. These are all transcendental names that only devotees can appreciate and nondevotees cannot.

The history of Kṛṣṇa the person has been openly seen by everyone, yet only those who are in love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead can appreciate this history, whereas nondevotees, who have not developed their loving qualities, think that the activities, form and attributes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are fictitious.

Therefore this verse explains, *na nāma-rūpe guṇa janma-karmabhir nirūpitavye tava tasya sākṣiṇaḥ*. In this connection, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has given the example that persons suffering from jaundice cannot taste the sweetness of sugar candy, although everyone knows that sugar candy is sweet. Similarly, because of the material disease, nondevotees cannot understand the transcendental name, form, attributes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although they actually see the Lord's activities, either through authority or through history. The *Purāṇas* are old, authentic histories, but nondevotees cannot understand them, especially *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which is the essence of Vedic knowledge. Nondevotees cannot understand even the preliminary study of transcendental knowledge, *Bhagavad-gītā*. They simply speculate and present commentaries with absurd distortions. In conclusion, unless one elevates himself to the transcendental platform by practicing *bhakti-yoga*, one cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead or His name, form, attributes or activities. But if by chance, by the association of devotees, one can actually understand the Lord and His features, one immediately becomes a liberated person. As the Lord says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.9):

janma karma ca me divyam
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna

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

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has therefore said that by affection and love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, devotees can express their mind to Him with their words. Others, however, cannot do this, as confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ* [Bg. 18.55]).

TEXT 37

शृण्वन् गृणन् संस्मरयंश्च चिन्तयन्
नामानि रूपाणि च मङ्गलानि ते
क्रियासु यस्त्वच्चरणारविन्दयोर्
आविष्टचेता न भवाय कल्पते

śṛṇvan gṛṇan saṁsmarayaṁś ca cintayan
nāmāni rūpāṇi ca maṅgalāni te
kriyāsu yas tvac-caraṇāravindayor
āviṣṭa-cetā na bhavāya kalpate

śṛṇvan—constantly hearing about the Lord (*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*); *gṛṇan*—chanting or reciting (the holy name of the Lord and His activities); *saṁsmarayan*—remembering (constantly thinking of the Lord's lotus feet and His form); *ca*—and; *cintayan*—contemplating (the transcendental activities of the Lord); *nāmāni*—His transcendental names; *rūpāṇi*—His transcendental forms; *ca*—also; *maṅgalāni*—which are all transcendental and therefore auspicious; *te*—of Your Lordship; *kriyāsu*—in being engaged in the devotional service; *yaḥ*—he who; *tvac-caraṇa-aravindayoḥ*—at Your lotus feet; *āviṣṭa-cetāḥ*—the devotee who is completely absorbed (in such activities); *na*—not; *bhavāya*—for the material platform; *kalpate*—is fit.

Even while engaged in various activities, devotees whose minds are completely absorbed at Your lotus feet, and who constantly hear, chant, contemplate and cause others to remember Your transcendental names and forms, are always on the transcendental platform, and thus they can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

How *bhakti-yoga* can be practiced is explained in this verse. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that anyone who has dedicated his life to the service of the Lord (*īhā yasya harer dāsyē*) by his activities, his mind and his words (*karmaṇā manasā girā*) may stay in any condition of life (*nikhilāsv apy avasthāsu*) and yet is no longer actually conditioned but is liberated (*jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate*). Even though such a devotee is in a material body, he has nothing to do with this body, for he is transcendently situated. *Nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve na kutaścana bibhyati*: because a devotee is engaged in transcendental activities, he is not afraid of being materially embodied. (SB 6.17.28) Illustrating this liberated position, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed, *mama janmani janmanīśvare bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī tvayi*: [Cc. Antya 20.29, Śikṣāṣṭaka 4] "All I want is Your causeless devotional service in My life, birth after birth." Even if a devotee, by the supreme will of the Lord, takes birth in this material world, he continues his devotional service. When King Bharata made a mistake and in his next life became a deer, his devotional service did not stop, although some slight chastisement was given to him because of his negligence. Nārada Muni says that even if one falls from the platform of devotional service, he is not lost, whereas nondevotees are lost entirely because they are not engaged in service. *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.14) therefore recommends that one always engage at least in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*:

*satataṁ kīrtayanto mām
yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā
nitya-yuktā upāsate*

"Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, the great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion."

One should not give up the process of devotional service, which is performed in nine different ways (*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam pāda-sevanam*, etc. [SB 7.5.23]). The most important process is hearing (*śravaṇam*) from the *guru*, *sādhu* and *śāstra*-the spiritual master, the saintly *ācāryas* and the Vedic literature. *Sādhu-śāstra-guru-vākya*, *cittete kariyā aikya*. We should not hear the commentaries and explanations of nondevotees, for this is strictly forbidden by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, who quotes from the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*avaiṣṇava-mukhodgīrṇam
pūtam hari-kathāmṛtam
śravaṇam naiva kartavyam
sarpochiṣtam yathā payaḥ*

We should strictly follow this injunction and never try to hear from Māyāvādīs, impersonalists, voidists, politicians or so-called scholars. Strictly avoiding such inauspicious association, we should simply hear from pure devotees. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī therefore recommends, *śrī-guru-padāśrayaḥ*: one must seek shelter at the lotus feet of a pure devotee who can be one's *guru*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu advises that a *guru* is one who strictly follows the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā*: *yare dekha, tare kaha, 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa* (Cc. Madhya 7.128). A juggler, a magician or one who speaks nonsense as an academic career is not a *guru*. Rather, a *guru* is one who presents *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa's instructions, as it is. *Śravaṇa* is very important; one must hear from the Vaiṣṇava *sādhu*, *guru* and *śāstra*.

The word *kriyāsu*, meaning "by manual labor" or "by work," is important in this verse. One should engage in practical service to the Lord. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, all our activities are concentrated upon distributing Kṛṣṇa literature. This is very important. One may approach any person and induce him to read Kṛṣṇa literature so that in the future he also may become a devotee. Such activities are recommended in this verse. *Kriyāsu yas tvac-caraṇāravindayoḥ*. Such activities will always remind the devotees of the Lord's lotus feet. By fully concentrating on distributing books for Kṛṣṇa, one is fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa. This is *samādhi*.

TEXT 38

दिष्ट्या हरेऽस्या भवतः पदो भुवो
भारोऽपनीतस्तव जन्मनेशितुः
दिष्ट्याङ्कितां त्वत्पदकैः सुशोभनैर्
द्रक्ष्याम गां द्यां च तवानुकम्पिताम्

*diṣṭyā hare 'syā bhavataḥ pado bhuvo
bhāro 'panītas tava janmaneśituḥ
diṣṭyāṅkitām tvat-padakaiḥ suśobhanair
drakṣyāma gām dyām ca tavānukampitām*

diṣṭyā—by fortune; *hare*—O Lord; *asyāḥ*—of this (world); *bhavataḥ*—of Your Lordship; *padaḥ*—of the place; *bhuvaḥ*—on this earth; *bhāraḥ*—the burden created by the demons; *apanītaḥ*—now removed; *tava*—of Your Lordship; *janmanā*—by appearance as an incarnation; *īśituḥ*—You, the controller of everything; *diṣṭyā*—and by fortune; *aṅkitām*—marked; *tvat-padakaiḥ*—by Your lotus feet; *su-śobhanaiḥ*—which are transcendently decorated with the marks of conchshell, disc, lotus and club; *drakṣyāma*—we shall surely observe; *gām*—upon this earth; *dyām ca*—in heaven also; *tava anukampitām*—due to Your causeless mercy upon us.

O Lord, we are fortunate because the heavy burden of the demons upon this earth is immediately removed by Your appearance. Indeed, we are certainly fortunate, for we shall be able to see upon this earth and in the heavenly planets the marks of lotus, conchshell, club and disc that adorn Your lotus feet.

The soles of the Lord's lotus feet are marked with *śaṅkha-cakra-gadā-padma*—conchshell, disc, club and lotus—and also by a flag and a thunderbolt. When Kṛṣṇa walks on this earth or in the heavenly planets, these marks are visible wherever He goes. Vṛndāvana-dhāma is a transcendental place because of Kṛṣṇa's walking on this land frequently. The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana were fortunate to see these marks here and there. When Akrūra went to Vṛndāvana to take Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma away to the festival arranged by Kāmsa, upon seeing the marks

of the Lord's lotus feet on the ground of Vṛndāvana, he fell down and began to groan. These marks are visible to devotees who receive the causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*tavānukampitām*). The demigods were jubilant not only because the appearance of the Supreme Lord would do away with the burdensome demons, but also because they would be able to see upon the ground the transcendental marks from the soles of the Lord's lotus feet. The *gopīs* always thought of the Lord's lotus feet when He was walking in the pasturing grounds, and, as described in the previous verse, simply by thinking of the Lord's lotus feet, the *gopīs* were fully absorbed in transcendence (*āviṣṭa-cetā na bhavāya kalpate*). Like the *gopīs*, one who is always absorbed in thought of the Lord is beyond the material platform and will not remain in this material world. It is our duty, therefore, always to hear, chant and think about the Lord's lotus feet, as actually done by Vaiṣṇavas who have decided to live in Vṛndāvana always and think of the Lord's lotus feet twenty-four hours a day.

TEXT 39

न तेऽभवस्येश भवस्य कारणं
विना विनोदं बत तर्कयामहे
भवो निरोधः स्थितिरप्यविद्यया
कृता यतस्त्वय्यभयाश्रयात्मनि

*na te 'bhavasyeśa bhavasya kāraṇam
vinā vinodaṁ bata tarkayāmahe
bhavo nirodhaḥ sthitir apy avidyayā
kṛtā yatas tvayy abhayāśrayātmani*

na—not; *te*—of Your Lordship; *abhavasya*—of whom there is no birth, death or maintenance as for an ordinary being; *īśa*—O Supreme Lord; *bhavasya*—of Your appearance, Your birth; *kāraṇam*—the cause; *vinā*—without; *vinodaṁ*—the pastimes (despite what is said, You are not forced to come to this world by any cause); *bata*—however; *tarkayāmahe*—we cannot argue (but must simply understand that these are Your pastimes); *bhavaḥ*—birth; *nirodhaḥ*—death; *sthitih*—maintenance; *api*—also; *avidyayā*—by the external, illusory energy; *kṛtāḥ*—done; *yataḥ*—

because; *tvayi*—unto You; *abhaya-āśraya*—O fearless shelter of all; *ātmani*—of the ordinary living entity.

O Supreme Lord, You are not an ordinary living entity appearing in this material world as a result of fruitive activities. Therefore Your appearance or birth in this world has no other cause than Your pleasure potency. Similarly, the living entities, who are part of You, have no cause for miseries like birth, death and old age, except when these living entities are conducted by Your external energy.

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.7), *mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*: the living entities are parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord, and thus they are qualitatively one with the Lord. We can understand that when the Supreme Lord appears or disappears as an incarnation, there is no other cause than His pleasure potency. We cannot force the Supreme Personality of Godhead to appear. As He says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.7):

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya
tadātmānaṁ sṛjāmy aham*

"Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion—at that time I descend Myself." When there is a need to diminish a burden created by the demons, the Supreme Godhead can do it in many ways because He has multifarious energies. There is no need for Him to come as an incarnation, since He is not forced to do anything like ordinary living entities. The living entities come to this material world in the spirit of enjoyment, but because they want to enjoy without Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-bahirmukha haiyā bhoja-vāñchā kare*), they suffer birth, death, old age and disease under the control of the illusory energy. When the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears, however, no such causes are involved; His descent is an act of His pleasure potency. We should always remember this distinction between the Lord and the ordinary living entity and not uselessly argue that the Lord cannot come. There are philosophers who do not believe in the Lord's incarnation and who

ask, "Why should the Supreme Lord come?" But the answer is, "Why should He not come? Why should He be controlled by the desire of the living entity?" The Lord is free to do whatever He likes. Therefore this verse says, *vinā vinodaṁ bata tarkayāmahe*. It is only for His pleasure that He comes although He does not need to come.

When the living entities come to this world for material enjoyment, they are entangled in *karma* and *karma-phala* by the Lord's illusory energy. But if one seeks shelter at the Lord's lotus feet, one is again situated in his original, liberated state. As stated here, *kṛtā yatas tvayy abhayāśrayātmani*: one who seeks shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord is always fearless. Because we are dependent on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we should give up the idea that without Kṛṣṇa we can enjoy freedom in this material world. This idea is the reason we have become entangled. Now it is our duty to seek shelter again at the Lord's lotus feet. This shelter is described as *abhaya*, or fearless. Since Kṛṣṇa is not subject to birth, death, old age or disease, and since we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, we also are not subject to birth, death, old age and disease, but we have become subject to these illusory problems because of our forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa and our position as His eternal servants (*jīvera 'svarūpa' haya-kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa'* [Cc. *Madhya* 20.108]). Therefore, if we practice devotional service by always thinking of the Lord, always glorifying Him and always chanting about Him, as described in text 37 (*śṛṇvan gṛṇan saṁsmarayaṁś ca cintayan*), we will be reinstated in our original, constitutional position and thus be saved. The demigods, therefore, encouraged Devakī not to fear Kaṁsa, but to think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who was already within her womb.

TEXT 40

मत्स्याश्वकच्छपनृसिंहवराहहंस-
राजन्यविप्रविबुधेषु कृतावतारः
त्वं पासि नस्त्रिभुवनं च यथाधुनेश
भारं भुवो हर यदूत्तम वन्दनं ते

matsyāśva-kacchapa-nṛsimha-varāha-haṁsa-

*rājanya-vipra-vibudheṣu kṛtāvatāraḥ
tvam pāsi nas tri-bhuvanam ca yathādhuneṣa
bhāram bhuvo hara yadūttama vandanam te*

matsya—the fish incarnation; *aśva*—the horse incarnation; *kacchapa*—the tortoise incarnation; *nṛsimha*—the Narasimha incarnation; *varāha*—the Varāha incarnation; *haṁsa*—the swan incarnation; *rājanya*—incarnations as Lord Rāmacandra and other *kṣatriyas*; *vipra*—incarnations as *brāhmaṇas* like Vāmanadeva; *vibudheṣu*—among the demigods; *kṛta-avatāraḥ*—appeared as incarnations; *tvam*—Your Lordship; *pāsi*—please save; *naḥ*—us; *tri-bhuvanam ca*—and the three worlds; *yathā*—as well as; *adhunā*—now; *īśa*—O Supreme Lord; *bhāram*—burden; *bhuvah*—of the earth; *hara*—please diminish; *yadu-uttama*—O Lord Kṛṣṇa, best of the Yadus; *vandanam te*—we offer our prayers unto You.

O supreme controller, Your Lordship previously accepted incarnations as a fish, a horse, a tortoise, Narasimhadeva, a boar, a swan, Lord Rāmacandra, Paraśurāma and, among the demigods, Vāmanadeva, to protect the entire world by Your mercy. Now please protect us again by Your mercy by diminishing the disturbances in this world. O Kṛṣṇa, best of the Yadus, we respectfully offer our obeisances unto You.

In every incarnation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has a particular mission to execute, and this was true in His appearance as the son of Devakī in the family of the Yadus. Thus all the demigods offered their prayers to the Lord, bowing down before Him, and requested the Lord to do the needful. We cannot order the Supreme Personality of Godhead to do anything for us. We can simply offer Him our obeisances, as advised in *Bhagavad-gītā* (*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru* [Bg. 18.65]), and pray to Him for annihilation of dangers.

TEXT 41

दिष्ट्याम्ब ते कुक्षिगतः परः पुमान्
अंशेन साक्षाद्भगवान् भवाय नः
माभूद्भयं भोजपतेर्मुमूर्षोर्
गोप्ता यदूनां भविता तवात्मजः

*diṣṭyāmba te kukṣi-gataḥ paraḥ pumān
amśena sākṣād bhagavān bhavāya naḥ
mābhūd bhayaṁ bhoja-pater mumūrṣor
goptā yadūnām bhavitā tavātmajaḥ*

diṣṭyā—by fortune; *amba*—O mother; *te*—your; *kukṣi-gataḥ*—in the womb; *paraḥ*—the Supreme; *pumān*—Personality of Godhead; *amśena*—with all His energies, His parts and parcels; *sākṣāt*—directly; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhavāya*—for the auspiciousness; *naḥ*—of all of us; *mā abhūt*—never be; *bhayaṁ*—fearful; *bhoja-pateḥ*—from Kāṁsa, King of the Bhoja dynasty; *mumūrṣoḥ*—who has decided to be killed by the Lord; *goptā*—the protector; *yadūnām*—of the Yadu dynasty; *bhavitā*—will become; *tava ātmajaḥ*—your son.

O mother Devakī, by your good fortune and ours, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, with all His plenary portions, such as Baladeva, is now within your womb. Therefore you need not fear Kāṁsa, who has decided to be killed by the Lord. Your eternal son, Kṛṣṇa, will be the protector of the entire Yadu dynasty.

The words *paraḥ pumān amśena* signify that Kṛṣṇa is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is the verdict of the *śāstra* (*kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* [SB 1.3.28]). Thus the demigods assured Devakī, "Your son is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He is appearing with Baladeva, His plenary portion. He will give you all protection and kill Kāṁsa, who has decided to continue his enmity toward the Lord and thus be killed by Him."