

TEXT 34

श्रीरुक्मिण्युवाच

नन्वेवमेतदरविन्दविलोचनाह

यद्वै भवान् भगवतोऽसदृशी विभूम्नः

क्व स्वे महिम्न्यभिरतो भगवांस्त्र्यधीशः

क्वाहं गुणप्रकृतिरज्ञगृहीतपादा

*śrī-rukmiṇy uvāca*

*nanv evam etad aravinda-vilocanāha*

*yad vai bhavān bhagavato 'sadṛśī vibhūmnaḥ*

*kva sve mahimny abhirato bhagavāms try-adhīśaḥ*

*kvāhaṁ guṇa-prakṛtir ajña-grhīta-pādā*

*śrī-rukmiṇī uvāca*—Śrī Rukmiṇī said; *nanu*—well; *evam*—so be it; *etat*—this; *aravinda-vilocana*—O lotus-eyed one; *āha*—said; *yat*—which; *vai*—indeed; *bhavān*—You; *bhagavataḥ*—to the Supreme Lord; *asadṛśī*—unequal; *vibhūmnaḥ*—to the almighty; *kva*—where, in comparison; *sve*—in His own; *mahimni*—glory; *abhirataḥ*—taking pleasure; *bhagavān*—the Supreme Lord; *tri*—of the three (principal deities, namely Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva); *adhīśaḥ*—the controller; *kva*—and where; *aham*—myself; *guṇa*—of material qualities; *prakṛtiḥ*—whose character; *ajña*—by foolish persons; *grhīta*—taken hold of; *pādā*—whose feet.

**Śrī Rukmiṇī said:** Actually, what You have said is true, O lotus-eyed one. I am indeed unsuitable for the almighty Personality of Godhead. What comparison is there between that Supreme Lord, who is master of the three primal deities and who delights in His own glory, and myself, a woman of mundane qualities whose feet are grasped by fools?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī lists the faults Lord Kṛṣṇa had described in Himself that He claimed disqualified Him from being Rukmiṇī's husband. These include incompatibility, fearfulness, taking shelter in the ocean, quarreling with the powerful, abandoning His kingdom, uncertainty as to His identity, acting against ordinary standards of behavior, having no good qualities, being praised falsely by beggars, aloofness, and lack of

desire for family life. The Lord claimed that Rukmiṇī had failed to recognize these bad qualities in Him. Now she begins to respond to all the Lord's statements.

First she responds to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statement in Text 11 of this chapter: *kasmān no vavṛṣe 'samān*. "Why did you select Us, who are not equal to you?" Here Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī says that she and Kṛṣṇa are certainly not equal, for no one can be equal to the Supreme Lord. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī further points out that in her extreme humility Rukmiṇī is identifying herself with the Lord's external energy, which in fact is her expansion, Rukmiṇī being the goddess of fortune.

### TEXT 35

सत्यं भयादिव गुणेभ्य उरुक्रमान्तः  
शेते समुद्र उपलम्भनमात्र आत्मा  
नित्यं कदिन्द्रियगणैः कृतविग्रहस्त्वं  
त्वत्सेवकैर्नृपपदं विधुतं तमोऽन्धम्

*satyaṁ bhayād iva guṇebhya urukramāntaḥ  
śete samudra upalambhana-mātra ātmā  
nityaṁ kad-indriya-gaṇaiḥ kṛta-vigrahas tvam  
tvat-sevakair nṛpa-padam vidhutam tamo 'ndham*

*satyam*—true; *bhayāt*—out of fear; *iva*—as if; *guṇebhyaḥ*—of the material modes; *urukrama*—O You who perform transcendental feats; *antaḥ*—within; *śete*—You have lain down; *samudre*—in the ocean; *upalambhana-mātraḥ*—pure awareness; *ātma*—the Supreme Soul; *nityam*—always; *kat*—bad; *indriya-gaṇaiḥ*—against all the material senses; *kṛta-vigrahaḥ*—battling; *tvam*—You; *tvat*—Your; *sevakaiḥ*—by the servants; *nṛpa*—of a king; *padam*—the position; *vidhutam*—rejected; *tamaḥ*—darkness; *andham*—blind.

Yes, my Lord Urukrama, You lay down within the ocean as if afraid of the material modes, and thus in pure consciousness You appear within the heart as the Supersoul. You are always battling against the foolish material senses, and indeed even Your servants reject the privilege of royal dominion, which leads to the blindness of ignorance.

In Text 12 Lord Kṛṣṇa said, *rājabhyo bibhyataḥ su-bhru samudram śaraṇam gatān*: "Out of fear of the kings, We took shelter in the ocean." Here Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī points out that the actual rulers of this world are the *guṇas*, the material modes of nature, which impel all living beings to act. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī points out that because Lord Kṛṣṇa fears that His devotee will come under the influence of the modes of nature and become entangled in sense gratification, He enters the internal ocean of their hearts, where He remains as the omniscient Supersoul (*upalambhana-mātra ātmā*). Thus He protects His devotees. The word *upalambhana-mātraḥ* also indicates that the Lord is the object of meditation for His devotees.

In Text 12 Lord Kṛṣṇa also said, *balavadbhiḥ kṛta-dveṣān*: "We created enmity with the powerful." Here Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī points out that it is the material senses which are actually powerful in this world. The Supreme Lord has taken up the battle against sense gratification on the part of His devotees, and thus He is constantly trying to help them in their struggle for spiritual purity. When the devotees become free of unwanted material habits, the Lord reveals Himself to them, and then the eternal loving relationship between the Lord and His devotees becomes an irrevocable fact.

In the same verse Kṛṣṇa stated, *tyakta-nṛpāsanān*: "We renounced the royal throne." But here Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī points out that the position of political supremacy in this world usually implicates so-called powerful leaders in darkness and blindness. As the saying goes, "Power corrupts." Thus even the Lord's loving servants tend to shy away from political intrigue and power politics. The Lord Himself, being completely satisfied in His own spiritual bliss, would hardly be interested in occupying mundane political positions. Thus Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī correctly interprets the Lord's actions as evidence of His supreme transcendental nature.

### TEXT 36

त्वत्पादपद्मकरन्दजुषां मुनीनां  
वर्त्मास्फुटं ऋपशुभिर्ननु दुर्विभाव्यम्  
यस्मादलौकिकमिवेहितमीश्वरस्य

## भूमंस्तवेहितमथो अनु ये भवन्तम्

*tvat-pāda-padma-makaranda-juṣām munīnām  
vartmāspḥuṭam nr-ṣubhir nanu durvibhāvya  
yasmād alaukikam ivehitam īśvarasya  
bhūmaṁs tavehitam atho anu ye bhavantam*

*tvat*—Your; *pāda*—of the feet; *padma*—lotuslike; *makaranda*—the honey; *juṣām*—who relish; *munīnām*—for sages; *vartma*—(Your) path; *asphuṭam*—not apparent; *nṛ*—in human form; *ṣubhiḥ*—by animals; *nanu*—certainly, then; *durvibhāvya*—impossible to comprehend; *yasmāt*—because; *alaukikam*—supramundane; *iva*—as if; *ihitam*—the activities; *īśvarasya*—of the Supreme Lord; *bhūman*—O all-powerful one; *tava*—Your; *ihitam*—activities; *atha u*—therefore; *anu*—following; *ye*—who; *bhavantam*—You.

**Your movements, inscrutable even for sages who relish the honey of Your lotus feet, are certainly incomprehensible for human beings who behave like animals. And just as Your activities are transcendental, O all-powerful Lord, so too are those of Your followers.**

Here Queen Rukmiṇī replies to Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement in Text 13:

*aspaṣṭa-vartmanām puṁsām  
aloka-patham īyuṣām  
āsthitaḥ padavīm su-bhru  
prāyaḥ sīdanti yoṣitaḥ*

"O fine-browed lady, women are usually destined to suffer when they stay with men whose behavior is uncertain and who pursue a path not approved by society."

In the present verse Rukmiṇī is taking the term *aloka-patham* to mean "unworldly path." Those who are entangled in worldly behavior are trying to enjoy this world more or less like animals. Even if such people are "culturally advanced," they should simply be considered sophisticated or polished animals. Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī points out that because the Lord's activities are always transcendental, they are *aspaṣṭa*, or "unclear," to ordinary people, and even the sages trying to know the Lord cannot

perfectly understand these activities.

TEXT 37

निष्किञ्चनो ननु भवान्न यतोऽस्ति किञ्चिद्  
यस्मै बलिं बलिभुजोऽपि हरन्त्यजाद्याः  
न त्वा विदन्त्यसुतृपोऽन्तकमाढ्यतान्धाः  
प्रेष्ठो भवान् बलिभुजामपि तेऽपि तुभ्यम्

*niṣkiñcano nanu bhavān na yato 'sti kiñcid  
yasmai balim bali-bhujo 'pi haranty ajādyāḥ  
na tvā vidanty asu-tṛpo 'ntakam ādhyatāndhāḥ  
preṣṭho bhavān bali-bhujām api te 'pi tubhyam*

*niṣkiñcanaḥ*—without possessions; *nanu*—indeed; *bhavān*—You; *na*—not; *yataḥ*—beyond whom; *asti*—there is; *kiñcit*—anything; *yasmai*—to whom; *balim*—tribute; *bali*—of tribute; *bhujāḥ*—the enjoyers; *api*—even; *haranti*—carry; *aja-ādyāḥ*—headed by Brahmā; *na*—not; *tvā*—You; *vidanti*—know; *asu-tṛpaḥ*—persons satisfied in the body; *antakam*—as death; *ādhyatā*—by their status of wealth; *andhāḥ*—blinded; *preṣṭhaḥ*—the most dear; *bhavān*—You; *bali-bhujām*—for the great enjoyers of tribute; *api*—even; *te*—they; *api*—also; *tubhyam*—(are dear) to You.

You possess nothing because there is nothing beyond You. Even the great enjoyers of tribute—Brahmā and other demigods—pay tribute to You. Those who are blinded by their wealth and absorbed in gratifying their senses do not recognize You in the form of death. But to the gods, the enjoyers of tribute, You are the most dear, as they are to You.

Here Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī replies to Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement in Text 14:

*niṣkiñcanā vyaṁ śaśvan  
niṣkiñcana-jana-priyāḥ  
tasmāt prāyeṇa na hy ādhyā  
mām bhajanti su-madhyame*

"We have no material possessions, and We are dear to those who similarly have nothing. Therefore, O slender one, the wealthy hardly

ever worship Me."

Queen Rukmiṇī begins her statement by saying *niṣkiñcanao nanu*, "You are indeed *niṣkiñcana*." The word *kiñcana* means "something," and the prefix *nir*—or, as it appears here, *niṣ*—indicates negation. Thus in the ordinary sense *niṣkiñcana* means "one who does not have something," or, in other words, "one who has nothing."

But in the present verse Queen Rukmiṇī states that Lord Kṛṣṇa "possesses nothing" not because He is a pauper but because He Himself is everything. In other words, since Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth, all that exists is within Him. There is no second thing, something outside the Lord's existence, for Him to possess. For example, a man may possess a house or a car or a child or money, but these things do not become the man: they exist outside of him. We say he possesses them merely in the sense that he has control over them. But the Lord does not merely control His creation: His creation actually exists within Him. Thus there is nothing outside of Him that He can possess in the way that we possess external objects.

The *ācāryas* explain *niṣkiñcana* in the following way: To state that a person possesses something implies that he does not possess everything. In other words, if we say that a man owns some property, we imply that he does not own all property but rather some specific property. A standard American dictionary defines the word *some* as "a certain indefinite or unspecified number, quantity, etc., as distinguished from the rest." The Sanskrit word *kiñcana* conveys this sense of a partial amount of the total. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa is called *niṣkiñcana* to refute the idea that He possesses merely a certain amount of beauty, fame, wealth, intelligence and other opulences. Rather, He possesses infinite beauty, infinite intelligence, infinite wealth and so on. This is so because He is the Absolute Truth.

Śrīla Prabhupāda begins his introduction to the First Canto, Volume One, of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with the following statement, which is quite relevant to our present discussion: "The conception of God and the conception of the Absolute Truth are not on the same level. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* hits on the target of the Absolute Truth. The conception of God indicates the controller, whereas the conception of

the Absolute Truth indicates the *summum bonum*, or the ultimate source of all energies." Here Śrīla Prabhupāda touches upon a fundamental philosophical point. God is commonly defined as "the supreme being," and the dictionary defines *supreme* as (1) highest in rank, power, authority, etc; (2) highest in quality, achievement, performance, etc; (3) highest in degree; and (4) final, ultimate. None of these definitions adequately indicates absolute existence.

For example, we may say that a particular American is supremely wealthy in the sense that he is wealthier than any other American, or we may speak of the Supreme Court as the highest court in the land, although it certainly does not have absolute authority in all political and social matters, since it shares authority in these fields with the legislature and the president. In other words, the word *supreme* indicates the best in a hierarchy, and thus the supreme being may merely be understood as the best or greatest of all beings but not as the very source of all other beings and, indeed, of everything that exists. Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda specifically points out that the concept of the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa, is higher than the concept of a supreme being, and this point is essential to a clear understanding of Vaiṣṇava philosophy.

Lord Kṛṣṇa is not merely a supreme being: He is the absolute being, and that is exactly the point His wife is making. Thus the word *niṣkiñcana* indicates not that Kṛṣṇa possesses *no* opulence but rather *all* opulence. In that sense she accepts His definition of Himself as *niṣkiñcana*.

In Text 14 Lord Kṛṣṇa also stated, *niṣkiñcana-jana-priyāḥ*: "I am dear to those who have nothing." Here, however, Queen Rukmiṇī points out that the demigods, the wealthiest souls in the universe, regularly make offerings to the Supreme Lord. We may assume that the demigods, being the Lord's appointed representatives, know that everything belongs to Him in the sense that everything is part of Him, as explained above.

Therefore the statement *niṣkiñcana-jana-priyāḥ* is correct in the sense that since nothing exists except the Lord and His potencies, no matter how wealthy the Lord's worshipers appear to be they are in fact offering Him nothing but His own energy as a loving act. The same idea is exemplified when one worships the Ganges River by offering Ganges water, or when a child gets money from his father on the father's birthday and buys him a gift. The father is paying for his own present,

but what he is really interested in is his child's love. Similarly, the Supreme Lord manifests the cosmos, and then the conditioned souls collect various items of the Lord's creation. Pious souls offer some of the best items from their collection back to the Lord as a sacrifice and thus purify themselves. Since the whole cosmos and everything in it is simply the Lord's energy, we may say that those who worship the Lord possess nothing.

In more conventional terms, people who are proud of their great wealth do not bow down to God. Queen Rukmiṇī also mentions these fools. Satisfied with their temporary bodies, they do not understand the divine power of death, which stalks them. The demigods, however, who are by far the wealthiest living beings, regularly offer sacrifice to the Supreme Lord, and thus the Lord is most dear to them, as stated here.

### TEXT 38

त्वं वै समस्तपुरुषार्थमयः फलात्मा  
यद्वाञ्छया सुमतयो विसृजन्ति कृत्स्नम्  
तेषां विभो समुचितो भवतः समाजः  
पुंसः स्त्रियाश्च रतयोः सुखदुःखिनोर्न

*tvam vai samasta-puruṣārtha-mayaḥ phalātmā  
yad-vāñchayā su-matayo viśṛjanti kṛtsnam  
teṣāṃ vibho samucitaḥ bhavataḥ samājaḥ  
puṃsaḥ striyāś ca ratayoḥ sukha-duḥkhiṇor na*

*tvam*—You; *vai*—indeed; *samasta*—all; *puruṣa*—of human life; *artha*—of the goals; *mayaḥ*—comprising; *phala*—of the ultimate goal; *ātmā*—the very Self; *yat*—for whom; *vāñchayā*—out of desire; *su-matayaḥ*—intelligent persons; *viśṛjanti*—discard; *kṛtsnam*—everything; *teṣāṃ*—for them; *vibho*—O omnipotent one; *samucitaḥ*—appropriate; *bhavataḥ*—Your; *samājaḥ*—association; *puṃsaḥ*—of a man; *striyāḥ*—and a women; *ca*—and; *ratayoḥ*—who are attracted to each other in mutual lust; *sukha-duḥkhiṇoḥ*—who experience material happiness and distress; *na*—not.

**You are the embodiment of all human goals and are Yourself the final aim**

of life. Desiring to attain You, O all-powerful Lord, intelligent persons abandon everything else. It is they who are worthy of Your association, not men and women absorbed in the pleasure and grief resulting from their mutual lust.

Here Queen Rukmiṇī refutes Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement in Text 15:

yayor ātma-samaṁ vittaṁ  
janmaiśvaryākṛtir bhavaḥ  
tayor vivāho mairī ca  
nottamādhamaḥ kvacit

"Marriage and friendship are proper between two people who are equal in terms of their wealth, birth, influence, physical appearance and capacity for good progeny, but never between a superior and an inferior." In fact, only those who have given up all such material conceptions of sense gratification and have taken exclusively to the Lord's loving service can understand who their real friend and companion is—Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.

### TEXT 39

त्वं न्यस्तदण्डमुनिभिर्गदितानुभाव  
आत्मात्मदश्च जगतामिति मे वृतोऽसि  
हित्वा भवद्भ्रुव उदीरितकालवेग-  
ध्वस्ताशिषोऽब्जभवनाकपतीन् कुतोऽन्ये

tvam nyasta-daṇḍa-munibhir gaditānubhāva  
ātmātma-daś ca jagatām iti me vṛto 'si  
hitvā bhavad-bhruva udīrita-kāla-vega-  
dhvastāśiṣo 'bja-bhava-nāka-patīn kuto 'nye

tvam—You; nyasta—who have renounced; daṇḍa—the sannyāsi's staff; munibhiḥ—by sages; gadita—spoken of; anubhāvaḥ—whose prowess; ātmā—the Supreme Soul; ātmā—Your own self; daḥ—who give away; ca—also; jagatām—of all the worlds; iti—thus; me—by me; vṛtaḥ—chosen; asi—You have been; hitvā—rejecting; bhavat—Your; bhruvaḥ—from the eyebrows; udīrita—generated; kāla—of time; vega—by the

impulses; *dhvasta*—destroyed; *āśiṣaḥ*—whose hopes; *abja*—lotus-born (Lord Brahmā); *bhava*—Lord Śiva; *nāka*—of heaven; *patīn*—the masters; *kutaḥ*—what then of; *anye*-others.

**Knowing that great sages who have renounced the *sannyāsī's daṇḍa* proclaim Your glories, that You are the Supreme Soul of all the worlds, and that You are so gracious that You give away even Your own self, I chose You as my husband, rejecting Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and the rulers of heaven, whose aspirations are all frustrated by the force of time, which is born from Your eyebrows. What interest, then, could I have in any other suitors?**

This is Queen Rukmiṇī's refutation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's statement in Text 16. There the Lord Kṛṣṇa said, *bhikṣubhiḥ ślāghitā mudhā*: "I am glorified by beggars." But Queen Rukmiṇī points out that those so-called beggars are actually sages in the *paramahansa* stage of life—*sannyāsīs* who have reached the highest level of spiritual advancement and thus given up the *sannyāsī* rod. Lord Kṛṣṇa also made two specific accusations against His wife in Text 16. He said, *vaidarbhy etad avijñāya*—"My dear Vaidarbhī, you were not aware of the situation"—and *tvayādirgha-samīkṣayā*—"because you lack foresight." In the present verse, Rukmiṇī's statement *iti me vṛto 'si* indicates "I chose You as my husband because You possess the above-mentioned qualities. It was not a blind choice at all." Rukmiṇī further mentions that she passed over lesser personalities like Brahmā, Śiva and the rulers of heaven because she saw that even though, materially speaking, they are great personalities, they are frustrated by the powerful waves of time, which emanate from the eyebrows of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, far from lacking foresight, Rukmiṇī chose Lord Kṛṣṇa after an exhaustive appraisal of the entire cosmic situation. Thus she lovingly rebukes her husband here.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī interprets Rukmiṇī's mood as follows: "My dear husband, Your accusation that I lack foresight indicates that You did know of my deep insight into the situation. Actually, I chose You because I knew of Your true glories."

#### TEXT 40

**जाड्यं वचस्तव गदाग्रज यस्तु भूपान्**

विद्राव्य शार्ङ्गनिनदेन जहर्थ मां त्वम्  
सिंहो यथा स्वबलिमीश पशून् स्वभागं  
तेभ्यो भयाद्यदुदधिं शरणं प्रपन्नः

*jāḍyam vacas tava gadāgraja yas tu bhūpān  
vidrāvya śārṅga-ninadena jahartha mām tvam  
simho yathā sva-balim īśa paśūn sva-bhāgam  
tebhyo bhayād yad udadhim śaraṇam prapannaḥ*

*jāḍyam*—foolishness; *vacas*—words; *tava*—Your; *gadāgraja*—O Gadāgraja; *yaḥ*—who; *tu*—even; *bhū-pān*—the kings; *vidrāvya*—driving away; *śārṅga*—of Śārṅga, Your bow; *ninadena*—by the resounding; *jahartha*—took away; *mām*—me; *tvam*—You; *simhaḥ*—a lion; *yathā*—as; *sva*—Your own; *balim*—tribute; *īśa*—O Lord; *paśūn*—animals; *sva-bhāgam*—his own share; *tebhyaḥ*—of them; *bhayāt*—out of fear; *yat*—that; *udadhim*—of the ocean; *śaraṇam-prapannaḥ*—took shelter.

**My Lord, as a lion drives away lesser animals to claim his proper tribute, You drove off the assembled kings with the resounding twang of Your Śārṅga bow and then claimed me, Your fair share. Thus it is sheer foolishness, my dear Gadāgraja, for You to say You took shelter in the ocean out of fear of those kings.**

In Text 12 of this chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa said, *rājabhyo bibhyataḥ su-bhru samudram śaraṇam gatān*: "Terrified of those kings, We went to the ocean for shelter." According to the *ācāryas*, Lord Kṛṣṇa finally provoked Rukmiṇī's anger by glorifying other men who might have been her husband, and thus in an agitated mood she here tells Him that she is not ignorant but rather that He has spoken foolishly. She states, "Like a lion You abducted me in the presence of those kings and drove them away with Your Śārṅga bow, so it is simply foolishness to say that out of fear of those same kings You went to the ocean." According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī, as Queen Rukmiṇī spoke these words she frowned and cast angry sidelong glances at the Lord.

#### TEXT 41

यद्वाञ्छया नृपशिखामणयोऽन्गवैन्य-

जायन्तनाहुषगयादय ऐक्यपत्यम्  
राज्यं विसृज्य विविशुर्वनमम्बुजाक्ष  
सीदन्ति तेऽनुपदवीं त इहास्थिताः किम्

*yad-vāñchayā nṛpa-sikhāmaṇayo 'nga-vainya-  
jāyanta-nāhuṣa-gayādaya aikya-patyam  
rājyaṁ viśṛjya viviśur vanam ambujākṣa  
sīdanti te 'nupadavīm ta ihāsthitāḥ kim*

*yat*—for whom; *vāñchayā*—out of desire; *nṛpa*—of kings; *sikhāmaṇayaḥ*—the crown jewels; *aṅga-vainya-jāyanta-nāhuṣa-gaya-ādayaḥ*—Aṅga (the father of Vena), Vainya (Pṛthu, the son of Vena), Jāyanta (Bharata), Nāhuṣa (Yayāti), Gaya and others; *aikya*—exclusive; *patyam*—having sovereignty; *rājyaṁ*—their kingdoms; *viśṛjya*—abandoning; *viviśuḥ*—entered; *vanam*—the forest; *ambuja-akṣa*—O lotus-eyed one; *sīdanti*—suffer frustration; *te*—Your; *anupadavīm*—on the path; *te*—they; *iha*—in this world; *āsthitāḥ*—fixed; *kim*—whether.

**Wanting Your association, the best of kings—Aṅga, Vainya, Jāyanta, Nāhuṣa, Gaya and others—abandoned their absolute sovereignty and entered the forest to seek You out. How could those kings suffer frustration in this world, O lotus-eyed one?**

Here Queen Rukmiṇī refutes the ideas put forth by Lord Kṛṣṇa in Text 13. In fact Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī repeats Lord Kṛṣṇa's own words. The Lord said, *āsthitāḥ padavīm su-bhru prāyaḥ sīdanti yoṣitaḥ*: "Women who follow My path generally suffer." Here Rukmiṇī-devī says, *sīdanti te 'nupadavīm ta ihāsthitāḥ kim*: "Why should those fixed on Your path suffer in this world?" She gives the example of many great kings who renounced their powerful sovereignty to enter the forest, where they performed austerities and worshiped the Lord, intensely desiring His transcendental association. Thus, according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī, Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī here intends to tell Śrī Kṛṣṇa, "You have said that I, a king's daughter, am unintelligent and frustrated because I married You. But how can You accuse all these great enlightened kings of being unintelligent? They were the wisest of men, yet they gave up everything to follow You and were certainly not

frustrated by the result. Indeed, they achieved the perfection of Your association."

#### TEXT 42

कान्यं श्रयेत तव पादसरोजगन्धम्  
आघ्राय सन्मुखरितं जनतापवर्गम्  
लक्ष्म्यालयं त्वविगणय्य गुणालयस्य  
मर्त्या सदोरुभयमर्थविविडदृष्टिः

*kānyam śrayeta tava pāda-saroja-gandham  
āghrāya san-mukharitam janatāpavargam  
lakṣmy-ālayam tv avigaṇayya guṇālayasya  
martyā sadoru-bhayam artha-viviḍa-dṛṣṭiḥ*

*ka*—what woman; *anyam*—another man; *śrayeta*—would take shelter of; *tava*—Your; *pāda*—of the feet; *saroja*—of the lotus; *gandham*—the aroma; *āghrāya*—having smelled; *sat*—by great saints; *mukharitam*—described; *janatā*—for all people; *apavargam*—bestowing liberation; *lakṣmī*—of the goddess of fortune; *ālayam*—the place of residence; *tu*—but; *avigaṇaḥ*—not taking seriously; *guṇa*—of all transcendental qualities; *ālayasya*—of the abode; *martyā*—mortal; *sadā*—always; *uru*—great; *bhayam*—one who has fear; *artha*—her best interest; *vivikta*—ascertaining; *dṛṣṭiḥ*—whose insight.

The aroma of Your lotus feet, which is glorified by great saints, awards people liberation and is the abode of Goddess Lakṣmī. What woman would take shelter of any other man after savoring that aroma? Since You are the abode of transcendental qualities, what mortal woman with the insight to distinguish her own true interest would disregard that fragrance and depend instead on someone who is always subject to terrible fear?

In Text 16 Lord Kṛṣṇa claimed that He was *guṇair hīnāḥ*, "bereft of all good qualities." To refute this claim, the devoted Rukmiṇī here states that the Lord is *guṇālaya*, "the abode of all good qualities." In a single moment the so-called powerful men of this world can be reduced to utter helplessness and confusion. Indeed, destruction is the inevitable fate of

all powerful masculine bodies. The Lord, however, has an eternal, spiritual body that is omnipotent and infinitely beautiful, and thus, as Queen Rukmiṇī argues here, how could any sane, enlightened woman take shelter of anyone but the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa?

TEXT 43

तं त्वानुरूपमभजं जगतामधीशम्  
आत्मानमत्र च परत्र च कामपूरम्  
स्यान्मे तवाङ्घ्रिररणं सृतिभिर्भ्रमन्त्या  
यो वै भजन्तमुपयात्यनृतापवर्गः

*taṁ tvānurūpam abhajam jagatām adhīśam  
ātmānam atra ca paratra ca kāma-pūram  
syān me tavaṅghrir araṇam sṛtibhir bhramantya  
yo vai bhajantam upayāty anṛtāpavargaḥ*

*taṁ*—Him; *tvā*—Yourself; *anurūpam*—suitable; *abhajam*—I have chosen; *jagatām*—of all the worlds; *adhīśam*—the ultimate master; *ātmānam*—the Supreme Soul; *atra*—in this life; *ca*—and; *paratra*—in the next life; *ca*—also; *kāma*—of desires; *pūram*—the fulfiller; *syāt*—may they be; *me*—for me; *tava*—Your; *aṅghriḥ*—feet; *araṇam*—shelter; *sṛtibhiḥ*—by the various movements (from one species of life to another); *bhramantyaḥ*—who has been wandering; *yaḥ*—which (feet); *vai*—indeed; *bhajantam*—their worshiper; *upayāti*—approach; *anṛta*—from untruth; *apavargaḥ*—freedom.

**Because You are suitable for me, I have chosen You, the master and Supreme Soul of all the worlds, who fulfill our desires in this life and the next. May Your feet, which give freedom from illusion by approaching their worshiper, give shelter to me, who have been wandering from one material situation to another.**

An alternate reading for the word *sṛtibhiḥ* is *śrutibhiḥ*, in which case the idea Rukmiṇī expresses is this: "I have been bewildered by hearing from various religious scriptures about numerous rituals and ceremonies with their promises of fruitive results." Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī gives this explanation, while Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī

give an additional idea Rukmiṇī might express with the word *śrutibhiḥ*: "My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, I was bewildered by hearing about Your various incarnations. I heard that when You descended as Rāma You abandoned Your wife, Sītā, and that in this life You abandoned the *gopīs*. Thus I was bewildered."

It is understood that Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī is the eternally liberated consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa, but in these verses she humbly plays the part of a mortal woman taking shelter of the Supreme Lord.

#### TEXT 44

तस्याः स्युरच्युत नृपा भवतोपदिष्टाः  
स्त्रीणां गृहेषु खरगोश्वविडालभृत्याः  
यत्कर्णमूलमन्कर्षण नोपयायाद्  
युष्मत्कथा मृडविरिञ्चसभासु गीता

*tasyāḥ syur acyuta nṛpā bhavatopadiṣṭāḥ  
strīṇāṃ gr̥heṣu khara-go-śva-vidāla-bhṛtyāḥ  
yat-karṇa-mūlam an-karṣaṇa nopayāyād  
yuṣmat-kathā mṛḍa-viriñca-sabhāsu gītā*

*tasyāḥ*—of her; *syuḥ*—let them become (the husbands); *acyuta*—O infallible Kṛṣṇa; *nṛpāḥ*—kings; *bhavatā*—by You; *upadiṣṭāḥ*—mentioned; *strīṇāṃ*—of women; *gr̥heṣu*—in the homes; *khara*—as asses; *go*—oxen; *śva*—dogs; *vidāla*—cats; *bhṛtyāḥ*—and slaves; *yat*—whose; *karṇa*—of the ear; *mūlam*—the core; *ari*—Your enemies; *karṣaṇa*—O You who vex; *na*—never; *upayāyāt*—come near; *yuṣmat*—concerning You; *kathā*—discussions; *mṛḍa*—of Lord Śiva; *viriñca*—and Lord Brahmā; *sabhāsu*—in the scholarly assemblies; *gītā*—sung.

**O infallible Kṛṣṇa, let each of the kings You named become the husband of a woman whose ears have never heard Your glories, which are sung in the assemblies of Śiva and Brahmā. After all, in the households of such women these kings live like asses, oxen, dogs, cats and slaves.**

According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, these fiery words of Queen Rukmiṇī's are a response to Lord Kṛṣṇa's opening statement, found in Text 10 of the chapter. The Supreme Lord had said, "My dear princess,

You were sought after by many kings as powerful as the rulers of planets. They were all abundantly endowed with political influence, wealth, beauty, generosity and physical strength." According to Śrīdhara Svāmī, Queen Rukmiṇī here speaks with anger, pointing her index finger at the Lord. She compares the so-called great princes to asses because they carry many material burdens, to oxen because they are always distressed while performing their occupational duties, to dogs because their wives disrespect them, to cats because they are selfish and cruel, and to slaves because they are servile in family affairs. Such kings may appear desirable to a foolish woman who has not heard or understood the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī adds that such kings are like asses because their wives sometimes kick them, like dogs because they behave inimically toward outsiders in order to protect their homes, and like cats because they eat the remnants left by their wives.

#### TEXT 45

त्वक्श्मश्रुरोमनखकेशपिनद्धमन्तर्  
मांसास्थिरक्तकृमिविट्कफपित्तवातम्  
जीवच्छवं भजति कान्तमतिर्विमूढा  
या ते पदाब्जमकरन्दमजिघ्रती स्त्री

*tvak-śmaśru-roma-nakha-keśa-pinaddham antar  
māmsāsthi-rakta-kṛmi-viṭ-kapha-pitta-vātam  
jīvac-chavaṁ bhajati kānta-matir vimūḍhā  
yā te padābja-makarandam ajighratī strī*

*tvak*—with skin; *śmaśru*—whiskers; *roma*—bodily hair; *nakha*—nails; *keśa*—and hair on the head; *pinaddham*—covered; *antaḥ*—inside; *māmsa*—flesh; *asthi*—bones; *rakta*—blood; *kṛmi*—worms; *viṭ*—stool; *kapha*—mucus; *pitta*—bile; *vātam*—and air; *jīvat*—living; *śavam*—a corpse; *bhajati*—worships; *kānta*—as husband or lover; *matih*—whose idea; *vimūḍhā*—totally bewildered; *yā*—who; *te*—Your; *pada-abja*—of the lotus feet; *makarandam*—the honey; *ajighratī*—not smelling; *strī*—woman.

A woman who fails to relish the fragrance of the honey of Your lotus feet becomes totally befooled, and thus she accepts as her husband or lover a living corpse covered with skin, whiskers, nails, head-hair and body-hair and filled with flesh, bones, blood, parasites, feces, mucus, bile and air.

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa's chaste wife makes a quite unequivocal statement about material sense gratification based on the physical body. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī comments as follows on this verse: On the authority of the statement *sa vai patiḥ syād akuto-bhayaḥ svayam*—"He indeed should become one's husband who can remove all fear"—Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the real husband for all women at all times. Thus a woman who worships someone else as her husband simply worships a dead body. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī comments further: Rukmiṇī thus considered that although the sweetness of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet is well known, and although He possesses an eternal body full of knowledge and bliss, foolish women reject Him. An ordinary husband's body is covered on the outside by skin and hair; otherwise, being filled with blood, feces, flesh, bile and so on, it would be overwhelmed with flies and other vermin attracted by its bad smell and other offensive qualities. Those who have no practical experience of the beauty and purity of Kṛṣṇa or of Kṛṣṇa consciousness may be confused by such uncompromising denunciations of material, bodily gratification. But those who are enlightened in Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be enlivened and enthused by such absolutely truthful statements.

#### TEXT 46

अस्त्वम्बुजाक्ष मम ते चरणानुराग  
आत्मन् रतस्य मयि चानतिरिक्तदृष्टेः  
यर्ह्यस्य वृद्धय उपात्तरजोऽतिमात्रो  
मामीक्षसे तद् ह नः परमानुकम्पा

*astv ambujākṣa mama te caraṇānurāga  
ātman ratasya mayi cānatirikta-dṛṣṭeḥ  
yarhy asya vṛddhaya upātta-rajo-'ti-mātro  
mām īkṣase tad u ha naḥ paramānukampā*

*astu*—may there be; *ambuja-akṣa*—O lotus-eyed one; *mama*—my; *te*—

Your; *caraṇa*—for the feet; *anurāgaḥ*—steady attraction; *ātman*—in Yourself; *ratasya*—who take Your pleasure; *mayi*—toward me; *ca*—and; *anatirikta*—not much; *dṛṣṭeḥ*—whose glance; *yarhi*—when; *asya*—of this universe; *vṛddhaye*—for the increase; *upātta*—assuming; *rajaḥ*—of the mode of passion; *ati-mātraḥ*—an abundance; *mām*—at me; *ikṣase*—You look; *tat*—that; *u ha*—indeed; *naḥ*—for us; *parama*—the greatest; *anukampā*—show of mercy.

**O lotus-eyed one, though You are satisfied within Yourself and thus rarely turn Your attention toward me, please bless me with steady love for Your feet. It is when You assume a predominance of passion in order to manifest the universe that You glance upon me, showing me what is indeed Your greatest mercy.**

In Text 20 of this chapter Lord Kṛṣṇa stated, "Always satisfied within Ourselves, We care nothing for wives, children and wealth." Here Rukmiṇī-devī humbly replies, "Yes, You take pleasure within Yourself and therefore rarely look at me."

In this regard Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī points out that Lord Kṛṣṇa had already declared His love for Rukmiṇī (SB 10.53.2): *tathāham api tac-citto nidrām ca na labhe niśi*. "I am also thinking about her—so much so that I cannot sleep at night." Lord Kṛṣṇa is satisfied within Himself, and if we remember that Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī-devī is His internal potency, we can understand that His loving affairs with her are expressions of His pure spiritual happiness.

Here, however, Queen Rukmiṇī humbly identifies herself with the Lord's external energy, which is her expansion. Therefore she says, "Though You do not often look at me, when You are ready to manifest the material universe and thus begin to work through the material quality of passion, which is Your potency, You glance at me. In this way You show me Your greatest mercy." Thus Ācārya Viśvanātha explains that Goddess Rukmiṇī's statement can be understood in two ways. And of course the Vaiṣṇavas, after thoroughly understanding the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa from the bona fide *ācāryas*, simply relish these loving affairs between the Lord and His exalted devotees.